

# THE INTERN

A Ten-Minute Dramatic Duet

by  
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## CAST: *INTERN and POLITICIAN*

INTERN: Hello? Hello? Are you Senator Hammond?

POLITICIAN: Why, yes I am. Are you my new intern?

INTERN: That's me, Sir. **(They shake hands)** I'm so proud to meet your acquaintance...I mean, to make your acquaintance. Sir, I've honored of this...I...I...I've dreamed of this honor. I'm sorry...I'm a little nervous, finally meeting you face to face.

POLITICIAN: Thanks, but you can relax now.

INTERN: I know. It's just so overwhelming. I can't believe I'm here.

POLITICIAN: Sometimes I wish I wasn't, but that's another story. So, which name do you go by?

INTERN: Chris. My first name is Jordan, but most people call me Chris. Of course, if you want to call me Jordan, you're perfectly welcome. In fact, whatever you want to...

POLITICIAN: Woodlew...Woodlew...It seems like I've been through there a few times. Yes, I remember. Charming town. Whenever I go up to the northern part of the state, I end up traveling through Woodlew.

INTERN: Woodlawn, Sir. And it's in the southern section.

POLITICIAN: Oh, yes. That's right. Anyway, I found time to take a peek at your resume. Very impressive. First in your class. Several leadership awards. I think you'll be a nice addition to this office.

INTERN: I'll try to live up to your expectations, sir.

POLITICIAN: I'm sure you will. But for now, lighten up. We're not too formal in this office, unless we have to be. Oh, and it's not 'Sir' around here. Just call me Jack. Last term, the kid couldn't get comfortable dropping the 'Sir'. At first I bothered him about it, but later on I figured he sounded more natural being formal than calling me by my given name. Maybe if I train you early, you can get used to calling me Jack. Makes for a more relaxed atmosphere. Think you can do that for me?

INTERN: Sure, Jack.

POLITICIAN: Great! Save the 'Sir' for the senate chamber...Oh, and when important people are visiting. Otherwise, my best advice for you is to relax and be yourself.

INTERN: Thanks, Jack, and I can tell you, though I may have a lot to learn, I'll be the hardest worker you've ever had on your staff.

POLITICIAN: I'm sure you'll do nicely. You certainly seem to have everything going for you, short of practical experience.

INTERN: Actually, I do have a bit of experience in state politics. I did some volunteer work for Representative Meeks.

POLITICIAN: Good. I like that. Meeks is a solid man. But remember, until you've learned the ropes in our state capitol, you're still a babe in the woods. This place is unlike anything you've ever experienced.

INTERN: That's what I'm here for...to learn the ropes of real politics.

POLITICIAN: Don't let it scare you. The political ropes aren't that tough. I've been here for years, and chances are, after this term, I'll leave with my integrity in one piece. That's the one thing that amazes me. Every term seems to bring more and more scandal, yet I've managed to avoid the fray.

INTERN: With one exception.

POLITICIAN: Yes, with one exception. I can see you've done your homework.

INTERN: I believe in being prepared.

POLITICIAN: So I see. Just for your knowledge and peace of mind, my being exonerated had nothing to do with political ties. Some of the newspapers insinuated that I was saved by a strong political machine, but even here in the state's capitol, a few of us are actually innocent.

INTERN: Of all charges?

POLITICIAN: Of all charges. You see, Chris, when the opposition decides to go after you, they'll find something. When that happens, all you can do is sit back and hope that the ball of justice will land in your court.

INTERN: But your failure to take action concerning the Rickerson Landing Strip...didn't the committee consider that criminal negligence on your part?

POLITICIAN: They tried to cut my throat with it. But I didn't actually do anything wrong. All they could do was reprimand me for allowing those activities to go on. And for the most part, I truly didn't know what they were up to until the harm was done.

INTERN: But you knew about some of it?

POLITICIAN: Yes, I did. But in this business, it's often easier to look the other way. Let's just say it's practical for those of us who want to stay around for awhile.

INTERN: In government class, we held an informal debate. We took the subject of whether it's as immoral for a public official to let a crime be committed as it is to commit the crime himself or to be a party to it.

POLITICIAN: How did it come out?

INTERN: I won the debate. I was given the side that said an official should not be held accountable for failing to prevent someone else's crime. After all, there's so much to do...so many people to oversee. A person can't be expected to go to prison for being a bit lazy or for not knowing what everyone around him is doing.

POLITICIAN: I would have to agree with that outcome.

INTERN: I didn't. Oh, I argued my points well because that's the side I was given, but in the end, I believe that a public official is accountable, no matter what. The buck should stop at the top.

POLITICIAN: But in my case, I didn't even know until the deals were underway.

INTERN: True, but after you learned of the deal, you made no move to stop it...expose them...to bring them down...to do anything.

POLITICIAN: It was a tricky situation by then. I did nothing wrong...technically. They couldn't put me in jail for being too lazy to take action. Greed is a crime in this state. Laziness isn't or half the congressmen would be in prison right now.

INTERN: Well, I believe it's your responsibility...

POLITICIAN: Now listen...

INTERN: I'm sorry. I just enjoy debating politics. I know you're a good man. No one agrees on everything.

POLITICIAN: Well, while you're with me, I expect you to support me...my views...my ideas...100%. Got it?

INTERN: Sure. But I'll warn you, I'm a bit of an independent thinker.

POLITICIAN: You could have left off with the warning. I can see your idealistic views coming from a mile off. Anyway, as you know, this is going to be my last term in office, so I want it to be comfortable for everyone involved. You're in luck.

INTERN: Don't I know it. If I had gotten here one term later, I would have missed working with you.

POLITICIAN: I don't know if you'd be missing much.

INTERN: Don't be modest, Jack. The entire state will miss you when you step down. Meanwhile, I'm ready to learn it all. What bills will we be sponsoring? What important piece of legislation are you working on right now?

POLITICIAN: Nothing.

INTERN: Nothing?

POLITICIAN: Yes. I said nothing.

INTERN: But Sir...I mean, Jack.

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