

NATIVE SPEAKER

By

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NATIVE SPEAKER

CHARACTERS

Office Worker – sits behind a desk.

Applicant – looking for a job.

NOTE: It is advisable that the Applicant be played by a non-Caucasian actor and the Office Worker played by a Caucasian actor. If the Applicant has a very polished accent and the Office Worker speaks with a foreign accent, it adds to the comedic and ironic effect of the play.

APPLICANT

I'm here to apply for the position.

OFFICE WORKER

You're here to apply?

APPLICANT

Yes. The native speaker.

OFFICE WORKER

Native speaker.

APPLICANT

In the paper.

OFFICE WORKER

Yes, the newspaper.

APPLICANT

The newspaper.

OFFICE WORKER

I'm sorry, but that position is filled.

APPLICANT

It's closed?

OFFICE WORKER

Yes. It's closed.

APPLICANT

But the position just ran in yesterday's newspaper.

OFFICE WORKER

Yes, it did.

APPLICANT

And I'm the first one here.

OFFICE WORKER

The first one this morning.

APPLICANT

Yes, the first one in the office.

OFFICE WORKER

I'm very sorry.

APPLICANT

But how can you fill the position on Monday if the position was advertised on Sunday?

OFFICE WORKER

The position has already been filled.

APPLICANT

Can't I just leave my CV?

OFFICE WORKER

Your CV?

APPLICANT

Yes, you know, my resume? My curriculum vitae?

OFFICE WORKER

Oh, yes.

APPLICANT

Okay. Here.

OFFICE WORKER

Oh, no. I'm sorry. I misunderstood.

APPLICANT

You misunderstood?

OFFICE WORKER

Yes. About the resume. The CV.

APPLICANT
What about it?

OFFICE WORKER
Never mind.

APPLICANT
Never mind? But I want to fill the position.

OFFICE WORKER
Which position?

APPLICANT
The one for the NATIVE SPEAKER!

OFFICE WORKER
I'm sorry. That position has been filled.

APPLICANT
By whom?

OFFICE WORKER
By whom?

APPLICANT
Yes, who is filling the position?

OFFICE WORKER
I'm sorry.

APPLICANT
You're sorry?

OFFICE WORKER
Yes.

APPLICANT
I have excellent qualifications.

OFFICE WORKER
Qualifications?

APPLICANT
Yes. I am very qualified.

OFFICE WORKER
I am sure you are.

APPLICANT
I have lived in the United States.

OFFICE WORKER
Yes.

APPLICANT
And Canada.

OFFICE WORKER
Canada?

APPLICANT
Yes. And the United Kingdom.

OFFICE WORKER
The U.K.

APPLICANT
Yes, the UK.

OFFICE WORKER
The UK.

APPLICANT
OK.

OFFICE WORKER
UK.

APPLICANT
OK. UK.

OFFICE WORKER
UK. OK. UK?

APPLICANT
No. UK. Ok?

OFFICE WORKER
You OK?

APPLICANT

No, UK OK?

OFFICE WORKER

UK. Ok. OK? (beat) You OK?

APPLICANT

I'm OK. You OK?

OFFICE WORKER

A-OK.

APPLICANT

Great. So, the position.

OFFICE WORKER

Filled.

APPLICANT

Oh, I get it.

OFFICE WORKER

You get it?

APPLICANT

You're mocking me!

OFFICE WORKER

I'm mocking you?

APPLICANT

Yes, you are!

OFFICE WORKER

No, I'm not.

APPLICANT

Well, I thought you were.

OFFICE WORKER

I wasn't.

APPLICANT

Well, I have all the qualifications. Just like it says in the newspaper.

OFFICE WORKER
Native Speaker.

APPLICANT
I am a native speaker.

OFFICE WORKER
You don't look like one.

APPLICANT
I don't look like what?

OFFICE WORKER
A native speaker.

APPLICANT
What?

OFFICE WORKER
You heard me.

APPLICANT
Damn straight I heard you.

OFFICE WORKER
You're astonished.

APPLICANT
Damn right I'm astonished! What the hell does a native speaker look like?

OFFICE WORKER
I don't know. But they don't look like...

APPLICANT
Like me?

OFFICE WORKER
Like you.

APPLICANT
That's ridiculous.

OFFICE WORKER
Ridiculous?

APPLICANT
Yes, ridiculous.

OFFICE WORKER
You saying I am worthy of ridicule?

APPLICANT
No. That's not what I am saying. I think you're a racist.

OFFICE WORKER
You think I'm a racist?

APPLICANT
Did I stutter?

OFFICE WORKER
A ridiculous racist?

APPLICANT
Not a ridiculous racist. Just ridiculous—and a racist.

OFFICE WORKER
What makes you think I'm a racist?

APPLICANT
Well, first of all, you can't tell if someone is a native speaker just by looking at them.

OFFICE WORKER
I did not say you were not a native speaker.

APPLICANT
Yes. No?

OFFICE WORKER
No?

APPLICANT
No. Yes.

OFFICE WORKER
Yes?

APPLICANT
Ah ha!

OFFICE WORKER

Ah ha!

APPLICANT

There I knew it. You admitted it.

OFFICE WORKER

What? What did I admit?

APPLICANT

That you're a racist!

OFFICE WORKER

I did no such thing.

APPLICANT

You didn't?

OFFICE WORKER

No, I didn't.

APPLICANT

Because I thought you just did.

OFFICE WORKER

No. I said that I did not say that you were not a native speaker.

APPLICANT

You didn't say that?

OFFICE WORKER

Yes.

APPLICANT

See!

OFFICE WORKER

See? See what?

APPLICANT

Oh never mind. I understand perfectly now.

OFFICE WORKER

I don't--I'm confused.

APPLICANT

Ok. Let me explain it for you.

OFFICE WORKER

Okay.

APPLICANT

You told me that the position was filled because you thought I couldn't be a native speaker based on how I look.

OFFICE WORKER

I said you didn't look like a native speaker.

APPLICANT

And that's why you said that the position was filled.

OFFICE WORKER

Not exactly.

APPLICANT

So then what's the story?

OFFICE WORKER

You see, our client is looking for someone who is a native speaker and also looks like a native speaker.

APPLICANT

And what, on God's green Earth does a native speaker look like?

OFFICE WORKER

I don't know. I just follow orders.

APPLICANT

And what are your orders?

OFFICE WORKER

To only allow native speakers—and those that look like native speakers to apply for the position.

APPLICANT

So, if I weren't a native speaker, but I looked like one, then I could apply for the position?

OFFICE WORKER

Well, no.

APPLICANT

Why not?

OFFICE WORKER

Because I would know that you were not.

APPLICANT

How would you know?

OFFICE WORKER

Well, I could just tell—by hearing you speak.

APPLICANT

By hearing me speak?

OFFICE WORKER

Yes.

APPLICANT

But what if I were masquerading as a native speaker, I came in here and didn't say anything, and just handed you my CV and sat down and waited for you to call my name?

OFFICE WORKER

Then you would be trying to trick me.

APPLICANT

To trick you?

OFFICE WORKER

Yes.

APPLICANT

But-

OFFICE WORKER

And you wouldn't be able to do the job properly.

APPLICANT

Why not?

OFFICE WORKER

Because you wouldn't be a native speaker.

APPLICANT

But I am.

OFFICE WORKER

And that would be fraud.

APPLICANT

Fraud?

OFFICE WORKER

Yes, fraud.

APPLICANT

Fraud.

OFFICE WORKER

Fraud. And that wouldn't be very nice.

APPLICANT

Oh, this is impossible.

OFFICE WORKER

What's impossible?

APPLICANT

All this! This! You put an ad in the paper, it's an attractive salary. I am well qualified for the position, but because you think I don't look like I'm a native speaker, then I can't get the job.

OFFICE WORKER

Because it's already filled.

APPLICANT

Why don't you just come out and say it?

OFFICE WORKER

Come out and say what?

APPLICANT

What we both know is true.

OFFICE WORKER

And what is that?

APPLICANT

Just say it, and I'll go away.

OFFICE WORKER
You trying to bargain with me?

APPLICANT
No. Yes. I just want to hear you say the real reason I can't have the job. Just whisper it to me. I won't tell.

OFFICE WORKER
Ok.

APPLICANT
Ok. Whisper.

OFFICE WORKER
Because it is filled?

APPLICANT
No! NO! NO! Bullshit! It's because I'm not white! Say it you fucking racist! You bigoted, prejudging twat! That's the real reason! Say it! Say it! You motherfuckers! *(leaves frustrated and then re-enters)* That was pretty good.

OFFICE WORKER
Pretty good?

APPLICANT
Yeah. You did a good job?

OFFICE WORKER
I did?

APPLICANT
Yes, you can have the job.

OFFICE WORKER
Oh, thank you. Thank you very much. You don't know how much this means to me. And my family.

APPLICANT
It's okay. You did very well. And if anyone comes in here like that—like me—or, you know what I mean. You know what to tell them.

OFFICE WORKER
The position is filled.

APPLICANT
Yes, the position is filled.

[END OF PLAY]