

## CHAPTER 1: THE FIRST CHAPTER

It was on yet another in a string of cold, unassuming January days, with February approaching fast, that Randy Mack first stepped into the unofficial office of the *Clark Progressive* on the first floor of the Corner House at 142 Woodland Street. The actual *Progressive* office was in the basement of Sanford Hall, but since Sundrop Carter, the Editor-in-Chief, and Jennifer Kilbane, the Associate Editor, lived together in the Corner House, their room often functioned as a secondary office.

For Jennifer, Randy's appearance was a surprise, but Sundrop had been expecting him, and was even pleased to see him there finally. She had first run into Randy in the University Center a little over a week before and he had expressed what seemed like a genuine desire to help Sundrop redesign the *Progressive*, change which she hoped would increase the interest the rest of campus had in the paper.

Jennifer said very little during this first meeting, just enough to be polite. Sundrop and Randy, on the other hand, poured over the most recent copy of the *Progressive*, constantly bouncing ideas off each other, scribbling the best in the margins. It was a Monday night, and somewhere on campus people might have gone to bed early, but Sundrop and Randy had no intention of getting much sleep that night: they had far too much work ahead of them. Jennifer was likewise awake, and even contributed her own ideas to the scribbled list, but her contributions were not substantial. There was something about the whole meeting that unsettled her. Randy left finally around 3:00 in the morning, but returned the next night.

At this point, the *Progressive* was still on his mind, but the conversation covered many more topics. When he left, both Jennifer and Sundrop had the sneaking suspicion that there was another reason why Randy kept coming over. Characteristically, though, they could not agree on the reason. Sundrop thought Jennifer was the reason, and Jennifer thought Sundrop was the reason.

In fact, they were both wrong. Randy had been branded a dangerous and subversive journalist (that was not the word they used, but it will suffice) by *The Scarlet* offices, and he could not trust anyone in any way associated with that newspaper, so he turned to Sundrop and the *Progressive* as a sort of haven. Sundrop knew nothing of *The Scarlet's* grudge against Randy, otherwise she might not have given him as much power as she did, but history is full of mistakes made in ignorance.

It was during their fourth meeting that the name was first brought up. "What about the name?" Randy started, his agenda already set. "I don't like it. Besides, this is a whole new paper, it needs a new name." Sundrop thought about this for a while. "I think you're right. What do you think we should call it?"

"I was thinking 'WheatBread'."

"WheatBread!?" Jennifer shouted, choosing that moment to break the silence she had kept since Randy's arrival. "What kind of a name is *WheatBread*? Anyway, what right do we have to change the name like that? It's been called the *Progressive*

for years."

"Maybe," said Randy, "there was time when the content lived up to the name, but not anymore. It needs a change, and I think *WheatBread* would be perfect."

"But why *WheatBread*? I don't even like *WheatBread*. How 'bout *Whitebread*? What's wrong with that?"

"I can answer that," Sundrop replied. "*Whitebread* would have too many negative connotations. *WheatBread's* more neutral."

Jennifer did not reply. She had surrendered, and Sundrop could see at that moment that Jennifer's time on the *Progressive* (*WheatBread*?) had come to an end. Sundrop regretted (silently, for she did not

want to make Jennifer think that she was making Sundrop feel guilty) that Jennifer could not see what she and Randy were planning to do.

Randy left, saying that he would come back tomorrow

to help finish the layout of *WheatBread's* first issue. The *Progressive* was working out even better than he had dreamed. He still had to be cautious of *The Scarlet*, but soon he would be beyond even their reach. He was only a step or two away.

In the office of the *Scarlet* in Dana Commons, Editor-in-Chief Yazad Dalal looked across the table at Mitch Cohen (officially identified as the Information Systems Consultant). Dalal's words were few and quiet, but the message was unmistakable.

"This *Progressive* problem is getting worse. We need to know more before we act. It's in your hands, now."

Cohen nodded and left Dalal alone in the office; he had preparations to make.

## CHAPTER 2: THE FIRST ISSUE

Deadlines were approaching and Randy Mack was doing his research. With very few people to support the first issue of *WheatBread*, Randy and Sundrop Carter were racing to find stories. So Randy began meeting with David Bernstein, Station Manager of the Radio of Clark University and a man with his own hidden agenda. Quite naturally, each saw an opportunity to further his own goals, Randy by gaining influence in another medium and Dave through channels which have never come to light, and took that opportunity.

Randy began his article of ROC-U with a few simple interviews with people associated with the station, but it soon turned into a marathon of late night meetings between Randy, Dave, Program Manager Zack Ordynans, Musical Consultant Bill Evans, and T.J. Schubert, who they decided, would be included in the story, despite the fact that he refused to become involved with *WheatBread* in any capacity.

Time was running short but the article was near completion and Randy and Sundrop began focusing on the layout of the paper. Finally, the articles were all done and the layout was completed. The night before there were supposed to take the final product to the printer, Randy came to see Sundrop and Jennifer (now completely removed from *WheatBread*, though she still expressed some support for paper) to discuss how they would distribute it. Randy also had another idea.

"Let's get some feedback," he proposed, producing from the manila envelope in

which he had brought the computer disks containing all of *WheatBread's* first issue a piece of paper, which he handed to Sundrop.

She looked it over before responding, chuckling occasionally. "A survey?" she said finally. "Do you want to hand this out with the paper?"

"No, I think we should stuff in everyone's mailbox. That way, it's also advertising."

"That's a good idea. We'll get a bunch of copies printed up and arrange to have them sent out."

The conversation continued, unaware that there was someone else listening besides Jennifer. Across the street from the Corner House, in a little-used music room on the first floor of Estabrook Hall, Mitch Cohen adjusted the volume control on the mish-mash of sound equipment in front of him. He had been recording conversations between Sundrop and Randy for the past week, having successfully placed bugs in the *WheatBread* office and Jennifer and Sundrop's room. Now, he picked up a phone and dialed *The Scarlet* office. Normally, no one would be there, but this call was expected. Editor-in-chief Yazad Dalal picked up after three rings.

"He's getting ready to leave," Mitch began.

"Good. Once he's out, what will happen?"

"Getting into the room won't be a problem. They haven't done their dishes from dinner and they'll always do them before they go to sleep, so I'll have at least a three or four minute window. I only need one."

"Very good. What else?"

"They're planning on sending out a survey, both to get feedback and as advertisement."

"That's fine," Dalal replied. "People hate surveys, it will annoy everyone. And if you get the disks, they won't have any reason to put out the survey."

"Hold it, he's leaving." Through the camera mounted in a classroom on the second floor, Mitch watched Randy exit the house. The envelope was in his hands. "Damn it! He's taking the disks with him!"

Dalal said nothing, but Mitch could hear the disk slamming on the desk in frustration. "There's nothing we can do now. Clean up after yourself and get over here quickly. I have another idea. I think we should invite *WheatBread* to the Student Council Debate."

Dalal hung up without another word, leaving Mitch confused. He packed up his sound equipment and the video camera and locked it safely away in the Little Center (fortunately, Mitch had connections all over campus that allowed him to do just such a thing) and headed back to *The Scarlet* office to listen to Dalal's newest plan. As he went, it occurred to him that with so many things working against the success of *WheatBread*, it didn't stand a chance of surviving the semester.

Meanwhile, when Randy got home, he locked the *WheatBread* disks in his safe as what he considered a necessary precaution, got ready for bed, and finally curled up in bed with the only creature on the planet that he truly trusted and his life-long feline companion, Spinoza (an alias, but we'll get to that later). That night, Randy enjoyed the first decent sleep that he had had yet this semester, and he attributed to

his confidence that nothing could stop the paper from being published now.

And so the first issue of *WheatBread* appeared on campus.

## CHAPTER 3: THE DEBATE

Yazad Dalal, editor-in-chief of *The Scarlet*, read over the first issue of *WheatBread* in his office in the early hours of the morning. After reading it, Dalal was not nearly as upset that the magazine had managed to get printed as everyone had thought he would be. In fact, he was pleased with Randy Mack's attempt at publishing. From the first issue, Dalal was able to see that everything he had heard had been correct and *WheatBread* was tied inextricably with ROC-U, making his job that much easier.

He would simply act the part of the gentleman and invite both ROC-U and *WheatBread* (especially *WheatBread*) to take part in the upcoming Student Council Candidate Debate. The agent that *The Scarlet* had so carefully placed in ROC-U should then have no problem "suggesting" certain questions which would make both organizations look foolish. The only difficult part would come after the debate, protecting *The Scarlet* from the same ridicule. He began jotting down some questions.

He did not notice the door to the office open, but he heard the woman approach and looked up. He did not know the woman, could not even remember seeing her around campus, so he became immediately suspicious. Still, he saw no reason to be rude. "Can I help you?" he asked.

"Yes, you can," she answered in an enchantingly seductive voice. "And I can help you." So saying, she removed the long coat she had been wearing and Dalal saw that she was wearing nothing underneath. He was, quite naturally, speechless. His eyes stayed on her naked body as she walked to his desk and sat down on it. "I can do a lot for you."

Dalal was so memorized by the woman's body that he did not notice that she had left the door open just a

crack. Nor did he notice the figure standing outside the door or the camera that clicked quietly. In fact, he did not notice much of anything for most of the next hour.

Aside from the ridiculous smile on the editor-in-chief's face, the next two days went smoothly in *The Scarlet* office. Dalal even put off his plan to sabotage *WheatBread* in favor of contemplating several last-minute adjustments for the upcoming issue. Then, late in the afternoon on the second day, Randy Mack walked confidently into *The Scarlet* office, closed the door behind him, and stared at Dalal with a ridiculous grin of his own on his face.

"What do you want?" Dalal asked. Randy did not answer, but instead handed Dalal an envelope. Confused, Dalal opened the envelope and pulled out a small pile of black-and-white photographs of himself and the woman. "What the hell is this?" he stammered.

Randy took the pile from his suddenly-trembling hands. "It's black-mail, Yaz." He leafed gingerly through the pictures. "Hmm, this definitely is your good side." He looked at another one. "You know, I'm pretty sure this is still illegal in this state."

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