

## A Preposterous Proposal

Storming out of the hall didn't have the impact Sylvia had hoped for. The hydraulic safety-mechanism schools installed on every door didn't allow for a proper slam. *Who the hell does Daphne think she is?* she muttered to herself as she fumbled in her handbag for car keys. *Not a good fit. Indeed!*

'Your presence is appreciated, Sylvia,' Daphne said. 'But you see, I've been Chair for... Oh my... Has it really been seven years?' She glanced around the top table and smiled. Her coterie nodded approvingly and admiringly, as if Daphne had discovered the cure for breast cancer. No. *All cancers.*

'You've only recently moved from the city to our village,' Daphne continued. 'New parents such as yourself. Well ... you can't just waltz in here and try to change the way the Westhill School Association has always done things.'

'It was only a suggestion.'

'And the committee considers all suggestions, so long as they aren't *preposterous*.'

Daphne's cronies sniggered.

'What's so *preposterous* about asking for cash contributions instead of pestering parents every week leading up to the Summer Fair?'

Daphne harrumphed. 'Surely, *you* must know that some Westhill families are not as affluent as others. Five pounds can mean the difference between eating and going without.'

'Yet, you expect these same families to comply to your rigid demands.' Sylvia leafed through handouts until she found what she was after. 'Week 1: Wrapped sweets for the Sweets Tombola. Week 2: A bottle (wine preferred) for the Bottle Tombola ...'

'I know what's on the donation list, Sylvia. Your point is?'

'Couldn't you ask families to give what they can afford so you could buy what you need in bulk?'

'Everyone *loves* the collections. They look forward to it every year.'

Blonde heads bobbed in unison.

'When was the last time you actually spoke to someone outside of this little ... *clique*, Daphne?' Sylvia asked.

'Excuse me?'

‘This committee is hardly inclusive, is it?’ she said, looking around at the pale faces in the room. ‘240 children from 127 families attend this school. Why are there only nine of you on the WSA?’

‘Most parents can’t be bothered to give their time to the school like we do.’

‘Is that really what you think?’

‘It’s the sad truth, unfortunately.’

‘Has it never occurred to you that more people would join if you weren’t so closed-minded and ... *so damn exclusive?*’

Daphne let out a groan, followed by a heavy sigh. ‘Thank you for coming this evening, Sylvia. But perhaps your views are too ... *urban* for the WSA. I don’t believe you’d make a good fit after all.

Sylvia stepped outside and felt the first drops of rain fall from the ominous storm clouds above. As she scurried past Daphne’s convertible BMW, Sylvia noticed that Daphne had left the top down. *Should I let her know?* she thought aloud. *It would be the right thing to do.*

‘Nah,’ she said, then climbed into her Prius and sped off.