

RISK TOLERANCE

by
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INT. MASON'S OFFICE, CAPITAL PARTNERS - NIGHT

City lights shimmer outside the high rise corner office window. It's quiet on the floor.

Handsome investment banker MASON (29), shuts down his computer and grabs his suit jacket off the back of his chair. He turns as

JARED (33) enters, shuts the door behind him, and leans against it, blocking it.

MASON

I don't care how hot she is, I'm not going out for drinks. Find another wingman.

JARED

We're not going anywhere.

MASON

Cut the crap, man. I have to go. We have to set up for Aubrey's birthday tomorrow.

He moves to walk past Jared.

JARED

Our golden goose Elbenhaur Securities just filed Chapter Eleven.

Mason stops, stunned.

MASON

What?

JARED

Not hitting the wires until Monday morning, but all computer accounts just froze investment activity.

MASON

Are you sure? I just logged in an hour ago.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JARED

So did I. My buddy Christoph in I.T. detected the computer firewall five minutes ago.

Mason slams his hand on the desk.

MASON

We're screwed. We'll never see that money again. I exposed us three quarter mil.

JARED

Me too.

MASON

That's triple my salary. Henmann will throw us out before he finishes his morning coffee.

He turns to the window, his mind churning.

JARED

I'm already upside down on my mortgage. Hello bankruptcy.

MASON

We're refinancing, in the middle of signatures. They get a whiff of this--

JARED

Christoph hasn't told a soul yet.

Mason turns back to him.

MASON

What are you saying?

JARED

We have options. That's why you can't leave right now.

MASON

What kind of options?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JARED

The only evidence we allocated those investments is our paper files, and the electronic signature.

MASON

Yeah.

JARED

We shred the files. Now. We're the last ones here, and I know where Brandy hides the key.

MASON

Are you crazy?! No way--I'm not going down for fraud.

JARED

Christoph can alter the electronic signature to trace back to Richard Singleton instead of us.

MASON

He's dead.

JARED

Exactly! Who knows what kind of stupid investments a suicidal bipolar maniac would make!

MASON

Christoph can really make it look like that? Foolproof?

JARED

Absolutely. They blame Richard for it, and go after his estate. Remember how he destroyed his files before he ended it? It's perfect. Boom. We're clean.

MASON

And how do you silence Christoph? He knows everything.

JARED

And I know everything about him. I can guarantee his silence.

MASON

Guarantee?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JARED

I report his--

MASON

I don't want to know.

JARED

See? Mason, it's our only option.

Mason stares at the glimmering lights.

MASON

I can't. I got a family. If it doesn't work--

JARED

You have to.

MASON

I'm telling Henmann.

JARED

You're not taking me down self-righteous boy. Remember, I know about the Asian chick.

MASON

That was years ago. Besides, I told Whitney.

JARED

And what happened when you fessed up?

Mason looks at Jared, eyes cold.

JARED

Exactly.

(Beat)

Meet me in the records room in five. We've got some serious shredding to do.

He exits the room as Mason slumps into his chair.

INT. RECORDS ROOM - NIGHT

Jared feeds papers through a shredder as bleary-eyed Mason approaches with a file box.

MASON

This is the last box.

JARED

Good. I can handle it from here. Make sure you leave your laptop in your office, and Christoph will wipe it clean on Sunday after he syncs the servers.

MASON

That's it?

JARED

Home free.

(Beat)

You did the right thing for your family. They'll appreciate having a house to live in. Go plan that party.

Mason takes a deep breath, then leaves.

INT. MASON'S HOUSE, HOME OFFICE - DAY

The sounds of a children's birthday party emanate from the living room as Mason stares out the window of his home office.

AUBREY (7) runs into his office, crying.

AUBREY

Daddy--help me!

He lifts her onto his lap.

MASON

What's up, honey?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AUBREY

I spilled on the couch but Mommy said to keep drinks outside. Tell her Jimmy did it. Please?

MASON

Aubrey, I'm not gonna lie for you. We always tell the truth in this family, remember?

The realization hits him.

AUBREY

Daddy, don't get me in trouble on my birthday! Please, I love you so much.

MASON

I love you too. Let's tell Mommy together and I'll help you clean it up, okay?

AUBREY

(disappointed)
Okay.

He puts her down and holds her hand as they walk out.

INT. MASON'S OFFICE, CAPITAL PARTNERS - DAY

Mason slips into his office and grabs the laptop off his desk. He pauses, then turns to exit but sees

Jared and CHRISTOPH (37) walking down the hall toward him. Jared spies the laptop.

CHRISTOPH

(Surprised)
Mason, I didn't know you'd be here. I haven't done yours yet.

JARED

What are you doing, Mason?

Mason quickly walks toward the stairwell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JARED

Don't be stupid!

CHRISTOPH

I need to wipe your computer!

JARED

Your computer's the only link to the transactions. They'll blame you.

MASON

It's alright. I'll handle it.

He opens the stairwell door.

JARED

You walk out that door, you're never coming back. You're finished, you understand?

Mason looks at him.

JARED

I'm clean now, no trace. You'll be the only fall guy, and it won't be a soft landing.

He slowly advances, preparing to snatch the laptop.

MASON

Maybe I'll bounce.

Mason vaults into the stairwell and hurtles down the stairs. Jared lunges after him, but Christoph grabs his arm.

CHRISTOPH

Security camera on the first floor exit. They'll know we were here.

Jared eases up.

JARED

His loss.

INT. OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

Various STAFF MEMBERS sit at the table, chattering over coffee. Jared makes small talk, while Mason stands at the door, anxious.

He sees hard-nosed HENMANN (53) approach the room, and steps outside to intercept him.

MASON

Mr. Henmann, I need to warn you--

HENMANN

I got your message.

MASON

Sir, I made a mistake--

HENMANN

Conference room. Now.

He gestures Mason inside, then follows Mason in. Mason takes a seat as Henmann slams the door. Everyone immediately shuts up.

HENMANN

We've got a serious problem.

He scans the faces and stops at Mason.

HENMANN

Elbenhaur Securities declared bankruptcy. Apparently, someone ambitiously exposed us far more than authorized.

Other staff members notice Henmann staring at Mason. He feels people's eyes boring into him, especially Jared's.

HENMANN

Mason, do you have anything to say?

Mason stands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MASON

I take full responsibility for that transaction. My due diligence was faulty, at best.

Henmann looks around the room.

HENMANN

I have to ask you to leave this meeting. Now.

MASON

(Nodding)

I'd like a moment to grab my personal effects, please.

He walks toward the door.

HENMANN

I don't think you understand. I want you on immediate damage control with our clients.

Mason pauses.

MASON

(confused)

You're not firing me?

HENMANN

You gave me a heads up, and we just invested \$750,000 in your education. You're staying at least until you earn that back for us.

Henmann gives him a "you dodged a bullet" look. Then he turns back to the staff with a serious face.

HENMANN

Jared. Security is waiting outside.

Jared glances at his co-workers, then Henmann.

Henmann opens the door, and two GUARDS enter and circle around toward Jared.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JARED

I think you must be mistaken.

HENMANN

You failed to realize that the
interns have been scanning our
paper documents all summer.
Digital copies are off-site now.

Jared looks panicked. The Guards each grab an arm.

HENMANN

I don't take destruction of
evidence lightly. We'll be
pressing charges to the full
extent of the law.

They escort him out, and Jared glares at Mason as he
passes.

Mason takes a breath and surveys the room.

HENMANN

Mason. Damage control.

Mason nods and rushes out.