

## Tekst 3

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*The following text is the beginning of the first chapter of the novel Boomsday, by Christopher Buckley.*

Cassandra Devine was not yet thirty, but she was already tired.

'Media training', they called it. She'd been doing it for years, but it still had the ring of 'potty training'.

Today's media trainee was the chief executive officer of a company that administered hospitals, twenty-eight of them throughout the southeastern United States. In the previous year, it had lost \$285 million and one-third of its stock market value. During that same period, the client had been paid \$3.8 million in salary, plus a \$1.4 million 'performance bonus'.

*Corporate Crime Scene*, the prime-time investigative television program, was doing an exposé and had requested an interview. In her negotiations with the show's producers, Cass had learned that they had footage of him boarding the company jet (\$35 mil) wearing a spectacularly loud Hawaiian shirt and clenching a torpedo-shaped indeed, torpedo-size cigar in his teeth while hefting a bag of expensively gleaming golf clubs. Unfortunate as it was, this footage was only the appetizer. The main cinematic course was a video of the company's recent annual 'executive retreat' at a Bahamas resort of dubious taste. It showed the client, today's trainee, along with his fellow executive retreatants – doubtless exhausted after a hard day of budget cutting and crunching numbers – drinking rum punch dispensed from the breasts of anatomically correct female ice sculptures, to the accompaniment of a steel drum band, a limbo bar, and scantily clad waitresses dressed as – oh dear – *mermaids*. It would all make for a spirited discussion on the upcoming episode of *CCS*, especially when juxtaposed against the footage they were also running of patients parked like cars in an L.A. traffic jam in litter-strewn corridors, moaning for attention, some of them duct-taped to the wheelchairs.

'So they don't fall out', the client explained.

Cass took a sip from her seventh or eighth Red Bull of the day and suppressed a sigh, along with the urge to plunge her ballpoint pen into the client's heart. Assuming he had one.

'That last one was a lot better', she said. They'd done four practice interviews so far, with Cass pretending to be the interviewer from the television program. 'If you have the energy, I'd like to do just one more. This time, I'd like you to concentrate on smiling and looking straight into the camera. Also, could you please not do that sideways thing with your eyes? It makes you look ... *like a sleazebag*.' 'It works against the overall tone of you know ... transparency.' The man was as transparent as a bucket of tar.

'I really don't know why we're even agreeing to the interview.' He sounded peeved, as though he'd been frivolously talked into attending a performance of *The Marriage of Figaro* when he'd much rather be at the office, helping humanity, devising new and more cost-effective methods of duct-taping terminal patients to their wheelchairs so they could be parked in corridors all day.

'Terry feels that this is the way to go. In cases like this ...' The client shot her an 'I dare you to call me a criminal' glance of defiance. 'That is, where the other side has a

strong, uh, visual presentation, that it's best to meet them in the center of the ring, so to speak. We're looking to project an image of total ... up-frontness.'

The client snorted.

'That *no one* is more upset at the' –she glanced at her notes to see what artful term of mendacity they were using at the moment– 'revenue downtick'. 'And that you and management are' – she looked down at her notes again, this time just to avoid eye contact – 'working around the clock to make the, uh, difficult decisions.' Like where to hold next year's 'executive retreat'. Vegas? Macao? Sodom?

The client generously consented to one final practice interview. He left muttering about persecution and complaining of the indignity of having to fly back to Memphis via commercial aircraft. Terry had sternly forbidden him the company jet. Tomorrow, the client would spend an hour in a soup kitchen ladling out faux humanity to Memphis's wretched, an act of conspicuous compassion that would be inconspicuously video-recorded by one of his aides. If *Corporate Crime Scene* declined to air it, perhaps it might come in handy down the line – say, during sentencing deliberation. Cass sent him off with a DVD of his practice interviews. With any luck, they'd cause him to jump out his corner office window.

Cass wanted to go home to her apartment off Dupont Circle, nuke a frozen macaroni-and-cheese, pour herself a goldfish bowl-size glass of red wine, put on her comfy jammies, get under the covers, and watch reruns of *Law & Order* or *Desperate Housewives* or even the new reality show, *Green Card*, in which illegal (but good-looking) Mexicans had to make it across the U.S. border, past the Border Patrol and minutemen and fifty miles of broiling desert, to the finish line. The winner got sponsorship for a green card and the privilege of digging ditches in some other broiling – or, if he was lucky, frigid – part of the country.

*Yes, that would be lovely*, she thought, then realized with a pang that she hadn't posted anything on her blog since before work that morning. There was an important Senate vote on Social Security scheduled for that day. She hadn't even had time to glance at CNN or Google News to see how it had turned out.

The light was on in Terry's office. She entered and collapsed like a suddenly deflated pool toy into a chair facing his desk.

Without turning from his computer screen, Terry said, 'Let me guess. You had a wonderful, fulfilling day.' He continued to type as he spoke.

## Tekst 3 The following text...

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- 4p 5 Geef van elk van de volgende beweringen aan of deze wel of niet in overeenstemming is met de inhoud van de tekst.
- 1 Cassandra zou haar cliënten het liefst behandelen als kleine kinderen.
  - 2 De cliënt met wie Cassandra aan het werk is, heeft al veel tv-optredens achter de rug.
  - 3 De cliënt zal stevig aan de tand gevoeld worden in *Corporate Crime Scene*.
  - 4 Ziekenhuizen die de toestroom van patiënten niet aankonden, waren veel in het nieuws de laatste tijd.
  - 5 Cassandra slaagt erin de cliënt een positieve houding bij te brengen ten aanzien van zijn tv-interview.
  - 6 Cassandra denkt dat de cliënt voor de rechter zou kunnen komen.
  - 7 Cassandra voelt behoefte aan ontspanning na haar uitputtende werkdag.
  - 8 Terry voelt Cassandra's stemming goed aan.
- Noteer het nummer van elke bewering, gevolgd door "wel" of "niet".