

DR STOCKMAN

Yes. I wanted to be positive.

MAYOR

Are you positive?

DR STOCKMAN

Of course!

*(MRS STOCKMAN quietly enters and sits at the dining room table to listen. There are table linens to fold but she only holds one)*

Start —

MAYOR

So, what do you intend to do? Did you inform the District?

DR STOCKMAN

No not yet. I thought you wanted me to talk to you first, but we have to let them know now. The school has to be closed. Do you want to call Superintendent Gynt with me now?

MAYOR

Children and staff are being exposed to toxins ... carcinogens?

DR STOCKMAN

Yeah, that's what's happening. The grounds are also used for youth sports. Eifif practiced on that field. The site must be closed, and we have to work on remediation plans. Maybe your school ... maybe God's Way Christian can help?

MAYOR

Close the school immediately and delay opening the Academy?

DR STOCKMAN

Yes. People trust their schools are safe. What else can we do?

MAYOR

I just happened to be talking ... confidentially ... to a lawyer ... administrator, at our school and he said that at all cost measures should be taken to prevent panic. Panic will lead to financial havoc. He also thought that precautions could be taken so the students could finish out the school year and that a cleanup effort could be stepped up in the summer so that we could still open in the fall.

DR STOCKMAN

Prevent panic, havoc?

MAYOR

(Raises his voice.) Yes. Reality check! Panic and havoc that's what will happen. We have bond money, grants, construction contracts that are all tied up in this project. Not just at the school, but the entire area. We just passed a resolution to get the renewal of the parcel tax on the ballot. Realtors are advertising our school district and the Academy. Do you have a lawyer? Did you think about the liability? The District will be sued. The County and State will come down on us. We will have ambulance chasers out testing kids. Our town ruined. Your reputation will be ruined.

DR STOCKMAN

Why would my reputation be ruined?

MAYOR

Because it was your idea! The school was your brilliant idea.

DR STOCKMAN

Actually, it was Katrina's idea. She told me about the inequity at Ponderosa and that it was a failing Title One. She wanted us to help out ... lift the students up with a STEAM school. But now your buddies manipulated school choice ... the new boundaries lines look like a jigsaw puzzle. But it doesn't matter ... no kid should be at that school.

MAYOR

Oh, nonsense. The independent testing was your idea!

DR STOCKMAN

And what I discovered is the public is at risk! This is a public health hazard! We have a duty to inform the public.

MAYOR

Well, they will shoot the messenger. People will scrutinize you. They'll look into your background, question your integrity and assume the worst of why you were laid off. Tom, I tried to be a good brother ... and to help you. I have tried to guide you and ...

DR STOCKMAN

There's no one living to blame here. This happened more than a half century ago. There are so many places where toxic chemicals were dumped and covered all over the United States. I can't understand why we can't tell the truth and work together to fix the problem and not assign blame. People will understand it's not our fault.

MAYOR

Are you kidding me? People don't forgive! Corporations, politicians, and stakeholders don't forgive. They have lawyers to assign the blame.

DR STOCKMAN

What do you suggest?

MAYOR

Well, I don't feel that the numbers are as bad as you say. We can take samples from other areas. You took samples one foot deep. Kids aren't going to be digging holes or trenches. We'll drop your outdoor classroom idea and concentrate on the lab, the engineering, and the technology, the inside. That's what parents want ... that's what sells the school. They don't need a garden or to plant vegetables. We will get rid of the field and plant cactus or something less attractive ... add a solar energy system. We can do it in piecemeal.

DR STOCKMAN

Keep them in the dark ... but numbers don't lie.

MAYOR

No, but they can be presented in a certain way.

DR STOCKMAN

That would be dishonest ... harmful and really twisted.

MAYOR

Listen, it's for the good of the community that we clean it up as we go or maybe we just need to simply and contain it better. Look, we're all exposed to toxins and carcinogens every day. Plastic, parabens, acid rain, cell phone towers, microwaves ... there is even arsenic in baby food. It's on apples! Everyone uses tin foil ... I see it all the time when the ladies bring in baked ziti at church ... the tomato sauce corrodes the foil that they cover it with and then we unknowingly eat the corrosion that has fallen on top of it! The black Styrofoam they use for packaging meat flakes off. We have Prop 65 to warn us! Heck, I even saw a Prop 65 warning on tissues! Everything gives you cancer and we just can't seem to get enough of all the cheap stuff we get from China.

DR STOCKMAN

Oh, I get it now, the school district must have been aware of this ... that's why they put the turf down and the concrete trails

all around. Did you know about the site's history? Are there underground storage tanks?

MAYOR

Yes, but... it's ancient history ... most of the spill burned off.

DR STOCKMAN

Oh my God, that's what I suspected. It's really interesting how I just floated the idea out to you to create a science magnet and how you ran with it. You and your friends at the school district just gave me the reins. You all jumped on it because it was convenient, an easy fix for a failing Title One ... and to raise real estate values. Everything was rushed. Got lemons, make lemonade. I remember you and Gynt laughing and saying that. I had no idea that the lemons were spoiled and now you just want to douse them with sugar. Well, sugar can give you cancer too.

MAYOR

I am telling you now, no I demand that you address this problem the way I direct you to.

DR STOCKMAN

Well, it's too late for me to follow orders.

MAYOR

What?

DR STOCKMAN

Too many people know about it. Hovstad ... you know ... the atheist ... he knows, and he'll expose the truth.

MAYOR

Do you know what you've done?

DR STOCKMAN

Yes, I'm protecting the public trust and our moral authority.

MAYOR

*(He yells.)* You are such an idiot!

*(DOG starts to bark and MRS STOCKMAN hurries in and throws DOG a treat to the back yard)*

*(MAYOR Lowers his voice)* You are MAD. You're an alarmist. Have you given any thought about the consequences ... the harm that this is going to bring ... to your family. You're willing to expose them? Open all of us up to harm from the wrath of unhappy

people? You ... always the rebel, thinking you're so smart. Thinking it's so cool to be an out of the box thinker. Do you know what you really are? You are just an elitist. Only an elitist would name their dog after Thoreau.

DR STOCKMAN

I didn't name him ... Petra did. Eilif shortened it. He's our double agent. And you should talk. You drive a Jaguar and have GODZGUY as your license plate. You're the elitist. You think you are better than everyone. Listen, it's my civic duty to inform the people of a danger that affects their health and wellbeing. The public will understand. I'm sure God understands.

MAYOR

Don't you go there! You think public opinion works like that? That the public is reasonable? That it's informed? People see a line in front of an entrance, and they get on it without questioning if there's another entrance. If Hovstad has published ... or posted ... you'll have to retract it. Write something ... informing ... stating that there's no need for concern. That we're going to take precautions to make sure that the Academy and all our schools are safe.

DR STOCKMAN

I can't. I just can't do that.

MAYOR

I'm telling you that you must do that or else.

DR STOCKMAN

Or else what?

MAYOR

I will ask for your resignation or have you dismissed.

DR STOCKMAN

For what?

MAYOR

Insubordination.

DR STOCKMAN

You want me to lie?

MAYOR

No, not lie. Simply give a statement that your tests were misinterpreted.

————— End