

# ***The Data Evaluation***

*by*

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Cast of Characters

<u>MR. HIGGS:</u>	50's
<u>GARALD REYNOLDS:</u>	Early 30's
<u>MAN #1:</u>	30's
<u>MAN #2:</u>	30's

Place  
Office

Time  
Morning

2.

Setting: The play takes place inside the elaborate sky rise office of Mr. Higgs. The room is open, spacious, minimalist with enormous windows overlooking a city.

At Rise: The play opens with Mr. Higgs examining paperwork at his desk.

*Gerald appears at the doorframe - knocks gently.*

*Mr. Higgs places a folder into the archive of his metal filing cabinet.*

MR HIGGS: Good morning, Gerald. Please, sit down.

*Mr. Higgs removes a different folder from his archive cabinet.*

*He opens it on his table before sitting.*

Yes, I do things according to our friends in the previous centuries. I write things down and file things away in folders by way of metal cabinets. So industrial of me, I know but it must be in my DNA. I like to organize the old fashion way.

Gerald, you are fired. Today, you will no longer be an employee of the company. Response?

GERALD: ...WHY?

MR. HIGGS: According to the data, of course..your work isn't up to par. You've dropped in percentage each month since you were recruited and this past month alone you have dropped a whopping 32.3 percent to be exact.

GERALD: But I've met all my deadlines. I still finish the work I've been assigned for each day. I sometimes stay overtime, if necessary.

MR. HIGGS: If necessary...

GERALD: Clearly, the data doesn't show my arrival and leave times.

MR. HIGGS: You know it does, Gerald.

GERALD: It does?

MR. HIGGS: Precisely.

GERALD: ...

MR. HIGGS: We needed you to finish more, FASTER..not less, LONGER.

GERLAD: All you had to do was ask.

MR. HIGGS: Ask..what?

GERALD: Instruct.

MR. HIGGS: That's not what we do here, Gerald.

GERALD: But wouldn't it make sense to help your employees make the necessary adjustments to excel?

MR. HIGGS: On the contrary, we expect the intensity of every worker to gradually improve on their own accord, without interference.

GERALD: How does that make sense?

MR. HIGGS: According to our data, it makes complete sense.

GERALD: I feel as though I get better each week. I am proficient.

MR. HIGGS: Proficient isn't sufficient. What we believe, wholeheartedly, is in organic matter. The organic matter of all our individual employees. You have heard of natural selection? We want the natural design of what makes you YOU to fit within the fabric of our company. Obviously, this is why you were chosen for this division to begin with.

GERALD: What other divisions are there?

MR. HIGGS: Many.

GERALD: Are you saying that there is a division where management can instruct employees to improve?

MR. HIGGS: Certainly.

GERALD: Why wasn't I selected for that division?

MR. HIGGS: You showed promise for the division you were chosen for, based on the data.

GERALD: But the data failed.

MR. HIGGS: No, Mr. Reynolds...you failed.

GERALD: But I fulfill my quota!

MR. HIGGS: Yes, you did, I see that and it's nice but we hope for one's passion to sing. You haven't sung since you're very first day.

GERALD: But this is what I love to do.

MR. HIGGS: We know it is.

GERALD: Why not transfer me to the other division?

MR. HIGGS: It does not work that way?

GERALD: Why not?

MR. HIGGS: That's not our protocol.

GERALD: Couldn't this just be a warning? I'll pick up the pace. I'll get the work done in half the time. I'm quite capable Mr. Higgs.

MR. HIGGS: I will say, we are extremely sad about it.

GERALD: But I haven't done anything wrong.

MR. HIGGS: It isn't a question per se of doing anything wrong. This is simply a matter of carrying out your duties with *rapid accuracy*.

GERALD: Have I not been accurate?

MR. HIGGS: Have you been rapid?

GERALD: Rapid? This is such..MR. HIGGS -

MR. HIGGS: Yes?

GERALD: Mr. Higgs, I need this job.

MR. HIGGS: I know that you do, Gerald.

GERALD: Give me today. It's only morning. I can polish off three days work by afternoon. By this day's end, I'll be starting on next week's workload. Let me show you. I will prove it.

MR. HIGGS: You are fired, Gerald. The data is specific. You know this.

GERALD: The data doesn't see the whole picture. It doesn't see all the help that I've provided my co-workers. The friendships built. The energy that I bring into the workplace. Those things count. In the meeting room I am always volunteering my ideas. I'm always providing feedback and attending company outings, conferences..I am involved, you understand? You want to fire me? How does the data make any sense in that?

*Mr. Higgs leans back in his chair. A series of prolonged stares and behavior exchanges are expressed between Mr. Higgs and Gerald. Mr. Higgs becoming more intimidating and Gerald becoming more tame and fearful until...*

MR. HIGGS: The data has spoken.

GERALD: You choose to take the data over my human potential?

MR. HIGGS: Of course.

GERALD: That is unfair treatment.

MR. HIGGS: You must leave today.

GERALD: I wish to speak to management.

MR. HIGGS: Mr. Reynolds, please don't make this more difficult than it needs to be.

GERALD: I want to speak to management!

MR. HIGGS: The data is the management.

GERALD: Who's above the data?

MR. HIGGS: No one is above the data.

GERALD: That's impossible.

MR. HIGGS: You are beginning to act irrational.

GERALD: Check the A.I. Check it for bugs. It's prejudice against me.

MR. HIGGS: (*laughs*)

GERALD: Something is wrong with the data. The numbers are obscured. It doesn't like me.

MR. HIGGS: Personal feelings do not matter to the data.

*Gerald stands up.*

GERALD: There's a bug! I'm telling you. There are co-workers of mine that do far less than me. Why aren't they getting fired? Why do they get to keep their jobs?

MR. HIGGS: ...They do not have a far reaching talent as you do. Take a seat, Gerald. You were hired for your promise, which outdid your contemporaries but you have remained average, deliberately. It is understandable, never pushing past yourself, never reaching your full potential, for why bother, correct? You were already outperforming the rest of them. However, it's been months, Mr. Reynolds. There have been warnings you have ignored, signs. And months is a significant amount of time to peer into your data and observe that your progress has stagnated. Disappointment describes you, Mr. Reynolds. You play it safe, you do not take calculated risks, you do not jump into the unknown. What is life if it were not for our capacity to imagine? What has had you expect to remain here? You are the same today as the day you arrived. The data reveals the truth. The data is never wrong. You can threaten me and demand to keep your place but this isn't a game. This is an algorithm. We adhere to its fundamental understandings or we go extinct. There are protections in place to avoid this. Do you understand, Mr. Reynolds?

*Two burly men appear at the door frame of the office.*

MAN #1: Mr. Gerald Reynolds, we presume?

GERALD: Yes.

MAN #1 We are here to assist you with packing your things.

GERALD: I don't need your assistance.

MAN #2: We assure you, you do.

GERALD: Are you fucking serious?

MAN #1: We are only here to help.

*Gerald stands up from his chair.*

GERALD: Here's something your precious data did not see.

*Gerald runs and dives through the window.*

MR. HIGGS: Gentleman, gather up Mr. Reynolds from the net. Return him home. He is forbidden to step foot on the premises again. Be sure to send him all of his belongings. Thank you. That will be all.

*Both burly men nod and leave.*

*Mr. Higgs places a folder into the archive of his metal filing cabinet.*

END OF PLAY