

Dialogue and Action: Looking Towards the Future



It wasn't until we spoke on the matter that I made up my mind.

"It's far too late for me," my father said. "I've wasted my life. Now it's up to you not to waste yours."

"I don't plan on wasting it at all," I told him for probably the thousandth time."

"Of course you don't. You won't regret a college degree. No one ever looks back and thinks, I wish I hadn't gone to college. Not when some big corporation is dumping money into your bank account every two weeks. No one ever regrets that."

"I wouldn't regret money, in and of itself," I said, thoughtfully, "but it's the time involved, what it takes to get from here to there, and then what it is I would be doing for the corporation in order to deserve that money that gets to me."

"Deserve!" my father practically spit the word. "You need to stop thinking about things like 'deserve.' Do what they ask and take what they give you, and don't think any more about it."

"That strikes me as a sad way to live."

"Nonetheless?"

"Nonetheless."

"You've decided then."

"I have."

"Excellent. Very good."

My father seemed satisfied. He settled back into his chair and dozed back to sleep. I wasn't lying. I had decided. I had decided that there was no way I was going to go to slip into the meaningless kind of existence that he was planning for me.

1. Is the father happy with his life? Explain. _____
2. Does the point of view character admire his father? How do you know? _____
3. Does the point of view character's father like his job? _____
4. Why does this dialogue cause the point of view character to make a decision? What is the decision?