

One Night at a Call Center Analysis

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World

The novel, *One Night at the Call Center*, follows the lives of six people as they make their way and find their place within their society. The story itself is set in Guragaon, India, a city just southwest of New Delhi. This city is known as a “technology hub” which is fitting, based on the place where the six focal characters share most of their lives together. Despite all having different life experiences, the characters all have the Connections call center in common. This is the place where their worlds collide and can even be considered a world of its own. The call center is central. This is a place where cultures collide and people are somewhat forced to conform to a new identity. In the middle of this Indian city, six people are expected to leave India behind the door and be American. Within this “world” that is Connections, their entire identity is transformed. Shyam becomes Sam, Varun becomes Victor, Esha becomes Eliza, and Radhika becomes Regina. This world is fast paced and exhausting, requiring significant amount of patience. However, in the midst of this intensity, Connections becomes a place of unity. Although just spending the night shift together, this world allows each character to share with each other and form a bond. This “world,” Connections as a whole, becomes a necessity to the characters. Despite its sense of frustration and stress, it becomes a place for the characters to feel a part of something. It provides the basis for relationships to form and self expression to be ignited. Although new identities are imposed upon these Indian lives, they begin to seek a new identity all of its own within these walls.

Orientation

For many of the characters, they are seeking a place to fit in. Common to Indian culture, families have placed high expectations upon them. Connections serves as a place of employment

but also a place where they can give their family a sense of pride - they are working hard and earning a living. Many of the characters have sacrificed careers they received an education for, to work here in order to support themselves as well as bring a more prideful career to their household. It's within this sacrifice where resentment is held for Connections. Despite bringing pride to the family, they are losing a sense of power over their own lives. Every shift becomes a time where the characters must face this dilemma head on - to stay in what is comfortable or follow their own path. Although this may seem as an identity crisis, it allows for a specific orientation within Connections. Through these formed relationships between one another, they find they are not alone in this search for oneself. They work through these feelings together, giving support, and even criticism when necessary. Even when Connections is a place where their frustrations of self worth, identity, and future is personified, it also acts as a place of security. In this sense, the characters willingly orient themselves within this security, a place where they are no longer alone in their anxieties, but rather brought together to provide support. This sense of orientation is necessary because it forces the characters to confront their inner thoughts, together.

Ultimate

As stated before, the sense of support given their orientation within Connections is crucial. During their night shift, while faced with tough times, the crew received a call from God. With this call, their individual identity crises were brought to light. This voice from God forces the characters to confront what they are fearing. The command is simple - think about what you really want and what you need to change in your life to achieve it. This sole command removes

everyone from their comfort zones. In some ways it can be seen as a way to force them from their usual orientation of the safety and support of Connections. This call from God is the necessary tipping point for action in the character's lives. It is the driving force behind change. No longer can they hide behind their insecurities, but this voice allows them to plan for action. God's ability to speak to the characters and break through to them changes their whole course of reality. For the first time they are acting upon what they value and hope for. Another important point is how sacred this voice of God is to the characters in relation to their world and their orientation. The voice was only heard by these six people, bound together solely from their world of Connections. It is as if this god is only theirs, a being only those who belong to this special group who orient themselves in this way. In some ways this makes the voice more powerful, more influential. This call from God was a necessity to the group because they used it as a guiding force, a sort of divine indicator that it was time to make a change. Given their circumstances, without this ultimate higher being, they would not make the steps to take back and gain control over their futures and identities.