



The Clock and the Code

morakanda gamage



Rohan sat hunched over his cluttered desk, the harsh fluorescent lights reflecting off his glasses. His screen was a blur of complex code that he had been staring at since the early morning hours, his body heavy with exhaustion.



Through the office window, the golden sun set over the Colombo skyline, casting long shadows across the room. Anjali walked toward Rohan's cubicle with a stack of papers, her expression filled with quiet concern for her colleague.



Rohan rubbed his tired eyes and ran a hand through his messy hair as he explained his exhaustion to Anjali. He pointed to the mountain of paperwork surrounding his monitor, feeling as though the office walls were closing in on him.



Anjali leaned against the neighboring desk and began to speak about the Shop and Office Employees Act. She explained that the law was designed to protect workers from the very exhaustion Rohan was currently feeling every day.



Rohan listened in shock as Anjali described the legal limits of an eight-hour workday and a forty-five-hour week. He realized that his fourteen-hour shifts were far beyond what any person should be legally required to endure.



The office grew quiet as Anjali emphasized that employers are legally required to keep accurate records of actual working hours. Rohan looked at his digital time sheet, realizing how much of his life had gone undocumented and unappreciated.



Anjali spoke about the fourteen days of annual leave and the casual leave Rohan had earned over his fourteen months of service. The idea of taking a continuous week off to rest seemed like a distant dream suddenly brought within reach.



A new spark of energy flickered in Rohan's chest, replacing his weary resignation with a sense of justice. He sat up straighter in his chair, the weight of the oppressive workload feeling slightly lighter as he understood his own value.



With a small, encouraging smile, Anjali turned to leave, her footsteps echoing softly in the nearly empty office. She left Rohan with the powerful reminder that knowing his rights was the first step toward changing his life for the better.



Rohan reached for his mouse with a steady hand, his gaze fixed on the glowing cursor with newfound purpose. The code on the screen no longer felt like a cage, but a task he would complete on his own terms before heading home.