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The Dream Job

What is your dream job? It is a question that we have been asked many times. My answer to this question has always been the same: anything that involves professional tennis. You may be asking, Why tennis? Well, tennis has been part of my life since I was 12 years old; for five years, I played and competed around my country, everything in my life was around tennis, and I was happy with it. When I turned 17, I had a back injury, and two years later, the doctors detected a neurological illness that forced me to stop playing. Nevertheless, my passion for this sport **had never gone**, and I continued looking for my dream job, even if it was outside of the courts. I thought of becoming a tennis judge or tennis coach, but before all that happen life wanted to teach me a lesson first.



In February 2016, I was looking for a part-time job. One morning I received a message from my cousin on Facebook. He sent me a post where a foreign company was looking for people to work in a professional tennis tournament. It was going to be held in my city at the end of the month. Without a second thought, I applied to work. Two days later, they wrote to me and had an interview on Skype. I clearly remember the voice of the person who interviewed me, a thick voice of an older man with a marked Italian accent, and the seriousness in his voice was intimidating; his name was Roman. He emphasized that he had to verify I knew about tennis before telling me what the job was about. Then he asked me some questions and then broadcasted a tennis video in which he asked me to count the score as the players scored. **I did well the counting**, and he told me the job was mine. I was happy even though I



had no idea what I was going to do. Roman said that I would upload the live scores of the matches to the company's sports website. He offered me tickets to all the games, pay for my food, transportation, and \$40 per day during the week the tournament last. In Ecuador, the wage is \$1.96 per hour so, his offer was rather than good to me. He even offered me to work all around Latin America, in other tournaments, if I did a good job in that one. I said yes immediately, the work of my dreams was there for me, and I could not believe it. He ended the interview by telling me that a guy will travel from Mexico and will work together in the tournament.

Two weeks later, the tournament started. I was in the parking lot waiting for my peer. I saw a small guy around 5'4 in height, with dark black hair, robust eyebrows, a pointed nose, and a serious facial expression in the distance. He approached me and confirmed that he was my coworker. His name was Andres. We got the tickets and went to the stadium a few minutes before the first match started. I thought that we would have a workplace inside the stadium in the radio and television areas. Since we would have to upload the results live, we would need to connect electronic equipment. Andres said it was unnecessary because he worked only from the cell phone; he activated an application and uploaded the results. That was kind of hard to believe for me, but I thought he already had experience, so he knew what he was doing. We went to our seats, the match started, and Andres began to upload the results. The way he did it seemed easy, but I thought what I was going to do if he already had everything covered. I asked him what I was supposed to do. Andres said that Roman would give me some special instructions after the first match was over.

When Roman called me, he told me that we must be cautious and do not get caught. I was confused; I did not understand what he meant with do not get caught. Roman explained to me that we upload the live scores to a sports bet page, and before each point begins, he and other people bet large amounts of money. If we uploaded the incorrect score, they would lose a lot of money. Then he said that

this type of game was not allowed in professional tournaments, so we could not be caught. He said that there is a person in charge in each championship to watch that nobody does anything illegal. So, your job will be to help Andres do not get caught by this guard, he said. If we got caught uploading the scores, we could be thrown out of the tournament, penalized, forbidden to enter in any professional championship, again, and depending on the laws of the country; we could get arrested. I was in shock. I remember how my hands started to sweat, and I was muting because I felt extremely nervous. With a brittle voice, I said to Roman that he offered another kind of job to me, and I will not do anything against my integrity. He calmly told me that this job needs to be done by two persons, one uploading the scores and the other covering his peer of do not be caught. I had already accepted the job; if I did not do it, he could reveal to the tournament managers that I was doing that illegally. He had all my personal and social media accounts information. I told him that he could do that, and he said, do not test me. When the tournament is over, you are free to go, were the last words he said to me. Immediately I began to feel a stream of fear run through my entire body, my chest closed, and my hands were not only sweaty but also began to shake. I was so scared by what Roman told myself and had no choice but to get on with the job. I thought of reporting him and this enterprise, but I found out that it was a ghost web page and enterprise. I even did not know if Roman was the real name of that man. At that moment, I was so scared and mad at myself as I did not do any research before accepting the job, and I trust someone I did not even know. I felt so stupid and gullible. Also, I discovered that the people who upload the scores to these gambling web pages are called "courtsiders" Roman was right about the consequences; there a lot of news around the internet about courtsiders who were caught and arrested.

I could not sleep during that week thinking about what could happen if something goes wrong. I was nervous all the time. I had many nightmares; I woke up every night with pain in my chest, feeling regret and embarrassment. I just wished that the tournament was over, and I did everything to don't get caught. The second day, I found out who the guard was for the next few days; Andres and I kept the

lowest possible profile. Every time he came to our seat section, we turned off the application and started to eat and talk. We also changed our seat section every day to do not appear suspicious. On the last day of the tournament, I clearly remember the guard sat next to us when there was still half of the game to end. I have never felt so much fear and adrenaline in my life. Andres turned off his phone, and he did not upload more scores for the rest of the match. While the guard was next to us, I could only think that we would be discovered, and I could get arrested. My heart was beating so fast that I felt it coming out of my chest. When the game was over, the guard stood up and left quickly. He did not even see us again; he just left. I had never felt so much relief in my life; it was finally over. As soon as the game was over, I said goodbye to Andres and wished him a good trip. I took the bus and returned home immediately. I did not want to go back to that tennis club for a long time. On my way home, I got a message from Roman telling me that I did a great job, and he wanted to work on other tournaments with me. I immediately deleted the message, blocked it from my number and social networks, even deactivated my accounts for a while. I never wanted to have another experience like that again.

When I got home, I felt reassured the nightmare was finally over. I thought about how life works because I got the job of my dreams, and it became a nightmare. There I understood how many things we want, but we do not get it, maybe because it is not the best for us no matter how much we wish it. If I lived that experience, it was to understand it was not the best for me. Also, being young and innocent did not exempt me from the responsibility of having taken that job. Since that day, I do massive research before accepting any offer I get. To this day, I am grateful that I never got caught, it is an experience that I will never forget.

