



Behind the Stream
(missing chapter)

PRINCIPAL CHICANERY PANICS

R. J. DYSON



absolutelyunprofessional.com
Wadsworth, OH

© 2022 Imagination, creation and publication by Absolutely Unprofessional. All rights held onto by R. J Dyson and Absolutely Unprofessional. This book may not be reproduced, recreated, rewritten or reused in any manner beyond the authors intended purpose hind-or-henceforth without written permission and personal autograph by those personally and vocationally responsible for Absolutely Unprofessional and the creation of Behind the Stream.©

However, portions of Principal Chicanery Panics will be allowed for the use of brief quotations in a book review, scholarly journal, blog, website, magazine, newspaper, family holiday newsletter or personal poem to loved ones.

Art & logo by R. J Dyson. Cover and interior layout and design by Absolutely Unprofessional.

First Printing: 2022
Absolutely Unprofessional
Wadsworth, OH 44281
rjdysonsblog.com
absounpro.com



Principal Chicanery Panics

"The hall was eerily quiet. Heschel and Joanna had been whisked away to The Adavis Center for Progress for an intense round of re-education. Before being hauled off, Principal Chicanery had hoped to strike a deal with them. He believed that, like all students, one way or another, those two would see things his way and blindly serve the greater good of the Anti-Libertas agenda. He believed they would lead him to any remaining relics of that ancient faith or reveal any loose ends of The Old Party. That they would become obedient disciples of The Chamber.

They wouldn't.

Rising to his feet and brushing off the last bits of glass

that had fallen from the broken screen—the screen he had smashed with his device—he let out a resounding yell. A roar that strained his chest, scratched his throat, and echoed throughout the building. Rather than a release of anger, he grew more enraged. Throwing his arms in the air with clenched fists still holding shards of glass, he let out a wail that would have sent chills down the spine of even the mightiest warrior.

He stood there in the streaming sunlight, exhausted. His hands were cut deep and dripping fast with blood. Principal Chicanery calmly pulled out a faded and patched handkerchief, the same one his grandfather had used when he was a child. He wrapped the hand spewing more blood, then pressed his other wounded palm against it.

“I haven’t put my hands together like this in years,” he whispered, then sighed deeply. When he was a child visiting his grandfather, they faithfully said grace before each meal. They weren’t particularly religious, but they were thankful. They knew the world was bigger than their farm and that life was more mysterious than they could account for. They knew the Alphabet Coup, a once-powerful worldwide movement, the organization that spawned the Anti-Libertas, would take their land, livelihood, and voice away. His grandpa could sense the social tide turning. Yet they remained thankful.

Holding his hands up to his forehead, he closed his eyes and began to talk as if speaking to the glow. “I know why

you're here, and I won't accept it. You've never provided so much as an ounce of protection...of wisdom...of joy. You're nothing but a sham. A Fake. A demon-liar from the depths of Hades...and I hate you."

As if in response to his words, or his mood, the sunlight that had been streaming in through the stained-glass dome above faded. It turned a murky gray, like nighttime but without the peace or hope-filled rest. A mighty wind smashed into the old dome. Rain followed suit, pelting the ornate blue, red, and green glass designs with a deafening fury. The old brick building trembled and swayed. Yet Principal Chicanery didn't move a muscle.

"I rid the world of you once, and I can do it again," he growled as the storm beat down on the groaning chamber of justice. "You wouldn't help them when they begged you. You ignored their cries. You abandoned them! No... no...you didn't abandon them because you don't exist. You're an illusion, and that's why your people failed. And whatever I saw, whatever delusion those students are attempting to spread, well, I can beat it again."

His voice growled like thunder as lightning began to flash. The wind and the rain picked up steam. Only this lightning didn't just wash in from the dome above. This light poured in from every door, hall, and crevice within the auditorium. Each burst of light, each crack of thunder attempting to outdo the other.

The elder councilman's demeanor began to shift. His

face began to droop. He looked older all of a sudden. Beaten down. Scared.

“You don’t scare me! Do you hear me? You don’t scare me because you don’t exist!”

Whipping around with each flash of light, he swang his bloody fists out into the empty darkness engulfing him. In between the bursts of light, he thought he saw shadows moving, stalking him in the empty building. Traitors? Deplorables? he thought. Shaking and shouting, the no-yet-beaten principal ripped the blood-soaked handkerchief from his hand then threw it across the room.

The storm stopped.

The silence terrified him.

Realizing what he’d done, the mighty Principal Chicanery let out a cry then dashed toward his memento. Slipping and sliding on broken glass, he growled when he landed face-first on top of his childhood treasure. With a sigh of relief, the elder statesman rolled onto his back just in time to watch wide-eyed as it happened.

The room began to glow all around him. The intensity grew until it became unbearable to keep his eyes open. A blinding, perpetual camera flash sort of light. But it was the pulsating humming that turned his stomach. Like the horn of a runaway freight train miles away and coming fast. He began to sweat large, unnatural globs of sweat. The room grew hotter as the light grew brighter and the

sound pulsed louder. The earth began to shake. Not the shaking you feel when you're cold, but the type of violent heaving that happens when you finally give in and throw up after fighting the feeling way too long.

The elite statesman was helpless as the world rocked. Back and forth, he slid on broken glass atop the polished floor. The light began to flicker as the noise cut in and out like a sound system blowing speakers. Opening his eyes to catch a glimpse, he watched in horror as the stained glass dome exploded upward, as though a microburst swelled up within the building, relieving its pressure in the old dome.

Glass went everywhere inside and out. The metal framing between the window panes exploded into shrapnel, shredding his clothes and embedding itself in his skin over the front of his body. The flashing lights and chaotic sounds stopped so suddenly he could hardly catch his breath in the calm.

"I won't forget them," he muttered into the bloody rag. "I'll stop you again."