

LIGHTS UP on EUGENE, DR ZAPATA and the BOSSMAN, who sit around a table center stage. (The table has a map on it, which characters point to occasionally.)

EUGENE

.. and the eminent-domain thing
lets us seize this coffeehouse
here and replace it with something
more profitable, like Starbucks.

BOSSMAN

Why?

DR ZAPATA

Good question, boss.

EUGENE

Well, we get a profit from the
real estate turnover.

(beat)

... which makes the shareholders
happy.

(beat)

Is that what you meant?

BOSSMAN

No! I mean why so small?

DR ZAPATA

A Starbucks is, bah!, nothing!

BOSSMAN

We should be thinking at least the
size of one of those "Hard Rock
Cafés."

EUGENE

(indicating on the map)
Austin already has one of those
over there.

BOSSMAN

Yes, but once we have the *second*
Hard Rock Café, we can put a
Starbucks *inside* the Café. Kid,
it's like we get the café for free.

EUGENE just blinks.

DR ZAPATA

Okay, these "Hard Rock" people will need, nay, *demand* capacious parking. Perhaps the neighboring property would -

BOSSMAN

Take the whole damn block. Pave it to the ground.

DR ZAPATA

Of course! A multi-tiered high-tech concrete parking utopia!

BOSSMAN

(gesturing)

With a little... thing up on top.

DR ZAPATA

Please?

BOSSMAN

Y'know, a... golf green. Putt-putt. With a windmill.

EUGENE

On the parking lot?

BOSSMAN

Don't sass putt-putt, kid. Putt-putt is pure money.

DR ZAPATA

Sir, I appreciate your city-block plan -- as I appreciate all your plans -- but clearly the situation demands something bigger.

EUGENE

Bigger?

BOSSMAN

Quiet, kid. Bigger is good.

DR ZAPATA
City-wide.

BOSSMAN
Mmmm...

DR ZAPATA
High-margin.

BOSSMAN
Mmmm?

DR ZAPATA
We take down the whole city.

EUGENE
What?!

DR ZAPATA
We shall contract an army of
mercenaries to rain destruction
upon Austin until there is no
stone atop another. Then, we
shall salt the earth so that
nothing shall grow there ever
again.

BOSSMAN
That's got balls, doc!

EUGENE
Sir! This isn't war with Carthage!

BOSSMAN
(loud)
This... is new building
opportunities.

EUGENE
Okay.

DR ZAPATA

Of course, this will mean that we shall lose our homes and our worldly possessions. We shall have to live as a band of nomads, feeding only upon what the desert can grudgingly provide. But the profits... would be staggering.

BOSSMAN

All right, all right. This chatter is proving to me one thing: that you're all a bunch of pansy-ass pansies. These pissant half-measures wouldn't get a gopher out of a McBLT styrofoam box!

A moment for EUGENE to puzzle over what this could possibly mean.

BOSSMAN

Here's how it's gonna be: tactical nuclear strike against the city of Austin. (jabbing finger at spots on the map)
Deploy H-bombs here, here, and here. Reduce the city and everything within a fifty-mile radius to radioactive molten glass.

EUGENE

Holy crap!

BOSSMAN

Eugene, you want a rabid ass-porcupine?

EUGENE

I'm... sure I don't.

BOSSMAN

Downside is: we all get burned alive, irradiated, and possibly pulverized to our component atoms. But we'd bring some profits home to daddy.

DR ZAPATA
Brilliant, sir. Absolutely
brilliant.

EUGENE
Oh, god.

BOSSMAN
Aw, quit your flytrappin', you
country Jezebel!

EUGENE
Okay, just a thought....

DR ZAPATA and BOSSMAN wait expectantly.

EUGENE
Say, instead of the nuclear option,
we... we don't do that.

BOSSMAN
(disappointed and irritated)
Oh....

EUGENE
(louder)
We don't do that and instead, we
just tell the stockholders we
did do that, and we pocket the
money, and then we buy ourselves
some extra vacation homes in Costa
Rica?

A long pause while DR ZAPATA and BOSSMAN look at each other
and think it over. EUGENE waits anxiously.

BOSSMAN
Hell yeah!

DR ZAPATA
Brilliant! Brilliant!

BOSSMAN shakes EUGENE's hand and drags EUGENE DC. He puts
one arm over EUGENE's shoulder.

BOSSMAN
(staring off into the distance)
God, I love business.

EUGENE nods.

BOSSMAN
(still staring off into the
distance)
It... makes... me... hard.

EUGENE looks alarmed.

BLACKOUT.