

## Scene 5: Summer 1959

*At the Capitol. Higgins encounters Bobby Crone, cane in hand.*

HIGGINS. Bobby Crone, my Bobby Crone. How you holding up? How you feeling? You're looking young and healthy.

BOBBY. I am neither, and I bet you say that to all the boys.

HIGGINS. Only the pretty ones.

BOBBY. E.W., let's have a word.

HIGGINS. Anything.

BOBBY. How do I say this to you delicately, son?

*Beat.*

When is this business gonna end?

HIGGINS. Which business?

BOBBY. Your endless pursuit, with bazooka in hand, of bunny rabbits.

HIGGINS. "Bazooka"? Is that what they say? Well, by God, a bazooka's what we need, don't you think? Wipe 'em out, be sure of it, because if they remain, you know how they *breed*.

BOBBY. They don't breed as fast as negative press. The *New York Times*, E.W.? *Time* magazine? We're all looking like fools down here, picking on a lady librarian and holding a match to a kiddie book that no one heard of until you brung it up.

HIGGINS. Who—who gives a carp's crap about the national media? And just how in the hell did those other papers get this, anyhow? This is an Alabama story. I was talking to local boys.

BOBBY. Have you heard of the wire services? Big deal in journalism. Been around for years. Look, E Dub, you ever read *Uncle Remus*?

HIGGINS. *Uncle Remus*? Wasn't raised on it. *Tom Sawyer* was my book. Saw that Disney movie, though. Loved that movie.

BOBBY. We all love that "Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah," all right. But, this rabbit book business—it's gonna be your Tar Baby, gettin' all stuck to you 'til you can't move. Some of the other boys in the House and Senate don't wanna get stuck along with you.

HIGGINS. I'm not stuck. Who says "stuck"? And what boys are you talking about? I got plenty of fellas on my side—

BOBBY. Look, this is your favorite Representative giving you advice—

HIGGINS. You're more than that to me, you might as well be my father.

BOBBY. My advice: Walk away from this. Bunny rabbits? There are other battles, E Dub. This one's done.

HIGGINS. The world of the South is a line of dominoes falling one by one, and here's another one. Before this, the Montgomery bus boycott. Before that, Brown and the Board of Education. Before that—a thousand others. This one falls, and the rest will follow right on into integration and ruination, and goodbye to glory.

BOBBY. Is bunny rabbits the battle?

HIGGINS. The battle is books. The choosing of books by and for our own.

BOBBY. Fair enough. Know what your battle is.

*Beat.*

I'm late for committee.

HIGGINS. You go on. What's the burning issue today?

BOBBY. House Bill 24. We're changing the state flower, from golden-rod to the camellia.

HIGGINS. Jesus wept!

*Beat.*

Another domino falls!

BOBBY. Oh, I don't know about that...

HIGGINS. No, it's *worse*. It's like watching your own funeral.

BOBBY. You've been readin' too much *Tom Sawyer*.

*They exit in separate directions.*