

DR STOCKMAN

And this is just the beginning. I have so much more. Where's Al?

BILL

I'll text him. *(He uses his phone)*

HOVSTAD

Ok, we'll print the test results and your report.

Start
Enters

AL

(Enters and goes to shake DR STOCKMANS's hand) There're working on finding more about the site's history. You have our full support. So, listen, I think you should speak at the district's school choice information meeting that is scheduled ... to gain support for remediation plans ... settle the community's concerns and ease their disappointment. I will suggest it to Superintendent Gynt, and we will publish all the necessary information.

DR STOCKMAN

Oh, okay ... just like the special school district meeting we had when I spoke about the plans for the Academy.

AL

Yes! A public forum is best ... demonstrates transparency.

DR STOCKMAN

A problem-solving meeting ... we encountered a problem and have to abort the plan. We will fix the problem and resume our mission at a later date. People are sensible when you speak to them sensibly.

AL

Indeed. Perhaps, I can even introduce you. I'm on a few boards including the Schools Foundation. I thought I would just give a short speech about your expertise, your findings and bestow our thanks to you. Then the School Board can hear public comments and go about their business.

DR STOCKMAN

Sounds good. Just changing course.

AL

Well, maybe in your line of work, you can easily change course, but I have found that change often leads to confusion and confusion left untreated leads to unhappy people. We don't want

that. *(He looks at HOVSTAD)* No dramatic headline. Remember moderation is the key.

DR STOCKMAN

NO, no, no. Peter is not being moderate! He threatened me and called me a quack!

HOVSTAD

What do you mean?

DR STOCKMAN

He ordered me to cover it up to protect my family and my job.

HOVSTAD

You see.

DR STOCKMAN

But I'll ... I'll use my pen as my sword ... uncover ALL the contamination!

AL

Whoa, whoa, wait a minute. What?

BILL

The battle has begun! Slay um.

DR STOCKMAN

Yes, the hammer of truth will strike. *(He makes a fist and pounds it into the palm of his other hand)*

AL

Okay, okay, let's not get carried away.

DR STOCKMAN

But now I realize the truth ... how my brother has been operating. He's an egotistical, tyrannical, self-interested power-hungry man who operates under the guise of serving God and the public good to wield his control. It's not just the school that's contaminated ... it's the ... Oh, we need to be rid of the rot.

BILL

(Raises his arm with a fist) Rid the rot!

DR STOCKMAN

Oh man, today ... today I was enlightened. I see all the toxic contamination now. I don't have all the facts in a neat package yet. But I'm telling you ... I see it now... all the corrupt

machinations. We must find more friends and support. If we stick together, the natural dynamic of our common will for good will work and our community will prevail.

AL

Now, hold your horses. Change needs to happen orderly and slowly. It can be too dangerous otherwise.

DR STOCKMAN

Not necessarily. Sometimes a blast of heat is what's needed to cause change. My brother is trying to scare me and I'm not going to be ruled by fear.

HOVSTAD

I'm with you.

BILL

Me too.

AL

We're your friends. You're courageous.

BILL

Props, hey, you'll be a hometown hero.

DR STOCKMAN

Thank you. Really. Thank you for your support and for your camaraderie. It's been a blow to my heart and soul to hear my brother attack me the way he did. He's not the man he pretends to be. Okay ... okay... I'll let you all go back to work. Again, thank you. *(They shake hands and DR STOCKMAN exits)*

HOVSTAD

We'll need him.

AL

Um, maybe.

BILL

Maybe?

AL

We don't want to bite the hand that feeds us. We have our business interest to protect. You can't be sure of anything.

BILL

But the facts are clear.

AL

Yes, but we're not going to blast it ... just report it. Mayor Stockman wants to meet with us. He'll be here soon.

HOVSTAD

Really?

AL

Yes. So, young man, I heard you have political aspirations of your own. Planning to run for Town Council?

HOVSTAD

What? Why didn't you tell me?

BILL

Ah, I was going to tell you today ... just so much going on. You know the Council's average age is 65. We need a younger voice in office.

AL

To be old is to be wise my friend. I always think of our community first and that is why I choose the middle of the road ... that is why we have survived all these years. *(He exits)*

BILL

He's spineless. Sometimes you have to change lanes ... get in the left or right lane to get where you're going. *(He looks at his phone)* Oh, man ... the Vets story. I gotta go cover ... I gotta get over to the library ... I'll check in with you later. *(He hurriedly exits)*

Exit - Stop

PETRA

(She enters and goes to HOVSTAD's doorway) Hi, I am a little early. I hope it's okay, but I have a class tonight and I need to get there early to get a parking spot.

HOVSTAD

Oh, geez, the book review. I forgot you were coming by. Sit down and tell me what you think. I was just with your dad and ... oh, I am sure you know. It's quite a story.

PETRA

I know, it is terrible, I'll be quick. So, I really think ... it's just not right for *The People's Pinecone* to review a book like this. "The Importance of Being Baptized?" Really, are you kidding? I didn't think you were religious.