

8

ARTHUR  
DAVE

ARTHUR. I'm happy to see you up and... moving again.

DAVE. (*This gets his attention.*) What?

ARTHUR. The last three times I came in here, you were lying on the floor in the fetal position.

DAVE. Oh. (*DAVE was in that position for a long time, but hadn't considered that other people might have seen him.*) Yeah. I think I needed some time to... process, and... grieve.

ARTHUR. (*Taking a seat, comfortable.*) Uh-huh.

DAVE. (*His energy could be described as "caffeinated".*) But I realized, if we're gonna fix this, we've gotta get on it quick, so: I've been writing out some different options.

ARTHUR. Options for... ?

DAVE. Well, we need to start with some kind of retraction, obviously. The public needs to know that, despite what they heard, the woman who interrupted that television interview is *not* Ned's nominee for Lieutenant Governor; she's a temp who was hired to answer the phones. Which, although we don't have to mention this, she never actually managed to do.

ARTHUR. Have you been drinking a lot of coffee, Dave?

DAVE. No—no coffee; this is just the natural energy I get when my entire world is collapsing around me. So— (*He retrieves the pile of pages. This is his presentation to ARTHUR, whom he assumes is looking for this kind of input.*) Retraction. There's a bunch of tacks we could take on the Governor's statement: There's "I misunderstood

the question," which makes him sound stupid, but you'll like that; (*He hands ARTHUR that statement.*) There's "My words were misconstrued," which is completely illogical, but I'm proud of that one; (*Hands it to ARTHUR.*) There's "The announcement was premature," where Miss Peakes is one of several candidates being considered, the rest of whom can actually do the job; (*Hands it to ARTHUR. Referencing the one sheet still in his hands.*) And then there's: "No, no, I didn't say 'Lieutenant Governor,' I said . . ." But I haven't gotten far with that one, 'cause I can't think of anything that rhymes with "Lieutenant Governor."

ARTHUR. So you're saying she *shouldn't* be the Lieutenant Governor.

DAVE. (*Beat.*) Yes. (*Beat.*) Or... you could just shoot me now. What are you asking?, are you seriously?, what are you talking about?

ARTHUR. I'm talking about Miss Peakes—sorry, Lulu; we're calling her Lulu now.

DAVE. Who's calling her Lulu?

ARTHUR. The administration.

DAVE. The administration has a position on her name?! Why would we?, what does that even?, why are you so *calm*?!

ARTHUR. You sure you haven't been drinking coffee?

DAVE. The Governor of this state—a man whose success is my sole responsibility—went on TV an hour ago and named as his Lieutenant Governor a person not only *completely unqualified* for that job, but completely unqualified for any job I can think of.

ARTHUR. I don't know; I think she definitely has a career in television.

DAVE. You're doing it again, you're doing it again—just like this morning—

ARTHUR. What?

DAVE. You're sitting there, in the middle of this disaster, and you're, you're *enjoying* it.

ARTHUR. I'm not *enjoying* it, I'm... okay, I'm kind of enjoying it. I mean, c'mon, you gotta admit: that Lulu, she was something else. Did you see what happened when she stepped in front of that camera? The way she just... turned on? The way those words just flowed out of her mouth? Effortless. Completely effortless. I mean... completely meaningless, but...

DAVE. But what? But *nothing*. She was nothing but meaningless. She was making as much sense as your index cards.