

## Bonus Chapter 57.5

### The Car Wash

(Early May, year of Collapse)

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“It’s time to smash them in the fucking mouth,” Eric screamed. Everyone else in the room, mainly his co-workers at the Washington Association of Business, just stared at him.

“Eric,” his boss, Tom Foster, said, “We’re all frustrated, but let’s not go off the deep end.”

“We’ve tried everything else,” Eric yelled, “and it never seems to work. Time to try something new.”

Eric knew his time at his WAB was done. Then again, he knew everything was done. His country was on fire. The protesters — mostly union thugs — were out vandalizing his town of Olympia, the state capitol of Washington State. The sound of sirens had become so common that he didn’t even notice them anymore. The shit had officially hit the fan. Chaos. Lawlessness. Everything Eric knew was coming had finally arrived.

Might as well make the most of it, Eric thought to himself. He looked around and saw that his co-workers and former friends were looking at him like he was a lunatic.

He stormed out of the room and walked right past the receptionist without saying a word. He got in his car. He knew what he needed to do.

He needed to go to the car wash.

As he headed there, he kept thinking about all the corruption. How the state agencies and local governments he sued at WAB were screwing WAB members, who were small businesses. All the taxes and fees the government charged, and all the mindless regulations. That was bad enough, but what

Eric saw all day long was government “interpreting” those tax laws and regulations to be hard on people they didn’t like and nice to people they did. It was a total racket.

And no one gave a crap, Eric thought. No one ever said, “Hey, this is wrong.” The general population — the “sheeple” as Eric called them — just went along. They hoped the government didn’t come after them. They kept their heads down and their mouths shut.

Which is how we got to this point, Eric said to himself. No one even tries to stop the corruption, so it grows and grows.

“Except me,” Eric said out loud as he was halfway to the car wash. “Except me.”

Eric wasn’t afraid to sue the government. Actually, he loved it. He was a lawyer and fought the bad guys, and sometimes won — when the judge wasn’t too corrupt, which was rare.

He had just finished up Ed Oleo’s case. Ed was a realtor who was being terrorized by a corrupt regulator on the state Board of Real Estate Licensing named Bart Sellarman. Ed was a WAB member, so Eric and his boss, Grant Matson, were representing Ed in a case against the Board. After Ed refused to pay a bribe, Sellarman tried to take away Ed’s license to sell real estate, which would bankrupt Ed. Amazingly, due to some fancy footwork on the part of WAB, Ed won his case and Sellarman, who had now been exposed for the corrupt scumbag he was, had to reinstate Ed’s real estate license.

Eric realized it was Friday. He smiled. He knew exactly what that meant. He looked at the clock. It was about lunchtime. “OK, it’s time to do this,” he said out loud. Today is what separates the talkers from the doers, he thought.

He was pulling into the carwash; it was the last one operating in town. All the others had been put out of business by the regulations. But not the Green Clean Carwash. It was owned by a very politically connected guy. He was the only

one who seemed to get certified as being in compliance with all the environmental regulations. Therefore, he was the only one who stayed in business while his competition had to shut down. Typical. That's how "business" was done now.

"Hey, Josh," Eric said to one of the carwash attendants as he rolled down the window. Josh was a nineteen year-old friend of Eric's. His mom worked at WAB; Eric and Josh had met at a WAB employee picnic. Eric was stunned to learn that Josh had read *Atlas Shrugged* by Ayn Rand. It was a libertarian book from the 1950s about how the government would slowly take over and squeeze out the productive people, which was exactly what had happened. Ayn Rand books were practically contraband now; only Patriots willing to risk ridicule read them. Josh was one of them. He realized that his generation was totally screwed, and he didn't appreciate it. He had picked sides months ago in what he knew was coming.

"What's up, bro?" Josh asked Eric. "Need a wash?"

Eric told Josh what was up. Josh got a very serious look on his face. Then he nodded slowly and looked around to make sure no one was watching. "I'm in," he whispered.

They went over the plan. It was a simple one, but simple is better.

"Wouldn't it be better if we did this at night at his house or something?" Josh asked.

"Yeah," Eric said, "but there aren't any cops around anymore. They can't investigate shit. I heard the prosecutors stopped showing up for work. Now's our chance, bro."

Josh nodded again. He knew Eric was right.

They finalized the plan. Eric left the carwash so Josh could do his part of the plan: disable the video cameras. Hopefully, before their guest arrived.

Eric parked his car in the next lot, but had a clear view of the carwash. After a few minutes, Josh came out of the carwash

and held up his arm. That was the signal that the cameras had been disabled.

After a few more minutes, Eric's heart jumped. There he was: Bart Sellarman, in his Cadillac on his way to get his Friday after-lunch car wash, as usual. Eric learned of this routine in the deposition he took of Sellarman in Ed Oleo's case.

Sellarman gave the Friday afternoon car washes as an alibi for why he couldn't be picking up paper bags of bribe money from his right hand man at the Board, Jim Browning.

Eric started up his car and went over to the Cadillac. He had to make sure it was Sellarman. Sure enough; it was him. Eric made sure that Sellarman did not get a good look at him.

He drove to the back of the carwash and motioned for Josh to come over.

"Black Cadillac," Eric calmly said to Josh. "It's him."

"Let's do this," Josh said quickly. Then he ran back to the entrance. Eric parked in the next lot, grabbed some things from his car, and casually walked to the exit of the carwash. He kept his back turned to the cars coming out.

After a minute, Sellarman pulled up to Josh at the entrance.

"Deluxe wash today, sir?" Josh asked.

Sellarman handed Josh the exact change. No tip. That made Josh smile. He knew what was awaiting Sellarman.

"Have a nice day, sir," Josh said with a fake smile.

Sellarman rolled up the window without even looking at Josh. Josh started laughing out loud. He knew it was wrong, but couldn't control himself. He didn't try very hard to wash the Cadillac with his brush before it went into the carwash.

Josh knew that Cadillac was going to get very dirty, very soon.

After Sellarman's Cadillac was inside, Josh ran behind the building and gave Eric a thumbs up. Eric nodded and started to do what he had come there to do.

Sellarman was listening to the radio; NPR to be specific. But in the carwash, radio reception cut out, so his radio went silent.

It was dark in the carwash. First the soapy foam was sprayed all over the car. Sellarman couldn't see out the windows. He started to have the worst feeling. He felt trapped in the car.

He jumped when the big brushes came up and enveloped his car. He had no idea why he was so scared; he got his car washed every Friday at this time so it would look good for the weekend. Why was he so scared right now?

Sellarman had his hands on the steering wheel. He kept thinking about all the people he'd screwed. All the bribes he'd taken. All the careers he'd ruined. He had never had these thoughts. It was like his whole corrupt life was flashing before his eyes. He wanted to drive away, but he couldn't. He was trapped.

Finally, the brushes were done, and he could see out the windows. Only for a brief second, though, because then the rinse water spray started up. Now he couldn't see out the windows again. He kept his hands on the steering wheel. He wanted this car wash to end. He was actually starting to sweat. He had no idea why.

He saw a dark figure in the carwash and felt a surge of terror. Then he laughed at himself. It was just some worker in there. Relax, he said to himself.

The rinse was over now, and he could see out the window. He looked at the worker, who had his back turned to him. The dryers started up and blew hot air on his car. It was incredibly loud. Sellarman realized that no one could hear him in the carwash. Then a surge of adrenaline shot through him.

The worker turned around. He had an Obama mask on. Why would a worker have a Halloween mask on? Sellarman

tried to unlock his car door, and then he realized he couldn't leave his car.

The man in the mask pulled out a pistol and Sellarman's windshield exploded. Sellarman tried to dive out of the way, but he was in his seat with the seat belt on. He couldn't move. He just sat there in his seat. Powerless.

Now that the windshield was gone, it was even louder with the dryers going. The hot air was pounding in Sellarman's face as he sat trapped in his seat. He finally reached for the seat belt release and started to get out.

The man in the mask came up to Sellarman's door and shot out driver's side windshield. Little cubes of glass hit Sellarman in the face, but he didn't feel like he'd been shot. He was relieved.

Until he saw the knife. A big one. All he saw was that big blade. He felt a searing pain in his face. Then his neck. Then his chest. He saw a pink mist being blown around by the car dryer's powerful gusts.

He was passing out. He thought he saw the masked man pull out a gun. Then he felt a powerful impact on his head and a burning. Then everything went black.

Eric's job was almost done, but not quite. He let the Cadillac go a few more feet in the car wash to a point past the dryers. He pulled a piece of paper out of his pocket, which took a while because he was wearing gloves. He put it on Sellarman's mutilated body. It stuck to the blood pouring out of him. He'd never seen a dead person before, let alone one he just killed. He liked it. He liked it a lot.

Eric started to laugh. He couldn't stop. He thought about what the reaction would be when this bloody mess of a car came out the end of the car wash. And when the cops — if there were still any cops — read the paper now stuck to what was left of Sellarman's head.

“Pay up, bitch,” the handwriting on the paper said. Eric had written that on a copy of an email he had from the deposition. The email was from Sellarman to Browning and talked about a “25 pound sack of potatoes,” which was a thinly veiled reference to a \$25,000 bribe Sellarman was promising to get to Browning. By adding “pay up, bitch” to the email, the cops would think Browning did this. Eric laughed.

Eric calmly walked out of the end of the carwash and got into his car. He was leaving to go do more of this. It felt so good. Finally, things were getting done without all the lawsuits and corrupt judges. Finally.

As Eric was leaving the carwash, he looked in the rear view mirror and said, “This is for all the Ed Oleos.”