

1
PAIGE
+
DAVE

PAIGE. *(Seeing the room, and immediately identifying it as the perfect location:)* Here. In here.

DAVE. Paige—

PAIGE. Listen to me, Dave; this is simple. If we're trying convince people the man is their Governor, if we want him to look like a Governor, we put him in the Governor's office; that's politics one-oh-one. *(Noticing the Governor's desk, crossing to it:)* In fact—even better—we put him behind the Governor's desk. Am I right?

DAVE. Paige—

PAIGE. Have you ever seen a more Governor's-desk-looking desk than this desk? No; it's perfect. We do the interview right here—

DAVE. Right, except for the part where we're not doing an interview.

PAIGE. We're doing an interview, Dave.

DAVE. I'm not putting him on television again today.

PAIGE. Okay, but you have to put him on television again today.

DAVE. I can't; not again.

PAIGE. I hear what you're saying.

DAVE. Good.

PAIGE. You're saying, because the swearing-in ceremony didn't go well this morning—

DAVE. Okay, can we not talk about the swearing-in ceremony?

PAIGE. Why would we not talk about the swearing-in ceremony?

DAVE. Okay, can we not talk about why we're not talking about the swearing-in ceremony?

PAIGE. Dave. I think you asked me here for my advice.

DAVE. I asked you here because there's no one else here. I have no staff. I'm the Chief of Staff to a Governor who has no staff.

PAIGE. Why does he have no staff?

(During the following, DAVE: realizes he needs a pen; tries the pen in the pen-holder on top of the desk; finding that doesn't work, opens the top drawer of the desk.)

DAVE. Because until three hours ago he was only the *Lieutenant Governor*. And when he was *Lieutenant Governor*, I was his entire staff, because—

PAIGE. *Lieutenant Governors* don't do anything.

DAVE. That's not entirely true. Though... that is pretty much the job description. But then Larry Clarke— *(He indicates the portrait.)* —this idiot—was forced to resign as *Governor*, because...

PAIGE. Because he had sex with the runner-up in a beauty pageant.

DAVE. Yes—the idiot.

PAIGE. Do you think it was the infidelity that people objected to, or the fact that he didn't sleep with the *winner*?

DAVE. It was the fact that he lied about it. And got everyone who *worked* for him to lie about it, so when the truth came out, not only did *Larry* have to quit, his whole *staff* had to quit. So suddenly my boss is the Governor of the state—

PAIGE. And he has no staff.

DAVE. And he has no staff. And I need a *team*; I need a *plan*; I need, uh...

PAIGE. (*Offering hers*;) You need a pen?

DAVE. I need a *pen*. (*Another level of exasperation*;) I don't think Larry Clarke ever *worked* in this office. There's nothing in this desk but plastic forks and soy sauce. (*After dropping the forks and packets back in the drawer*;) Look, I'm gonna be honest with you. This was never supposed to happen. (*As in "This is insane."*) Ned Newley was never supposed to be Governor. I'm not supposed to be a Governor's Chief of *Staff*. I've been working in politics since I was in college, but... I always work for the guy who *loses*. I always work for the *good* guy—the honest, stand-up guy, who has absolutely zero chance of ever getting elected. I'm not experienced at, you know... *success*. I called you this morning because when we worked together on the...

PAIGE. McMartin campaign—

DAVE. Yeah, you were great on that campaign.

PAIGE. Oh!

DAVE. You were. Your polling was insanely accurate, *and* you were the smartest person on the whole team.

PAIGE. (*Not disregarding the compliment, but suspicious of it*;) Well... thanks. Funny, I always had the impression you didn't like me.