

Chapter 1

From End to Beginning

The taxi moved like a boxer fighting off exhaustion as it made its way through the maze of New York City's streets, dipping and swaying with the imperfections in the weathered asphalt. As in most east-coast cities, a thick mist rose from the street's manhole covers into the November sky. As the cab passed through one of the misty clouds, it left behind a beautiful swirl, remarkably symmetric and tenacious. The swirl ascended into the chilly night air just in time to pass above a car carrying pursuing Paparazzi.

Tiffany Windsor-O'Reilly felt resigned to the climax of the long ordeal. For her it had been a year—her petite southern confidant, Dee Dee Smith, had endured it for eighteen months. Looking over at her, Tiffany sensed how tired Dee Dee was.

The Paparazzi weren't tired. They were energized by the biggest story in New York. There seemed to be no limit to their cynical pursuit for a fleeting glimpse of Dee Dee—for one glorious opportunity to shove a camera into her face. Shopping at Bloomingdales and Macys had been a nightmare. They had even followed Tiffany and Dee Dee into the elevators, always armed with their Minoltas. Tiffany had never seen such blatant rudeness.

For three days the Paparazzi had followed them everywhere they went. Running red lights and weaving in and out of lanes, they persisted in their quest.

As the cab came to rest at a light, Tiffany looked around in all directions. She had developed a watchful eye in order to protect her vulnerable friend. Tiffany had no regrets because the struggle had been worth it. The public now believed Dee Dee, and it appeared likely that President deWitt would be impeached for the lies he told in trying to deny her a day in court. While Dee Dee had sealed her own fate regarding an appearance in court, his fate was most certainly not in his own hands. How odd fate can be. Impeachment had never even crossed Tiffany's mind.

"The arrogance of the man is astounding!" thought Tiffany. From the very beginning he had refused to offer a dime more than \$500,000 to settle the case with Dee Dee. His lawyer, Mike Winderside, had never considered any compromise on the amount, which was precisely the limit deWitt's lawsuit-insurance policy allowed. Dee Dee's lawyers had insisted on \$1,500,000 but had made no headway despite all the effort and time they had invested.

Things looked grim after a federal district judge threw the case out in early July. Dee Dee's lawyers weren't planning on appealing—only after a tremendous amount of pressure on Tiffany's part did they change their minds. She felt very strongly that the judge's decision would be overturned. Tiffany continued to encourage Dee Dee to hang in there because she was certain Dee Dee would earn her day in court. In the core of her soul, Tiffany really believed justice would prevail.

Dee Dee's lawyers felt differently. They had told Dee Dee that Winderside was back to offering \$500,000, and that because the case had been thrown out she didn't figure to do any better. "How irritating these men had become," thought Tiffany.

“That’s crazy,” she told them. “We could have settled for \$500,000 before we ever hired you. You’re recommending capitulation after all of our efforts. Don’t be ridiculous.”

She also felt there was private money available, perhaps as much as two and a half million dollars. It was money that would be paid on the condition that it would never be made public. There was a real possibility that she could collect four million dollars—one and a half in public and the rest surreptitiously. With the chill of impeachment hastening a harsh winter at the White House, it was clear that deWitt was feeling pressure to settle.

When the light changed to green, Tiffany wondered if the Paparazzi ever considered how unsettling the pressure they applied might be. “What’s the word that momentarily escapes me,” Tiffany reflected—the word she had so often used to describe the appearance of logic and liberal in the same sentence? Tiffany’s dominating emotion was that she was tired—relieved but tired.

Noticing that their car was still close behind, Tiffany’s head cleared and the words came to her—“Considerate Paparazzi is an *oxymoron*.” If she said it to their face they would probably mutter something about their IQ. Of course they’re smart enough to know about faces, having mastered the art of being in Tiffany’s and Dee Dee’s. But that is the hallmark of the New York media. Pushy, obnoxious and invasive must be included in the job description for these people. Willingness to shove people probably enhances a New York media person’s résumé. This city is the worst place on Earth for a story to break if it’s about you—just the opposite of San Diego. Tiffany would be so happy to get back home.

Everyone in New York seemed to be in cahoots with these range-of-the-moment creatures. Tiffany had hoped that she and Dee Dee could sneak into town. Their flight had landed in New York City three days ago a little after midnight. They were coming

to town to do a taped interview for a major television network show. Because Tiffany was constantly concerned about Dee Dee's safety with so many crazies around, she really didn't want anybody to know they were arriving. Yet, despite all of her precautions, the *New York Post* found out and they were waiting for Tiffany and Dee Dee at the gate. Tiffany suspected later that it was the limo company the TV show had hired. They had probably offered the *Post* a scoop for a price. But if any newspaper was to be there, Tiffany was glad it was the *Post*—they had usually been good to Tiffany and Dee Dee.

The price the television network had offered was worth the trip for Dee Dee. Tiffany had negotiated an excellent deal that permitted them to conduct a four-hour interview that would be aired as a two-part special. But it had been brutal.

The interviewer had been condescending and arrogant. At one point in the interview, Dee Dee burst into tears. Tiffany asked them to stop taping, but they refused. Only when she demanded that they stop taping did they comply. They asked Dee Dee if she was going to settle with deWitt and she told them she was not. After the taping was done Tiffany and Dee Dee walked back to the hotel. They needed fresh air and time alone away from TV crews, cramped areas and arrogant reporters.

Tiffany remembered the very moment—as she and Dee Dee walked from the studio to the hotel—when Tiffany's cell phone rang. It was Tiffany's husband calling from California. It was a little after 4:00 pm.

He spoke just six words: "Let me speak to Dee Dee."

Tiffany watched her face as she listened. Dee Dee's expression told Tiffany nothing. Bits and pieces of the conversation told Tiffany that something big was in the works. What neither Tiffany nor Dee Dee had known was that Tiffany's husband had

been asked by one of Dee Dee's lawyers to negotiate with Mike Winderside. He had not played much of a role in Tiffany's dealings with Dee Dee except in the beginning when Tiffany was coordinating with the team of lawyers.

Winderside liked Tiffany's husband and vice versa. He was now asked to bring the case to a conclusion. Tiffany's husband had gotten Winderside to agree to "splitting the difference" so that the settlement would be one million dollars.

When Tiffany and Dee Dee arrived at the hotel, they could hardly get through. There were more than a hundred media people outside the lobby. They had already heard about the deal—Winderside had leaked it to the press.

When they finally made their way to the room, Dee Dee asked Tiffany, "What should I do Tiffy?"

"What do you want to do Dee Dee?" was Tiffany's reply. And then she added, "If it was me, I'd keep fighting because it's the right thing to do. I wouldn't give up the battle because I'm tired. But that's me—you're different. What do you want to do?"

Dee Dee's answer was blunt. "Tiffy, I wanna settle."

To underscore the implications of her decision Tiffany said, "You're not going to get hardly anything out of this, and you've gone so long. Why settle?"

Dee Dee gave her reason in two words: "I'm tired."

"I think it's a mistake, but if that's what you want to do, I'll back you 100 percent." Tiffany felt her exhaustion.

"I wanna do that, and I neva want anyone to tell me othe'wise. It's what I wanna do," Dee Dee said with an ominous tone of finality.

Speaking barely above a whisper, Tiffany uttered the words, "All right." She concluded the saga by saying, "It's your decision and yours alone."

Tiffany called her husband in California and told him to go for it. This ended Dee Dee's eighteen-month ordeal and set Tiffany free to return to a normal life. The two women celebrated the end of the ordeal with a visit to a restaurant across town. Sneaking out the back entrance to the hotel, they had eluded the Paparazzi and eaten in peace. The tranquility ended the moment they entered the taxi to return to their room.

The cab finally arrived at the hotel with the Paparazzi in tow. With the help of hotel staff and security, Tiffany and Dee Dee quickly made their way through the mindless media crowd and headed back to the room to pack. It was comforting for Tiffany to know that in another day she would be back home.



The news of Dee Dee's settlement with deWitt had traveled across the country, and around the world in fact, in a matter of seconds. She had reached her decision on November 13.

Republicans were still reeling from their loss of several seats in the House of Representatives. Now Dee Dee Smith had settled the case that had triggered impeachment hearings. Armed with these two political aces, could the president spin his way out of an impeachment? Many Americans feared the worst—that the answer was *yes he could*.

A tenacious writer from El Paseo, California was one of the Americans who feared that deWitt would avoid impeachment. He could no longer remain silent. On November 14 he made an outline for a new book. For him, Dee Dee's decision was the last straw.

Chapter 4

Rocco's Mission

“Call for you on line two, Mr. Sarducci.”

“Okay, I’ll pick up in my office,” replied El Paseo City Councilman Rocco Sarducci. He slouched into his chair and paused to catch his breath. Lugging his 335-pound body up two flights of stairs was such a chore. Rocco readily admitted that it was the curse of being Italian. He really enjoyed eating and had never even considered the idea of dieting. He had an impish face, made unconvincingly threatening by thick black eyebrows and chronic deep black bags under his eyes. At 42, his full head of hair and well-trimmed mustache had no signs of gray.

Rocco rubbed his eyes and brushed his mustache to make sure none of the sugar from the donut he had just eaten remained. He took a sip of his morning coffee and picked up the phone.

“Rocco Sarducci—how may I help you?”

“Rocco, this is Mort Stalinsky. Do you have any idea how many people went to the Goodman Rally at Ben Frank’s place?”

Stalinsky was a retired high-school teacher who had invested wisely in the stock market. He lived in a 5,000 square foot hillside home in the northwestern corner of El Paseo. He had hosted a

coffee for Sarducci during his election campaign and contributed \$500. Rocco considered him to be a bit of a pest, always worrying about trivia—a typical *nouveau riche* Democrat.

“Sure do Mort. I know about everything that happens in El Paseo. They had almost 3,000.”

“Yeah. I heard Ben Frank tell the caterer there were 2,800 and something,” said Stalinsky.

“So, what’s the big deal? Frank is a kook and his right-wing pals at KGOP blasted it all over the airwaves for three weeks. They just stirred up all the deWitt haters.”

“But, Chad Dimpleman only had 50 show up for his announcement last week. I know, ’cause I was there. You said Goodman was dead meat. 2,800 is a lot more than 50.” Talking very fast, Mort was in an agitated state that Sarducci described as a “full-Stalinsky.”

Sarducci rolled his eyes and took another sip of his coffee. “Calm down, Mort. The fix is in. No way Goodman beats Dimpleman next year. deWitt and his Hollywood buddies have sworn to get that sneaky SOB for trying to get him canned.”

“How they gonna do it if he has so much support?”

“They only charged five bucks, and that included food. Trust me, Goodman takes a fall next November. Gotta go now.”

Sarducci thought to himself, “You don’t know the half of it. Dimpleman will have millions of dollars, the unions will be getting out the vote with a vengeance and we control the press.” But, Mort Stalinsky was small potatoes and a few nice words here and there were good enough to maintain his loyalty and, more importantly, his financial support. There was no need to tell him more.

Looking around his sparsely furnished office, Sarducci still felt the exhilaration of his victory in the March election. His

eyes focused on the business card attached to the folder on his desk. Eli Cohen, PhD. . .Deputy Field Coordinator. . .Democratic National Committee—he owed a lot to the DNC.

“These guys really know how to win,” he said to himself.

He had received a record setting number of votes in the City Council election that had swept two Republicans out of office, replacing them with two Democrats. The DNC had been correct in their prediction that El Paseo was ripe for a Democrat takeover. Despite a 63 to 25 percent Republican registration advantage, three of the five City Council Members were Democrats.

With their recent election, Sarducci and retired businessman Dean Lewis joined Council Member Jean Carr to form the Democrat majority. Moderate Republican Barbara Kilro had been re-elected. She and Arnie Benedict now constituted the Republican minority.

He had done his political calculations and identified a potential voting coalition that would permit him to dominate the City Council. While Rocco hadn't figured Lewis out yet, he seemed to have an affinity for Kilro's ideas. This suggested that trying to operate strictly on party lines would yield unreliable results.

However, a coalition across party lines held promise. Because they had both joined the City Council six years ago, Carr and Benedict were good friends and usually voted the same way on most issues. Neither was politically astute and both appeared to be easily influenced. This strongly suggested that Sarducci could advance the DNC agenda through a voting coalition with fellow Democrat Carr and Republican Benedict. Additionally, Kilro and Benedict had an established track record of opposition that bode well for Sarducci's plans. If he could win the confidence of Benedict, while Kilro and Lewis might be nuisances, their interference would have little bearing on City Council decisions.

“Winning people’s confidence—that’s one of my strongest traits,” thought Sarducci.

Sarducci didn’t like Kilro because she was smart and often criticized him for what she claimed was his overriding concern for his own political aims. She had beaten him by just two votes in a special election the year before that had been held to fill an open seat.

The original margin had been three votes, and a recount had been held. On DNC advice, Sarducci had his lawyers monitor the recount with cameras capturing every move of the recounters. “Intimidation’s an excellent motivator, and it will keep those Republicans honest,” they said. The presence of cameras during the recount was not reported in the local papers.

“How clever the DNC operatives had been,” thought Sarducci. Make friends with the local papers, they had stressed. If you have them on your side, the Republicans will have a lot less influence. Sarducci had been very successful on this score. The well established newspaper, the *Foothill Gazette*, had a liberal Republican publisher and a Democrat editor. Rocco had charmed both of them with his middle-of-the-road message.

The upstart *El Paseo Review* was a much easier sell. Founded and owned by far-left Democrats, the paper had an abundance of liberal writers. Sarducci could “let his hair down” with these folks who represented the best of El Paseo’s true-believer liberals.

“Mr. Sarducci, Dr. Cohen is here to see you,” said the voice over the intercom.

“Send him in, please.”

Rising quickly to meet Eli Cohen as he entered the office, Sarducci knocked his coffee cup off of the desk. The searing liquid burned his foot as it seeped through his sock.

“Oh, damn it!” Rocco exclaimed.

Closing the door quietly behind him, Cohen smiled and said, "I hope you don't do that at City Council meetings, Rocco. Appearances, you know."

Startled and embarrassed, Sarducci snapped, "Not funny Eli!" Regaining his composure, he added, "How long after leaving McDonald's can you sue them for their hot coffee?"

"I'm afraid the statute of limitations has passed, Rocco. Are you going to invite me to sit down?"

"Oh yeah, of course. Please have a seat." Pressing the button on the intercom to his secretary, Sarducci said, "Bring in a towel or something. My coffee spilled all over the floor."

Waiting for the secretary to mop up the mess Sarducci had made, Eli Cohen remained silent. Standing just five feet four inches, his deep baritone voice suggested a much taller man to people who spoke with him on the telephone. His gray hair matched his scholarly demeanor, but made him look much older than 45. His beak-like nose gave his face the appearance of always looking down, even when—as he usually had to do—he tilted his head upward to focus on another person's eyes.

"What a bore this man is," thought Cohen. The bookshelves were already messy even though he had only occupied the office for three months. And it wasn't because of an overabundance of books. There were binders with City Ordinances and a few volumes on labor law and regulations. But, the majority of the shelf space was cluttered with newspapers. Sarducci had become a publicity hound, and had saved every issue of the *Foothill Gazette* and the *El Paseo Review* that mentioned his name.

A framed newspaper clipping hung in full view of every visitor seated in front of Sarducci's desk. The headline read "Sarducci wins with record vote!" Below the headline was a picture of Rocco with his arms reaching upward in the shape of a V.

“Why can’t the Democratic Party attract a better class of people,” thought Cohen. He wondered why the elite of the Ivy League, such as he, always seemed to be shackled with the likes of Rocco Sarducci. He completed this thought as the secretary closed the door leaving him alone with Sarducci.

“I’m so pleased with your victory, Rocco. Of all the Democratic Missionaries I have helped, I’m proudest of you. I brag about you all the time. How are you?” Cohen put on his warmest smile to stress how much he meant what he had just said.

“I like thinking of myself as a missionary. El Paseo isn’t the South Pacific—but there are plenty of Republican souls to save. We made a big step forward in March.”

“Two steps forward, Rocco, and one step back as a great philosopher has said,” corrected Cohen.

“What was the step back?”

“Why, your loss last year, of course. Replacing two Republicans with two Democrats counts as two steps forward. It’s really quite simple, you see.”

“I’m not sure how good a Democrat Dean Lewis is, Eli. He’s unpredictable and talks like a Republican sometimes. But, I’ve got a plan.”

Leaning forward, Cohen commanded, “Tell me about your plan Rocco.” The expression on his face conveyed the kind of concern a father might have with a teenage son who had just decided to have his tongue pierced.

Sensing Cohen’s uneasiness, Rocco responded, “Don’t worry, you taught me well. I don’t trust Lewis. I think he and Barbara Kilro are going to be a problem. Jean Carr is a solid liberal. That leaves Arnie Benedict. I’ve checked him out and I can tell you he can be led. His rep is he votes the way the last person he’s talked to says. But, best of all, he and Carr are thick. They both

got elected six years ago, so they came in together. Now, they're all that's left of the old guard. I think me and Carr can work with him."

"Have any Republican friends who can influence him when you're not around?"

"Yeah, yeah I do. A guy named Vince Tratoria—real right-wing nut who's the self-proclaimed voice of the Republican Party in El Paseo. We belong to the same church and he likes me. And Benedict's one of his buddies. Great idea Eli, I'll get Tratoria to help out. He doesn't like Kilro, and I can use that as a wedge."

Relieved, Cohen concluded by saying, "Right on the mark Rocco. You just gave me more ammunition to use at the DNC. You have a bright future as a Democrat. Now, let's get down to business—I'm on a tight schedule this morning. Harry Welsh has decided to run for Dimpleman's State Senate seat. That means his State Assembly seat is open. He likes Jean Carr and wants her to run for the Assembly. Think she'll do it?"

Sarducci had heard this rumor and asked Jean Carr about it. She admitted that she and Welsh had discussed the idea at dinner two weeks ago. Her husband had given his blessing—two million dollars worth—and she had agreed to run. He had guessed that this was the real purpose of this hastily scheduled meeting.

"It's a done deal—she's in. So are Mr. Carr's dollars." he said with a smug smile.

"Okay. Now, you've gained control of the local papers, right?"

"Sure have. I say jump and the *Gazette* and *Review* say, 'How high?' I haven't tried to have anything spiked yet, but I'm sure I'll be able to when it really matters." Rocco was nodding up and down.

"Must you use such trite phrases Rocco? Oh, nuts, there I go picking on you again. Sorry about that. Look, just make sure you

impress them that she's a real moderate. Push the fact that she's a Democrat who's been elected twice in a heavily Republican city, the mayor stuff and all that." Eli Cohen enjoyed giving marching orders.

"Any idea who she'll be running against?" asked Rocco.

"In the Primary it'll be Al Phonia. He's the California Democratic Party's pick. Came close to beating Goodman last time 'round. She'll have to spend a lot to beat him. She may have to play a little hardball, too." Cohen ran his finger across his throat as he finished speaking.

"She's prepared—we talked about it. How about the General Election?"

"Well, there are rumblings that it will be Tiffany Windsor-O'Reilly. She could be tough if the lunatic fringe rallies behind her. She might be able to pull money from all over the country to help her win."

Rocco saw an opportunity to sound smart. "The same people who want to help Goodman?"

"Yes, indeed."

Cohen's tone said he had hit pay dirt. "Well, that means they'll both be trying to dip into the same well."

"Yes, Rocco, that's right. And the smart money says Goodman gets most of it. He's more of a national hero to the Republican faithful. Windsor-O'Reilly isn't as visible. She spent most of her time on cable news stations, so her name recognition isn't as high as Goodman's. The DNC doesn't think she can come close to matching Carr's money."

"So, what do you want me to do? How can I help?"

"Give her all the help you can. Most importantly, make sure there's no bad press. She's really big on education, which is why Welsh likes her. Anybody criticizes the El Paseo school system,

you strike back. Get local Democrats to help write rebuttals. If they go negative about the Council, call for people to calm down.”

“You can count on me, Eli.”

“I knew I could, Rocco. I’ll be in touch.”

As Cohen walked out of his office, Rocco Sarducci wondered what it was about Eli Cohen that left him with a queasy stomach every time they had been together.

“Here’s a fresh cup of coffee, Mr. Sarducci,” Rocco’s secretary announced. “I just brewed another pot.”

“Oh, thanks. You’re a sweetheart.”

Sipping the coffee, he put his feet up on his desk and leaned back in his chair. He reflected on his first meeting with Cohen seven years ago on a cold December morning.

The air was brisk next to the Delaware River in Old New Castle. The chill winds of winter had descended on the east coast, as evidenced by yellow and brown leaves on the area’s trees. The grass in the park by the wharf was green. But, it was only a matter of time. The coming weeks would bring frozen soil that would deliver the blades to a fate similar to that of the leaves.

As Rocco drove up to the *Armitage Inn*, he spotted Fistin Wallace’s Corvette in the parking lot. It bore an AFL-CIO bumper sticker that read “Proud to be a Union Thug!” Although the slogan had probably been selected in jest, Rocco thought it was very appropriate for the driver of this particular car.

He had met Fistin Wallace at a union rally three weeks ago, protesting the use of non-union labor on New Jersey highway construction projects. The union faithful had been anything but, and only six people had shown up to picket public hearings in the auditorium of a Cherry Hill high school. Rocco had organized his own group of six to join the picketing ranks, mainly because there was bad blood between him and the committee chairman.

Wallace, who also lived in Cherry Hill, was so grateful for the unexpected doubling of his picketing ranks that he invited Rocco and his wife to dinner. While they ate, Rocco told Wallace that they would be moving to Southern California soon because his wife had landed a high-paying job with a Carsontown company. From this point on, it had been an odd evening.

Although he could hardly be described as a cultured intellectual, Wallace talked about the missionaries who had changed Hawaii and the South Pacific. Rambling on in a confusing manner, he said the Democratic Party was a lot like the “carriers of the word of God” in the nineteenth century. The other part of the evening that Rocco thought odd was Wallace’s intense interest in their impending move to California. A week later, Fistin Wallace called Rocco.

“Rocco, I got a man you gotta meet. I’m talkin’ big time.”

“Whaddya mean?” asked Rocco.

“I mean somebody straight from deWitt. Ever hearda Mike Winderside?”

“Sure, he’s one of deWitt’s PR guys—on TV all the time. You want me to meet him?” Rocco felt the butterflies in his stomach.

“No, Rocco. He wants to meet you—two weeks from now across the river. Interested?”

“Do blacks vote for Democrats? Are you kidding?”

Wallace laughed. “Half my members is black, man—and they’s a lot smarter than my white guys when it comes to votin’. I actually got a couple white guys who always vote Republican!”

“Sad! When and where do I meet Winderside? And, by the way, what’s he want anyway?”

“I’ll let him say what for. Two weeks from today at 9:00 am—Old New Castle across the Delaware—the *Armitage Inn*. Okay?”

Rocco concluded the conversation by saying, "Everything's copesetic—see you there."

The drive from Cherry Hill, New Jersey across the river to New Castle, Delaware had taken just over an hour. Rush hour traffic had not been much of a problem. Parking next to Fistin Wallace's Corvette, Rocco noted that he was fifteen minutes early. "No problem since Fistin's already here," he thought. Arming his car's alarm, he spotted his union friend waving from behind a window.

The warmth of the room engulfed Rocco from the moment the door closed behind him. Fistin Wallace shook his hand in greeting and said, "We can go upstairs—they said bring you up when you got here." The stairway creaked as the two men ascended. Wallace was nearly as heavy as Sarducci although, at six foot four, he was a large, stocky man.

The door of the *White Rose Room* opened almost immediately in response to Wallace's rapping. Eli Cohen motioned to them.

"Come on in boys."

Situated on the west wing of the second floor, the room has a magnificent view of the Delaware River. Although not visible from the room, the double spans of the Delaware Memorial Bridge connecting Delaware and New Jersey dominate the view from the nearby wharf. Entering the spacious room, Rocco's eyes first focused on a high king size four poster bed draped in a soft white fabric. Across the room he recognized the profile of a man he had seen on television many times, Mike Winderside, seated in an intimate nook next to a bay window.

Eli Cohen said, "Hello Fistin." Turning to Rocco and offering his hand, he added, "And you must be Rocco Sarducci. I'm Eli Cohen of the DNC."

"Glad to meet you Mr. Cohen."

“Actually, it’s *Dr. Cohen*, Rocco—like in Yale PhD.”

“Sorry Dr. Cohen. I didn’t know,” Rocco answered sheepishly.

“What’s all the fuss over there Eli? Bring our guests over here so they can enjoy the view.” Winderside’s voice was precisely as it sounded on television.

He would be a handsome man according to many were it not for a large beige-colored growth beneath the left side of his nose. Like Cohen, he was surprisingly small in stature, standing five foot five. His brownish beard and hair had veins of gray that matched the overcast morning sky. As he bent over to pick up the spoon he had dropped, Rocco noticed that Winderside had a small bald spot near the top of his head that was concealed by a brown tint. “I wonder if it’s shoe polish,” thought Rocco.

Winderside had a reputation for being very smart. He was a Harvard lawyer who had suddenly appeared in public when the deWitt administration took control of the U. S. Government. He would eventually gain national fame by defending the president against Dee Dee Smith. He was a formidable debater with a condescending manner toward his opponents and a belligerent demeanor that often found him talking over them.

Four chairs had been arranged around a small table that had a pitcher of hot coffee, a small tray of pastries and four sets of cups and small plates. “Shall I pour?” asked Cohen as the three men slid into their seats.

“Yes,” answered Winderside who spoke with a pronounced Boston accent. “Rocco, I am pleased to make your acquaintance. So good of you to come.”

“I’m honored to be here, Mr. Winderside.”

“Call me Mike.”

“Okay Mike.” Rocco was beaming.

As he poured coffee for everyone, Cohen related a little of the history of the *Armitage Inn*.

“Gentlemen, you might be interested in knowing occupants of this room have watched ships sailing up and down the Delaware for nearly 300 years. Although the *Inn* was built in 1732, one of the rooms on the main floor was actually built in the 1600’s. They say William Penn first set foot in the New World just a few feet from the *Inn*’s front door.”

“Perhaps most pertinent to our purpose today,” added Winder-side, “is the role the house played during the American Revolutionary War. Zachariah Van Leuvenigh bought the property in 1765. He was a patriot during the War. Post riders, carrying information about the progress of the War, would stop to give Van Leuvenigh the latest news. He gave them comfort and sped them on their way.”

“Yes, indeed” said Cohen. “And now we’re engaged in a new revolution—the deWitt revolution.”

“In a very real sense, it is also a war,” continued Winder-side. “And, just as the sophisticated British Army of the late eighteenth century lost to the ragtag Colonial street fighters, so the Republicans are sitting ducks for our side. A Republican protest is so rare it’s worthy of a front-page headline. The Republicans can’t hold a candle to a union picket line, Fistin—wouldn’t you agree?”

“No way,” Fistin responded.

“So, our opponent is weak when it comes to hand-to-hand combat,” continued Winder-side. “But, he’s also rich and that’s always been a problem for our side. The good news is, Buford deWitt’s figured out one way to turn their greed against them. Have I gotten your attention Rocco?”

“You certainly have Mr.—I mean Mike. Tell me more.” After a pause, he added, “Please.”

“There are parts of this country that like the idea of what is called slow growth. It’s popular in highly urbanized areas that have wealthy suburbs. The suburbs are usually heavily Republican by registration. There is a battle in such areas between contractors who want to build more homes and residents who want to resist further development. By and large, the contractors are Republicans. While many of the wealthiest homeowners are Republicans, increasing numbers are now Democrats—yuppies, if you will. Are you with me Rocco?”

“Yes,” answered Rocco. “How does slow growth come into the picture?”

“Excellent question,” replied Winderside. “The point is this. Slow growth aims at limiting the building of new homes or expanding existing ones. This drives the cost of homes in the neighborhood upward. This is good for the residents—bad for people trying to move into the neighborhood, of course. It’s easy to get the Democrats in such a neighborhood to oppose the contractors. Just cast it in terms of greedy businessmen and they’ll vote in droves.”

Winderside paused to drink a little of his coffee. “Now, here’s the genius of deWitt. Pour it on to the Republican homeowners about how their property values will be driven down by further development, and they’ll come on board too. Not because they all believe new housing is bad, mind you. Many will know that limiting the supply of housing guarantees that demand will drive their property values up. Simple economics, my man.”

“The last part is the Republican greed Mike mentioned earlier,” added Cohen. “And, there’s more. Would you like me to elaborate Mike?”

“Yes, go ahead while I sample one of these pastries,” answered Winderside. “Help yourself Rocco, Fistin.”

“Typical slow-growth states are New York, Colorado and California. Democrats have a lock on New York and the east coast in general, but states like Colorado and California—and most everything west of the Mississippi for that matter—have been Republican territory for a long time. The South, Midwest and Far West have been going Republican ever since the Republican base shifted out of New York after the Goldwater nomination back in 1964. deWitt carried California and we want to keep its electoral votes. All the Mexican immigration is helping—they breed new Democrats like rabbits. But, they’re like blacks, a little undependable on Election Day.”

“So, where’s slow growth come in?” Rocco was beginning to wonder if Cohen and Winderside loved to hear themselves talk.

“Yes, sorry Rocco,” answered Cohen. “We’re trying too hard to make sure you have a good background in all this. There will be time to educate you later. Many of these slow-growth areas are dominated by country-club Republicans. That is, Republicans who lean left on issues such as abortion, gun control and environmentalism. This is especially true in some of the foothill communities in Southern California that are heavily Republican. Much of the Democratic message resonates with these people. Add to that their greed, and you have reliable cross-over voters—what you might call deWitt Republicans.”

Taking charge again, Winderside said, “And this is where people like you come in, Rocco. President deWitt is recruiting what he calls ‘Democratic Missionaries.’ Like the Christian missionaries who went to places like the Pacific Islands hundreds of years ago, he wants his missionaries to convert the heathens. Today’s heathens are Republicans who need to be saved from their primitive and uncivilized ways. Think of the irony—we’ll win the war by loving them to death.”

“And, perhaps they’ll sell us their souls as part of the bargain,” stated Rocco. “Are you sayin’ the pickin’s are good in these slow-growth places?”

Winderside focused on Rocco’s eyes for the first time. “Indeed they are. You’re a quick study, Rocco. Now, I understand you’re moving somewhere in the vicinity of Carsontown soon.”

“My wife’s got a good job offer there, so yes we are.”

“Have you decided where you’re going to live?”

“Not yet. The company is flying us out next week and we’re gonna look around,” said Rocco.

“Good. I would suggest that you take a good look at El Paseo. It’s very close to Carsontown.”

Winderside continued on, explaining how the President’s Democratic Missionary Program consisted of situating Democrat operatives in key cities like El Paseo. He was very aware that Rocco had a reputation as a hard worker and a party loyalist. If he was willing to settle in El Paseo, the DNC would help arrange low-interest financing and introductions to the local Democrat power structure. They would help establish him in the community with the goal of securing his election to the City Council. This could, of course, serve as a stepping stone to higher office.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Cohen gave Rocco two thick three-ring binders with complete details of President deWitt’s Democratic Missionary Program. Leafing through the binders, Rocco noticed a lot of information on official positions of the deWitt administration and how to influence people. He was especially impressed with a detailed discussion of techniques aimed at manipulating and controlling the local news media and a short section on the “genius of Machiavelli.”

As they rose to leave, Winderside explained that a key element in all of this was close coordination with the labor unions. He

instructed Wallace to make the necessary calls to union officials to provide Rocco with the information he would need to contact union organizers in El Paseo. He speculated, correctly, that it would be the teacher's union.

“Our union friends are the great equalizer. Their get-out-the-vote efforts make up for the monetary advantage Republicans have.” Looking at Wallace with a warm smile, Winderside said, “Men like Fistin Wallace are the backbone of the Democratic Party.”

“Thanks Mike. You know we're there when you need us.” Wallace clenched his right hand and thrust it into his left palm, resulting in a loud smacking noise.

Rocco finished the coffee his secretary had brought him, and removed his feet from his desk. Recalling the help the unions had given him in his quest for a City Council seat he thought, “Yes, you were.”