

Vote For Herbert

VOTE FOR HERBERT

Cast:

Herbert Granger, 82, white. Lanky, 6-foot-3 retired pharmacist with thin gray hair. Lives in London, Ohio.

David Bosserman, 31, white. Short, stocky, balding. political consultant and lawyer, based in Columbus, Ohio.

Paula Bosserman, 54, white. Real estate agent, London, Ohio. Short, salt and pepper hair, 5-foot-6, Inclined to wear power suits.

Cassie Rotenhaus, 31, white. Lawyer. David's girlfriend. Dark-haired, 5-foot-6, thin, intense.

Michael Scheinbaum, 73, white, Governor of Ohio. 5-foot-10, gray hair, thin.

Walter Bergeron, 68, Black. Lives in homeless shelter, Springfield, OH.

Lance Stryker, 42, white. Republican candidate for Ohio State Senate. Thinning black hair, portly.

Sid Meadows, 64, barber, Xenia, Ohio.

Bert Fleming, 54, customer in Sid's barber shop.

Jake Ziegler, 46, customer in Sid's barber shop.

Ned Graham, 62, general practitioner, London, OH.

Stuart, 21, Wittenberg University student.

Kate, 20, Wittenberg University student.

Rev. Donald Doleman, 68, pastor, First Presbyterian Church.

Vera Doleman, 58, the pastor's wife.

Rotary Club president, 35, Bellbrook, OH.

VOTE FOR HERBERT

Set in London, Ohio, and surrounding towns.

SCENE 1

Sunday afternoon in December. Herbert is in the living room in his white frame house, reading the Springfield, Ohio paper. Paula drops by.

PAULA

Dad! Hi. Sorry, I'm really on the run today.

HERBERT

Don't worry about it. I have one of these birthdays every year. You can start catching up next year.

PAULA

I know, Crazy, isn't it? At last I'm getting some open houses and I've got to put up the signs and make sure everything's on the up-and-up. But it's about time, don't you think?

HERBERT

I guess. Are they moving here because they actually want to, or is it the Witness Protection Program?

PAULA

I don't know or care at this point...Here. I got cake. Want it in the refrigerator?

HERBERT

Let me take a look. How did you ever find the time to make

that?

PAULA

You mean, how did I ever find the time to go to Kroger?

HERBERT

I was kidding.

(gets up, goes to refrigerator)

Oh, a rotisserie chicken from Kroger, too. One-stop shopping. How nice.

PAULA

I got a card but I forgot to bring it. My God, it seems like I'm on the run every minute. Gotta go. Love you, Dad.

HERBERT

Okay. Next time I'll tell you about that triple bypass I had the other day.

PAULA

(on way out)

Great, looking forward to it. Bye.

HERBERT

(shakes head. Passes a bookcase, looks at a picture of his deceased wife, Alma, on the top shelf)

Yeah, I know. You told me so. She was never gonna change.

(turns picture frame around, sits in easy chair, grabs remote)

LANCE (from the TV)

"I'm Lance Stryker, and I approved this message.

"Is this why you moved to central Ohio? To be pushed around by illegal aliens, most of whom can't even speak English? You see them in their streets, in our stores,

everywhere but our churches, thank God. Crime has skyrocketed. Daughters are terrified. Nobody in Washington cares. But if you send Lance Stryker to Columbus in the fall, they'll be running for the border like Olympic sprinters...."

HERBERT

What border? The Kentucky border?

LANCE (from the TV)

"Let's run them out of here so we can live at peace with each other in Middle America, the way our parents did. Vote for Lance. He's our last chance."

HERBERT

(changes channel, puts on glasses, starts reading the paper again)

Little twerp. He wants to be a State Senator. What's that got to do with immigration?

(looks outside, sees dark clouds. Goes to back yard, gathers clothes from the clothesline)

Look at the deer. Must be slim pickings in the woods, huh, buddy? Better leave my trashcans alone. You remember what happened to your granddaddy. Yes, I do indeed have a gun permit, thanks for asking....

DAVID

(comes into yard)

Pops! Who are you talking to?

HERBERT

The deer. At least they don't pretend to listen.

DAVID

Oh. Sounds like Mom was here.

HERBERT

For about 90 seconds. It's OK. What are you up to?

DAVID

Let's go back in the house so maybe we can find your cane.

HERBERT

No, I hid it so good I can't even find it. That's what happens when you get old. You ought to see me try to find my glasses.

(they go back in the house)

DAVID

OK...Cassie cooked you a meat loaf, which I put in the fridge already.

HERBERT

She did? She's the best. David, you better marry that girl, If you don't I will.

DAVID

Well, we're negotiating...and here's a 12-pack of Bud...and a couple of audio books...

HERBERT

That's great, but...

DAVID

And I got you some headphones.

HERBERT

Thanks, boy. I hate to tell you this, but my birthday was last week.

DAVID

No...wait. You sure?

(Herbert laughs)
Ah, shit. You got me.

(David fetches the beers, sits on sofa)

So how you been? How's the leg and the hip and everything else?

HERBERT

Great. I can't tell which leg is real and which isn't. The prostate's doing all right, too. I can give you the details if you want..

DAVID

Nah, I'll just settle for the overview.

HERBERT

You want to watch football?

(picks up remote)

LANCE (from the TV)

"I'm Lance Stryker and I approved this message..."

HERBERT

(slams down remote)

Not again, for God's sake! The election isn't till next year!

DAVID

I'm so sick of this guy. He just moved to Bellbrook two years ago. He's from Florida or someplace. Nobody ever sees him, except on TV.

HERBERT

Is he just another lawyer? No offense, mind you.

DAVID

No, he's a hedge fund guy who's got some friends who are close to the governor. Most people think he wants to spend a couple of years in the state Senate. Then he'll run for governor or senator. He's got this Barbie doll family but he doesn't know shit about this area or anything else. He just has the catchphrases. Limited government, school reform, elitists, Mexicans coming to get you. He's an anti-vaxxer, too, even though he's got two kids.

HERBERT

And since there's about two Democrats in the whole

district...

DAVID

Right. All he has to do is win the Republicans, and nobody's going to run against him. I have no idea why he's spending this much money.

HERBERT

I just can't believe people here have gotten that stupid. I used to know everybody in this town, David. And really in the county. They're not bad people. They don't hate anybody. They're not scared of immigrants unless you tell 'em they should be. They're got their opinions about things, but, hell, I do, too. They loved Reagan and so did I.

DAVID

I did, too. Still do.

HERBERT

Somebody's got to run against this punk. How about you?

DAVID

(deep breath)

You know, Pops, I did think about it. He just infuriates me. But I can't.

HERBERT

Is it the money?

DAVID

I think I could swing the money. I don't even think it would take that much. I can go door to door and do really well, just because of the people I know. But it won't work. Did I tell you about the drunk driving?

HERBERT

Yeah. But that was five years ago.

DAVID

Yeah. But the hooker in Columbus was two years ago.

HERBERT

Well, there you go. Three clean years. What politician can say that?

DAVID

(laughs)

All the so-called Christians, they'd eat me for lunch over that. I bet they have a file on me right now. But I'm going to be on the sidelines. I'll run somebody else's campaign, maybe.

HERBERT

Got anybody in mind?

DAVID

(smiles)

Well, I've been thinking...It would have to be a guy who is known very well in the community. Somebody with roots, who can draw a real contrast with this guy. Challenge him to give us directions on how to get to Choctaw Lake. That kind of thing.

HERBERT

Yeah,. There's been an algae outbreak over there. The homeowners are up in arms.

DAVID

Which brings me to the other thing. He's going to need a wide grasp of all the issues. All the little details that Lance can't come up with. Stuff that people care about. And hopefully we could find a veteran. Maybe a guy with a couple of Distinguished Flying Crosses in Vietnam. Because Lance is just a wimp at heart. I bet he never got through a week without losing his lunch money.

HERBERT

Yeah, I think if somebody could show people what he's

really like, he wouldn't be that hard to beat.

DAVID

Do you know anybody like that?

HERBERT

(gets up)

Excuse me, I forgot to take my Metamucil. Goes good with Cheez-Its. Want some?

DAVID

(laughs)

But the best thing would be a guy with a sense of humor. Do you know how many elderly people are in this district?

HERBERT

They all seem pretty young to me.

DAVID

You could make them laugh. I can see it: "Ohio Needs A Life Alert. Vote for Herbert."

HERBERT

"You Need Hard Arteries To Make The Hard Choices."

DAVID

That's right! Let's send a real pacemaker to Columbus!

HERBERT

You're pretty funny. But come on, David. I can't go around and shake 300 hands a day. Not without a nap. .

DAVID

You don't have to. They don't campaign that way anymore. They use this.

(holds up phone)

Put some videos on Facebook or You Tube.. They'll see them all over the district. We get some attention, they'll see them all over the state. People see that a guy in his 80s is running for office, they'll see it all over the country. Who can resist a story like this? And then the money will come rolling in.

HERBERT

I can't believe you actually got me thinking about this. But nobody's looking after people my age. Nobody cares. Everybody running for office says the same old shit. You know what? Maybe they **do** need to hear it from somebody like me. And what if I do say one thing one day and another thing the next? They can't accuse me of flip-flopping when I can't remember anything. That's old age..

DAVID

OK. Keep thinking about it. We've got time.

HERBERT

Speak for yourself, son.

SCENE 2

*(11:30 a.m., Sid's Barber Shop, Xenia, Ohio.
HERBERT walks in as SID cuts BERT's hair, with
JAKE waiting.)*

SID

What are you doing here? You don't look too shaggy to me.

HERBERT

No, I just wanted to see if you were still a free man. I read where the State Police heard a guy was impersonating a barber.

SID

I'm not worried. They can ask anybody. There's no evidence that I can really cut hair.

BERT

(in barber's chair)

Don't distract him. He's got a razor in his hand.

HERBERT

Actually I wanted to know if you could sign something.

SID

Sign what?

HERBERT

Well, I found out that if you can get 50 fools to sign a petition and if you can write a check for 85 bucks, you can run for the State Senate.

SID

Oh, you doing it for your grandson?

HERBERT

Uh, no. I'm doing it for me.

SID

What?

BERT

Damn it, Herbert, he almost chopped off my ear. Knock it off.

SID

Are you serious? Are they trying to put together a Senior Senate?

HERBERT

No, I just got interested in some of the issues, and I don't have anything else to do, and I've lived here all my life. And I don't want this nutjob to run away with it.

SID

You mean Lance? I kinda like that guy.

HERBERT

Like him?

SID

Yeah, he's going to keep the immigrants out.

HERBERT

He's full of it. The State Senate has nothing to do with immigrants.

BERT

So what do they do?

HERBERT

Well, I'm still learning about that. But they put together a budget, and they figure out the taxes, and they try to deal with all these opioids.

JAKE

My nephew is all messed up with that. It's tough to find treatment.

HERBERT

That's right. So maybe we can do a little good.

SID

How do they feel about abortion in that State Senate?

HERBERT

Against it.

SID

How about guns?

HERBERT

Come on, Sid. We used to go hunting all the time. They're not going to take your gun. But if you had a criminal record and you tried to buy an assault rifle...

SID

Nope. That just opens the door to the government. Give 'em

an inch and they'll be going through your gun cabinet next week.

BERT

That's right. A weapon never killed anybody by itself.

HERBERT

A bat never hit a home run by itself. But Pete Rose never got a base hit with his bare hands. I mean, that just doesn't make any sense.

SID

Are you sure I'll vote for you? You might go to Columbus and keel over on your first day.

HERBERT

Or I could go over there and actually help. Like, if we lowered taxes on small businesses...

SID

Well, I'm up for that.

BERT

How about that sidewalk on Market and Detroit?. That thing buckled two years ago, and not a soul has tried to fix it.

HERBERT

You go to the City Council for that. Look, just give me three signatures and I'll be up to 35. And I won't ask you for a campaign contribution.

SID

Okay. I guess it would be nice to actually know somebody in Columbus. Here you go.

BERT

Let me have that thing.

JAKE

Give me your pen when you're done.

HERBERT

Perfect. Thank you. You won't regret this. I might even get you a MOGFO cap.

SID

Is that like a MAGA cap?

HERBERT

Yeah, except it says, Make Ohio Great For Once. See you later.

(walks out)

SID

(shakes his head)

How old is he, 80?

BERT

Every bit of it.

SID

Well, let him have his fun. I hope I never get crazy like that.

SCENE 3

*(Herbert is in the office of Dr. Ned Graham,
London, Ohio)*

NED

It's a good thing I ordered that bone-density test.

HERBERT

Why?

NED

Yours came out minus-2.5.

HERBERT

I take it that's not good.

NED

It means your osteoporosis is becoming a progressive thing. You're 6-foot-2 $\frac{1}{2}$. Fifteen years ago you were 6-foot-3.

HERBERT

That's not osteoporosis, that's global warming.

NED

What? How do you figure that?

HERBERT

I don't know. You're the doctor.

NED

That's right. Have been for, what, 40 years?

HERBERT

Wow, you're getting old. Thought about retiring?

NED

What I'm trying to say, you pain in the ass, is that you better watch yourself. You're far more prone to falls than you used to be. How's your arthritis?

HERBERT

Well, I can't play golf like I used to.

NED

I've seen you play. That's actually good.

HERBERT

Did I tell you I'm running for State Senate?

NED

(exasperated)

Oh, good. Dementia is setting in.

HERBERT

And you know what? I just so happened to bring in my petition. You can be the 50th signatory and put me over the top.

NED

You're actually serious.

HERBERT

Absolutely. I'm going to get the Republican nomination and go in there and clean up Columbus, if I can get somebody else to push the broom.

NED

Is that the race Lance Stryker is in?

HERBERT

That's right.

NED

What's wrong with you? You'll never beat him. He's on TV all the time.

HERBERT

That's right, and you're going to get sick of him before we get to August. He doesn't know the first thing about this district, about your, about me, about how we're living our lives. He'll go to Washington and forget all about us. He's just using us as a stepping stone.

NED

So you're asking me to sign something that will work directly against your health. You can't be shaking hands with that arthritis of yours and you can't be walking up and down the street all day without a walker or a cane or

something.

HERBERT

Let me worry about that. I might even introduce a bill so you can get a bigger deduction on your medical devices.

NED

You will?

HERBERT

Well, I'll promise it anyway.

NED

OK, I signed it. You're over the top. But I'm serious. There's a lot easier ways to die than a broken hip. Limit your walking and don't stay out there more than a few hours every day. And this is all contingent on your bloodwork and your visit to the cardiologist, which you last did...when?

HERBERT

A few years ago. I'll call Dr. Kass.

NED

You might have to leave a message. Kass died 10 years ago. For all you know, you've got blockages everywhere. I don't know, Herbert.

HERBERT

Don't worry about it, Ned. I did the research. You can write me in. Doesn't matter if I'm dead or not. .

SCENE 4

HERBERT, DAVID and CASSIE are at Herbert's kitchen table.

DAVID

So I called the Yellow Springs paper and they're going to have one of their kids do a story on you.

HERBERT

An interview?

DAVID

That's right, Pops. Get ready to do a lot of them.

HERBERT

I guess I better start learning about all these issues.

DAVID

That's right. You're going to focus on the little things, the stuff that Stryker knows nothing about. School repairs, cleaning up Choctaw Lake, how to spend the money from the opioid settlement.

HERBERT

Build more opioid treatment centers. Or give part of it to Clark State College. We ought to make Clark State tuition-free and add to their curriculum. Education is the only way out of this mess.

CASSIE

Very good. Because that's exactly the type of thing Stryker will be against.

DAVID

I'll get in touch with the AARP. I can't imagine they wouldn't endorse you, and they might throw a few bucks our way, too.

HERBERT

Do they pay anything for being a State Senator?

CASSIE

Something like \$63,000.

HERBERT

What if I said I was going to forego my salary?

DAVID

That might get some attention.

CASSIE

And a good contrast.

HERBERT

And term limits?

DAVID

You get termed out after eight years.

HERBERT

(laughs)

I'll say, 'You don't have to worry about that with me.' We can film that in front of the cemetery.'

DAVID

Pops, you're pretty good at this political thing.

CASSIE

Now, we've reached out to the Springfield Lions Club to see if they'd want you to speak.

HERBERT

I used to be a member. I probably still know a lot of those guys.

CASSIE

I don't know, Pops. There aren't many of those guys left. They hold their meetings at Wendy's now.

HERBERT

Really? That's sad.

CASSIE

I also called the Xenia (*Zeen-ya*) Rotary Club. They'll be happy to have us in February, at the Senior Center.

DAVID

But, really, the best thing we can do is make some videos. Nobody's giving money to a State Senate race, except for corporations. We've got two ways to go. Get the videos out there and get some attention, and then just pound the pavement.

HERBERT

The doctor said he didn't want the pavement to pound back.

DAVID

You don't have to do it yourself, Pops. In fact, you shouldn't. I can't believe they gave you a driver's license last year. I can see it now: Vote For Stryker, Keep Our Roads Safe From Herbert Granger.

CASSIE

You know, I hope you're not biting off more than you can chew here. There's the part where you say, hey, this seems like fun, running for something. But then it wears off and it comes down to a lot of drudgery, a lot of long days. Are you sure about this?

HERBERT

I'll tell you what I tell everybody else. I got nothing else to do. I don't have much time to make a difference. And I'm afraid to turn on my TV because I know this asshole is going to be screaming at me and I might throw a shoe through the screen. And then I'd have to go get a TV.

CASSIE

(laughs)

Okay. We're going to get this guy.

HERBERT

Yeah, we're going to end his career in the first trimester!

DAVID

Pops? Let's not say that on the campaign trail, OK?

SCENE 5

(Springfield, Ohio, Soup Kitchen, 5 p.m.)

HERBERT

(sits down at a table)

Walter. Is that you?

WALTER

(laughs)

That's me, Herbert. Don't tell me you've hit the skids, too.

HERBERT

No, not me. How are you doing?

WALTER

You want the King James version or the Revised Standard version?

HERBERT

Tell me whatever you want.

WALTER

Got laid off at Navistar, had to give up the house, Jessica couldn't get along with my parents so she left, and Jamie got hooked on the opioids. I did odd jobs for a while, but that's what the jobs are. They're odd, not even. So now I'm in a shelter.

HERBERT

God. I feel so bad. I wish you'd called...but I know why you didn't.

WALTER

I'm not worried about me. Jamie's in really bad shape. They can't keep enough Vivitrol for everybody who needs it here. I never wished anything bad on anybody, Herbert, you know that, but these drug companies are the devil. They really are. I know the state got a settlement out of them but it should have been ten times that.

HERBERT

I know. I can't believe what's happened to this town.

WALTER

They're trying. But when they take the manufacturing away, there's nothing left. All the institutions go away, too. The churches turn into homeless shelters. The school activities aren't what they used to be. And the drugs and the crime rush right in. It's brutal. I wish I'd seen it coming.....So how are you? And what are you doing here?

HERBERT

The doctors, they oil me up and keep me going. I can walk around and I can still drive, although my grandson might argue with me there. I just came here to see what was going on in my neighborhood. Isn't that pathetic? I should have seen it all along.

WALTER

It's fine. I wish more people took an interest.

HERBERT

Well, that's just part of it. I'm running for State Senate. How about that? At my age, I'm the new face of politics.

WALTER

You're doing what?

HERBERT

I'm running for office. For State Senate. And I'm here to see if I can help people in your situation.

WALTER

Politics? You thought you'd just come down here to make a campaign appearance? Just a looky-loo kind of thing? Let me look around and see if you brought a cameraman.

HERBERT

I didn't. And that's not it. I mean, not really.

WALTER

(voice rising)

And just what would you do for people like me, Mr. Senator? Pass a law that says I can have a job? Bring my wife back? Or maybe you should just settle for naming the post office after yourself. Good Lord, Herbert. You don't have anything better to do?

HERBERT

The truth is, no, I don't. But if I can make good things happen, or stop bad things from happening...

WALTER

Our savior. Look, Herbert, I'm going to make it. At least I'm hanging out with people who are going through the same stuff. You want to find out what it's like? Spend the night in the shelter with me. Although you'd have to sleep on the floor, and there are things crawling around down there. But, no, you've probably got some more drive-by appearances to make. This is why you have these assholes like this Stryker guy, who tells us we have to hate everybody. This is how they get somewhere. They're phony, too, but at least they're entertaining.

HERBERT

I know. I'm running against him. That's why I'm running, tell you the truth. I've lived here all my life. He's lived here five minutes. He can't even name the counties in this district. And I'm going to make him try, face to face. But I'll tell you what, Walter. I'm going to take you up on that offer. Tell me what would be a good night to sack out in the shelter and I'll do it.

WALTER

(laughs)

You don't have to make a fucking reservation, Herbert. We're always open.

SCENE 6

(Herbert's house. Cassie and David are there)

LANCE (from the TV)

"I'm so tired of bureaucrats telling you what to do. Regulations are strangling small business in the 10th District. Springfield is a war zone. People are afraid to walk the street between the gangs and the homeless. Gangs

from Dayton and Cincinnati are headed our way. Whatever happened to the days when we could leave our doors unlocked? And whatever happened to politicians who would stand up to China and worship God, and not the other way around? I'm Lance Stryker and I approved this message."

DAVID

You know, he'd probably be a nice fellow if you got to know him.

CASSIE

Ugh. I'll take your word for it. OK, let's go out back.

(they go to the back yard)

CASSIE

(holding up phone)

OK, Take One.

DAVID

This is Herbert Granger. He's lived in the 10th District all his life. He never thought about running for office. But then, along came Lance Stryker. Herbert has two shovels that are older than Lance Stryker.

HERBERT

(holds up a shovel)

Smarter, too.

CASSIE

Herbert flew fighter jets in Vietnam. Lance played badminton at his prep school.

HERBERT

And he didn't make the varsity.

DAVID

Herbert was a pharmacist in Springfield for decades. He knows almost everyone in all three counties. Lance isn't sure what baseball team plays in Cincinnati.

HERBERT

(points at camera)

And don't you dare look it up, Lance.

CASSIE

Herbert has never run for office before. Lance has never been in an office.

HERBERT

I don't know whether to beat him or spank him.

DAVID

Now you probably have some questions about Herbert. Like, for instance, how old he is. And it's a fair question.

HERBERT

Please tell me. I forgot.

CASSIE

He is 82. Doesn't he look good?

HERBERT

A testament to baked apples and jello and the avoidance of exercise. And red wine.

DAVID

I mean, if Lance had to follow Herbert around for one morning, he'd probably need oxygen.

HERBERT

Although he'd want to stop for doughnuts first.

CASSIE

So if you want somebody who's focused on making your life better instead of making a name for himself, vote for Herbert.

HERBERT

Because I'm Herbert Granger, and I'm doing this to improve all of our lives, and I don't approve of phony politicians.

DAVID

And you approved this message.

HERBERT

I did?

SCENE 7

(In the back room of McMurray's bar in Springfield. Herbert is having pizza with Wittenberg University students.)

HERBERT

You know, I could use some volunteer help on this campaign.

KATE

Like what?

HERBERT

(turns to David)

Yeah, like what?

DAVID

You can put up some posters on campus, you can tell your friends about Herbert, you might even knock on some doors in town if you want. Or you can help us when we organize phone banks, and call up voters. And if you don't like it when people hang up on you, you can text them.

STUART

The people in town don't like us very much. They think we're just a bunch of rich kids who don't care about

anything. They think we drink too much.

KATE

(rolls eyes)

Where would they get that idea?

STUART

But you'll notice they don't complain when we keep their bars in business. By the way, Herbert, when you get elected could you push back last call to 2 a.m.?

HERBERT

Hell, no. Nothing good happens after midnight. Except for when I go to the bathroom.

STUART

How about jobs? Some of us are getting a little nervous. We don't want to get our diploma and then go home and live in the basement.

KATE

Yeah, and how about all the debt payments we're looking at?

HERBERT

Well, you gotta realize that the Ohio Senate is a little conservative. I am, too, but you have some senators who don't want to pay for anything. Look right here in Springfield. The voters actually approved an 0.4 percent income tax increase in 2017. That's how desperate things were. So they built a new police substation and they repaved a bunch of streets. But you'll never hear anybody say, 'Gee, I'm glad they raised my taxes. Look at all this good stuff.'

So you'll always have opposition. And Springfield itself has to decide all this. But if I had to pass a tax bill for the state, I wouldn't touch the income and sales taxes. I'd have special taxes. You want guns? Great, pay extra for them. Cigarettes and alcohol, too. And this could be the perfect solution for the marijuana situation.

Make it legal and tax the hell out of it. I'd even tax soft drinks. I was a pharmacist for a long time. There's nothing good about 'em.

KATE

(nudges Stuart)

I only wish I knew somebody who liked to smoke dope, so I could bounce this off him.

STUART

Shut up.

HERBERT

But the Senate is already considering a bill that will reduce student loan debt for those who take jobs in underserved areas, doctors and dentists in particular. I'd like to see a service program, where graduates spend a year working for the state, rebuilding bridges, teaching in tough areas, maybe staffing libraries that need it. So just because we're Republicans doesn't mean we don't care. Besides, my opponent has no answers, and he doesn't particularly care what matters to us. He's just a rich blowhard who thinks he can move up the ladder by spending millions on a State Senate race. But he ran into a little problem. He didn't see me coming. I didn't either, for that matter.

STUART

We love your videos. We've been showing them all over campus.

DAVID

People have been showing them all over the country. But every time you do that, you help us.

KATE

And I hate that Stryker guy. He's like a bad date.

HERBERT

Yeah. Even I would carry Mace if I was around him.

KATE

(to Stuart)

What did I tell you? He's like that cool Grandpa we never had.

HERBERT

You're lucky, Stuart. If I was just 100 years younger...

SCENE 8

(Herbert's house, London, Ohio. He is reading the Springfield newspaper)

HERBERT

(aloud)

"The angular, approachable Granger typically meets with potential 10th District voters every morning. On Tuesday he visited a fire department in Bellbrook and then a political science class at Clark State, where scores of students took photos of him in the parking lot and asked for his autograph. Granger obliged, but then rode back to his London home with his grandson, Columbus lawyer David Bosserman, driving. He said he was looking forward to an 'old man's lunch' of lemonade, a turkey sandwich and an Advil and then a two-hour nap."

PAULA

(barges in)

Why didn't you tell me?

HERBERT

Tell you what?

PAULA

Tell me what? Is this some kind of joke? It's embarrassing.

HERBERT

It's embarrassing that I'm actually getting off my ass and doing something, or it's embarrassing that I didn't ask your advice? Which would have been difficult, since you're

either working all the time or jetting off somewhere with God-knows-who.

PAULA

Where I go and who I go with is none of your business.

HERBERT

Oh, but when I want to actually do something for myself, that's all of your business. It's fine, Paula, just tell all your friends I've lost my mind. People in the real world seem to like it. I'm learning all kinds of stuff about a place I've lived in all my life. This is a pretty interesting area, this district. I'm learning more about it every day. But you'd have to get outside your gated community to know.

PAULA

I just had no idea. Somebody at the book club mentioned it to me the other day and I had to pretend it wasn't a surprise.

HERBERT

Maybe I should come to your book club and ask for some votes. I promise I'll change undershirts.

PAULA

Dad, do you know how old you are?

HERBERT

Sure. I just read it in the paper. Look.

PAULA

(puts hand over mouth)

Oh my God.

HERBERT

You should check out YouTube if you really want to be humiliated. David said I've gone viral. I corrected him and said I've gone bacterial, since a vaccine is available.

PAULA

(quietly)

I can't believe David put you up to this. He's such an idiot.

HERBERT

All he did was suggest it. I'm the one who's doing it. And maybe you should watch what you say about my grandson. He's worked his way into a pretty good life. Just imagine what he could have done with parents.

PAULA

Easy to second-guess, like you were the greatest dad in the world.

HERBERT

Obviously I wasn't. You did have the greatest mom in the world. And you broke her heart on a monthly basis.

PAULA

I know. She got hurt. You just got mad. Enough of this. Do you really think you'll win this thing?

HERBERT

Probably not. This Stryker guy is running TV ads all the time. But nobody ever really sees him. We're making a joint appearance in Fairborn last week, almost like a debate, so I've got to bone up for that.

PAULA

But you're really getting famous?

HERBERT

Looks that way. I'm even considering a rap video.

PAULA

Well, next time you do one of those interviews, maybe you should mention that your daughter is a major player at REMAX and will stop at nothing to get you that dream home.

HERBERT

Oh, absolutely, dear. And if you dropped the married name and just went back to Granger, you'd get all that free publicity, and maybe Stryker wouldn't find out that my beloved son-in-law is doing time for tax evasion.

PAULA

That's an idea.

HERBERT

Or you could even consider driving me around for a day or two. David and Cassie have put everything on hold to help me with this. They can't always get over here..

PAULA

Well, you'd have to give me at least two weeks notice on that, and I never go into Springfield unless I absolutely have to.

HERBERT

Okay. Whatever your heart can handle.

PAULA

In fact I'm backed up right now because I had to come over and ask you what the hell was going on. But, hey, I'm glad you're happy. Give me a call.

HERBERT

Anytime, dear. Don't worry, I'll fight hard for those embattled realtors when I get to Columbus.

PAULA

Now you're talking. Bye.

(Paula leaves)

HERBERT

(sighs, picks up paper)

"The Democrats can't even recruit a candidate for the seat, which stretches from the eastern suburbs of Dayton to within commuting range of Columbus. So the Stryker-Granger race is tantamount to the general election. Although few professionals think Granger has a shot to beat the well-funded Stryker in the primary for Rep. Barrett Heller's vacated seat, his unique candidacy has brought attention and even some contributions from outside Ohio. Shirley Barringer, a political science professor at Cedarville University, says Granger 'may bring new voters into the mix' and thinks Stryker "needs to start taking this seriously.'"

Geez, I wish she hadn't written that. Let him sleep.

(picks up Alma's picture and talks to it)

This is all your fault, you know. If you'd hung around, if you'd stopped smoking when I told you to, we'd be traveling the world right now, living the good life....Yeah, I know I could have gone by myself, but why would I want to do that? Who would have taken the pictures? Imagine me sitting on a camel, taking a selfie. I hate those things anyway...What happened to Paula, anyway? Was it only-child syndrome? I know, I'll take responsibility for that. I was sitting there surrounded by all those drugs and couldn't find anything to put lead in the pencil...But I wish you were helping me right now. Are you wearing your hair like you did in the picture? I hope so. Good night.

SCENE 9

(8:30 a.m. Herbert's house. On the phone with David)

HERBERT

We need to be over there at 11, right? So why don't you pick me up at 10?...Should I wear a sport coat or something? No? Good...All right, I'll be ready...Yeah, it's a place called T.J. Chump's. I'll ask Lance if they named it after him...Or not. OK...See you then.

(11:15 a.m. at the Fairborn Rotary Club. LANCE

is sitting at a dais.)

LANCE

Well, I was on time. Maybe I should go ahead and start, since Herbert has either gotten lost or forgotten what day it is. I mean, I've got a grandfather, too, but I don't think he ought to be running for office...Anyway, I can't tell you how much great feedback I've gotten from the people in this district, from Springfield to Fairborn to Ex-eenia...

...

HERBERT

(comes in from back, in wheelchair)

You pronounce it Zenia, you jackass. Not Ex-een-ia. Zenia like it's a Z. Of course it's only been here since 1803..

ROTARY PRESIDENT

We're pleased to welcome Herbert Granger, our other Republican candidate for the 10th District seat in the Ohio State Senate. Herbert, what happened to you?

DAVID

It was unfortunate. Herbert left the TV on when he went to sleep and all of Lance's misstatements and lies sort of piled up on the living room floor. He got up and tripped over them. He'll be fine, just bruised his ribs and his leg. I told him to forget it but he said he'd crawl from London to Fairborn, if he had to, just to meet the great Lance Stryker.

HERBERT

Although somehow I knew it would be a place called T.J. Chumps.

LANCE

Don't worry, folks, I can handle his hostility. People get that way when time has passed them by. There's a new Republican party out there and I can feel the energy. We're going to take our country back.

HERBERT

Take it back? Who took it away? It didn't belong to you anyway, Florida Man. It belongs to every one of us, and if we, as Republicans, forget that, we're done. I'm not here to talk about issues that have nothing to do with the State Senate. I'm here to talk about Ohio, and the fact that we're second in the country in giving unnecessary tax breaks to businesses, and that we're diverting all that money from the educational needs of our people. I'm here to protect our health care while we keep our income tax low. And to point out that we have the highest infant mortality rate of any state outside the South, and we're ranked right in the middle in educational achievement even though we've got all these great colleges and universities. We can do better. And we need to put more money, nor less, into our police departments so they can do community policing, put a cop on the beat like the old days, get to know the neighborhoods. That's just part of it, but I'm 82 years old and my hard drive gets filled up pretty quick.

(audience laughs, applauds)

LANCE

You know, when you get old, sometimes you can't see what's right in front of you. Illegal immigrants are tearing this country apart. Right now I would tell ICE to go over to Navistar and pick up every one of those illegal Mexicans that are taking our jobs away. And I'd go into the tobacco fields and roust out all the illegal workers there, too. We need opportunity for our own kind.

HERBERT

Own kind? When did you get your hands dirty doing anything, except for taking dirty money from drug companies?

LANCE

See, this is what they do. They take a well-meaning old man and they bribe him to run for office -- in our Republican party, no less -- and it's kinda like a poison pill. They fill him full of these statistics nobody cares about, and they get outsiders and radicals to back him.

HERBERT

I can't believe you think the fine people of Champaign County are going to fall for this.

LANCE

Maybe I know more about Champaign County than you think.

HERBERT

Maybe I know that we're not in Champaign County. That's not one of the three counties in the district.

(crowd roars)

But maybe you'd like to identify them for the fine folks in attendance today.

LANCE

No problem. Clark County. Madison County. And...

(Lance's advisor starts pointing to his green bow tie)

Collar County? No, that doesn't sound right.

HERBERT

Greene County, you nitwit. And nobody in the State Senate has anything to do with immigration. You're just playing on people's fears.

LANCE

Well, the Senate does have something to do with abortion. Would you vote for the fetal heartbeat bill?

HERBERT

They already approved it. It will probably go to the courts because Roe vs. Wade is still the law of the land. I don't like it. I can't approve of abortion and I think we need to educate all young men and women on what it entails. But let's say one of these brown-skinned, villainous people you always talk about gets your daughter pregnant. Now what do you do? I don't think any public servant should tell her what to do in that situation. I don't think God would either, quite frankly. It's great to talk about theory but what happens when it all comes home?

LANCE

You just said God approves of abortion. That'll be the end of your campaign, old man.

HERBERT

Well, maybe you can take that message into Montgomery County.

LANCE

You bet I will.

HERBERT

That's not in the district either! We just went over that!

(crowd laughs)

Well, if you don't mind, this has been fun. And I have enjoyed finally meeting Lance. You know how they say the camera adds 10 pounds? Not in this case. You're a lot fatter in person...Anyway, I think you folks know what you need to do. What my grandson needs to do is slip me a Percoset right now, and maybe drive me home so I can recover from this excitement. So thank you all.

(crowd applauds)

SCENE 10

(First Presbyterian Church, London, Ohio. CASSIE is making a video with HERBERT and the minister and his wife.)

HERBERT

I've literally been coming to this church for 82 years.

REV. DOLEMAN

That means he's older than all our Bibles.

HERBERT

(standing in the choir loft)

For many years I sang in the choir.

MRS. DOLEMAN

He was in the choir. I would quibble with the rest of that statement.

HERBERT

Every Saturday morning I would mow the lawn.

REV. DOLEMAN

James 5:4: Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you...In other words, we should have paid somebody else to do that..

HERBERT

And, as an usher, I would pass the plate.

MRS. DOLEMAN

You pass it to the row directly behind the plate that is coming toward you. Most people don't find that very difficult. Herbert was not one of those people.

HERBERT

What I learned here was simple: Worship God, respect those around you, reach out into the community, and don't look at your watch when the sermon reaches the 20-minute mark, which the Reverend exceeded on a weekly basis.

REV. DOLEMAN

(shrugs)

Sometimes, the spirit just moves you.

HERBERT

And leave the community better than the way you found it. I believe in the separation of church and state, but when you elect me to the State Senate, I'll use the teachings of Jesus as a guide to everything I do. So don't worry about my age. As Deuteronomy 34:7 teaches us, "Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eye was undimmed, and his vigor unabated." So I'm just getting started, all you ladies out there.

REV. DOLEMAN

(shakes his head, walks away)

SCENE 11

(7:30 a.m. Cassie picks up Herbert at the homeless shelter)

CASSIE

Moving kinda slow, huh, Pops?

HERBERT

I probably slept about two hours.

CASSIE

Where did you sleep?

HERBERT

The floor.

CASSIE

Oh, God. Let's go to Bob Evans for breakfast.

HERBERT

Sure. But it wasn't bad. I promised Walter I would spend the night there. So David took me over there about 10 last night. Walter couldn't believe it. I guess he thought I was bullshitting him. So we just kinda stood there, outside, and just hung out for most of the night.

CASSIE

Who was there?

HERBERT

(laughs)

I probably knew seven of them. It was unbelievable. They'd lost their jobs, they were alcoholics, they were hooked on pills. Guys I went to church with. Some were sons of guys I went to school with. They said they were happier in the shelter than they were out of it. What does that tell you? It's messed up.

CASSIE

Did you talk about the campaign?

HERBERT

Oh, hell, no. Walter would have blown the whistle on that. No, the only thing I said was, if I win I'll try to get

some money to keep the soup kitchen open five days a week. And I told them to make sure they registered to vote. Other than that, we just told stories. I'll probably go back next week.

(they go inside the restaurant)

CASSIE

I do have some good news.

(hands over copy of the Columbus Dispatch)

HERBERT

"Tenth District Generation Gap: Granger Hopes For Senior Moment."

CASSIE

I didn't even know they interviewed you.

HERBERT

Yeah, some gal called last week. Hah. It says Stryker was unavailable for comment.

CASSIE

The money's starting to come. We might be able to afford a poll. And more street signs. It's getting close. Only a couple of weeks left. And I got a great idea for another video. How about tomorrow morning?

HERBERT

I've got to see my new cardiologist in the morning. Dr. Shah.

CASSIE

See, that's perfect. I wanted you to make a video with five people in your life who are immigrants, or at least came from immigrants. You've got Raul the auto mechanic, Miyako the massage therapist, Akano the assistant pastor...

HERBERT

Well, let's not commit to anything. He specifically said

he wanted to talk to me. So it might not be the happiest conversation.

CASSIE

Have you had chest pain?

HERBERT

No, but I had an echocardiogram and a stress test. And I've been tired.

CASSIE

We can postpone the meeting with the ministers this afternoon.

HERBERT

No, no. We've got to push on. It's your fault and David's fault. You guys work so hard I'm not going to let you down.

CASSIE

You're our inspiration.

HERBERT

Nah. I'm just an old fart who says whatever he wants because most people think he's fruit-loopy anyway. I never realized what a huge advantage I have. People will forgive me for just about everything. They want me to succeed because they want to be 82 and functioning. Actually they just want to be 82 themselves. That's why I'm nervous about this cardiologist. Old Dr. Kass would have said, screw it, do whatever you want. This young guy might want to shut me down.

CASSIE

It's your health, Pops. You're Pops first, a Senator later. In fact, if you hold out long enough you might be my Pops-in-law. How about that?

HERBERT

Nothing would make me happier. Nothing, except beating this son of a bitch. That's a little scary, isn't it, how much I want to win?

CASSIE

Welcome to politics.

SCENE 12

(David is driving Herbert to Cedarville University to meet students)

DAVID

So what did the heart guy say?

HERBERT

He said he had bad news and worse news. I asked him about the bad news and he said, "You have pancreatic cancer." I said, "Jesus, what the hell is the worse news?" He said, "You have Alzheimer's." I said, "Well, at least it's not pancreatic cancer."

DAVID

That was a great joke the first 99 times I heard it, but if you do it publicly, don't preface it by saying you went to the heart doctor. That makes no sense. What did he really say?

HERBERT

He said we'd talk after the election.

DAVID

Bullshit. What did he say?

HERBERT

(sighs)

It could have been worse. Two arteries are over 50 percent blocked. He can put stents in there, but he'd rather do a bypass.

DAVID

Even at your age.

HERBERT

Well, I'm not the ideal patient, but, yes, even at my age.

DAVID

How could it have been worse, exactly?

HERBERT

Four blocked arteries, I guess.

DAVID

So what are you going to do?

HERBERT

I was up all night thinking about it and I still don't know.

DAVID

Well, anyway, I got a surprise for you. The Governor is going to be here and wants to talk.

HERBERT

Really? I guess we just happen to be in his hometown. I've known him off and on, over the years. What does he want?

DAVID

It sounded like a special trip. His chief of staff called me.

HERBERT

Maybe he wants some political tips.

(an hour later. In parking lot on Cedarville campus)

GOV. SCHEINBAUM

(gets into passenger's seat)

Herbert, it's been a long time.

HERBERT

Sure has, Governor. You're looking good.

GOV. SCHEINBAUM

It's Mike, and thanks. When you get to be 73, that's a good place to be.

HERBERT

So you wanted to get some advice from someone with more experience.

GOV. SCHEINBAUM

(laughs)

No. Actually I wanted to congratulate you for what you're doing. This is one of the most amazing campaigns I've ever seen and it underlines what I've always thought. The only important thing is the candidate. And either you or David or somebody has realized that.

HERBERT

His girlfriend Cassie has been right there with us.

GOV. SCHEINBAUM

Now, I've been calling around and I think it's going to be nip and tuck. I also think something just might happen between now and then. If you just sit tight, keep doing what you're doing, I believe you're going to win this thing, and I certainly hope you do, because this little schmuck is going after all our jobs if he wins. So just plug away. You're the type of person I want to work with in the Senate. We've got some real characters there, as you know. But you've been a Godsend for us. Without you we'd be stuck with Stryker. He has about as much interest in governing as I do in cross-stitching.

HERBERT

Thank you. Nice to be back home, huh?

GOV. SCHEINBAUM

It is and I'm always surprised. You're a kid and you can't wait to get away. Then you miss those screened front porches and the sweet gum trees in the fall. I was in Washington for 12 years. It got to the point that I'd think about Ohio and I'd want to cry. That's why we need you, Herbert. You came from the same soil. You care about us.

HERBERT

I do indeed. Thank you, Governor. It's an honor.

(Gov. leaves, David gets in)

DAVID

What's the good word?

HERBERT

(sighs)

We're going to win. Something's going to happen to Stryker next week, but he wouldn't tell me what it was. And I'm supposed to just play it straight and not rock the boat.

DAVID

So that's good. Right?

HERBERT

Except for one thing, David. I can't do that.

SCENE 13

(Herbert's house. David is filming. Cassie is there)

HERBERT

On Tuesday, you decide who represents the 10th District in the Ohio State Senate. Until this campaign I never realized how important that is. My eyes have been opened to all the problems and all the exciting solutions that we can achieve. And if I'm sounding more like a politician than usual, don't worry, the drugs will wear off soon.

A politician in my position wouldn't make the announcement that I'm making today. It's late in a campaign that I think we're going to win, over a totally unqualified candidate. A politician would hide the fact that last week, a cardiologist discovered two blocked arteries around my heart, and is suggesting a procedure, either a by-pass operation or the insertion of stents. As you might have heard, I'm 82 years old. An 82-year-old heart has enough stresses, considering my time in Vietnam and the demands of my totally dysfunctional family. So I'm not sure it can withstand a major operation.

If you're wondering, I am not withdrawing from the election. But you deserve to know just how decrepit and sickly your next State Senator might be. I fully plan to serve my first two years in Columbus. After that, we shall see. At the moment I'm feeling good and strong and ready to join a bunch of folks, mostly men, who have spent their adult lives screwing people like you and me. Maybe I can make a difference, at least if I can upgrade my heart to 5G. Thank you and please vote on Tuesday.

DAVID

That's great. I don't agree with it, but it's great.

HERBERT

You've got all your life to deceive people. I don't have any stepping stones to worry about...I'm pretty close to shore.

DAVID

And, coincidentally, while we were doing this, look at the breaking news...

HERBERT

(glances at phone)

"District 10 Candidate Investigated For Domestic Violence; Wife Hospitalized." Well, that isn't me, so it must be Stryker.

DAVID

I think so. I'd rather have a bad heart than no heart at all.

HERBERT

(smiles)

Great line. Got room for one more video?

DAVID

No. The Governor said to cool it. But, maybe we can just make one for ourselves.

SCENE 14

(Election Day. Cassie drives Herbert to the church fellowship hall to vote at 9 a.m. He comes out 20 minutes later.)

CASSIE

What took you so long? I almost came in there.
Thought maybe one of those stints had come loose.

HERBERT

(sits in the front passenger seat)
Why didn't you tell me I had to vote for everybody
except Joe Shit The Ragman?

CASSIE

What do you mean?

HERBERT

Judges, water district supervisors, the sheriff, the clerk of court, the coroner....How do you figure out who's a good coroner? I mean, what's the qualification. 'Yeah, I took a look at him. He didn't move for five minutes. So now I officially rule that he's dead. Cause of death? I don't know. He's a fat SOB. Could be anything.'''

CASSIE

Stop it. There was plenty of information on the Internet. You just didn't read it.

HERBERT

I thought I'd just find my name, put a big X on there, and get out. But no. It said 'City council. Vote for three.' Out of four. Too bad they didn't have pictures. I could have ruled out the ugly one.

CASSIE

I don't think there's any difference between this election and the last one. How did you handle that?

HERBERT

(after a pause)

Uh....I don't remember. I know they didn't have all these touchscreens. You just took a stylus and you punched a hole next to your candidate.

CASSIE

That's the way they did it the last time you voted?

HERBERT

Yep. Is that a problem?

CASSIE

Pops. The last time you voted, who did you vote for, for President?

HERBERT

You know, I was trying to think about that.

CASSIE

Oh, for God's sake....

HERBERT

I believe it was Bob Dole. That's right. I didn't like any of those Bushes. But Bob Dole, he fought in the war and got wounded, and he had a great sense of humor...Of course, he got beat by that damn Clinton. Yeah, I thnk that was it.

CASSIE

So you haven't voted since 1996.

HERBERT

Yeah, that sounds about right.

CASSIE

(exhales)

Thank God you didn't tell anybody that during the campaign.

HERBERT

Nobody asked me. But I don't see where that's a big deal. Don't I have the right not to vote, if it means voting for Bozo 1 instead of Bozo 2? Either way, I'd be voting for a Bozo. Nobody can tell the difference between most of these guys. Or girls. Sorry, Cassie.

CASSIE

I'm not worried about being gender-perfect. I'm worried about somebody finding out about this and spreading it around the district. It's not too late, you know. Somebody could say, 'He's old and he doesn't know anything and he's got a bad heart and, worst of all, he doesn't give a damn because it's been so long since he voted.'

HERBERT

Blame David. It was all his idea. He talked me into it. In fact, if I win and we have a tornado or something, that will be my official position. Blame David.

CASSIE

(laughs)

Yeah. I do a lot of that myself. Besides, nobody can call you one of the regular bozos. You're a bozo of your own making.

HERBERT

That's right. In fact I think I'm older than Bozo. Look that one up on your Google.

CASSIE

(checks phone)
You're absolutely right. He only came along in 1946...But I am surprised you didn't vote for McCain.

HERBERT

I meant to. But Alma left us that year. So I wasn't paying much attention to politics.

CASSIE

I'm sorry. I wish I'd known her. In fact, I wonder what she'd think about this adventure.

HERBERT

She'd be shaking her head, like she did anytime I did anything. And then she'd be standing right there with me. I wish you'd known her, too. She'd be bugging you right now about why you and David aren't married.

CARRIE

(laughs)
Even more than you do?

HERBERT

I don't mean to be a pain. It's just that David needs somebody.

CARRIE

(quietly)
I know, Pops. He's had a rough life. I don't need to tell you. And we don't talk about it much. He deserves to be happy. I just don't know how much I want the responsibility of him being happy, or unhappy, or whatever's in between. And sometimes I feel like I am. Know what I mean? It's a little tricky. But just be patient and we'll get there.

HERBERT

You just told me to be patient when I'm 82, with little staples holding my heart together.

CASSIE

I know. I just meant that things will work out if they're meant to be. Now. What are we doing the rest of the day?

HERBERT

You tell me.

CASSIE

Well, if you feel like it, we'll head over to Springfield and shake a few hands. Then we'll get you home so you can take a nap before the polls close and the vote starts rolling in.

HERBERT

Good. I'll be on pins and needles wondering if I voted for the right guy for coroner. I might be running into that guy soon.

CASSIE

(squeezes his hand before she starts the car)
Listen to you. You'll put us all in the ground before you're through.

SCENE 15

(Election Night. HERBERT's house. DAVID, CASSIE and PAULA are there. DAVID and CASSIE are looking at their laptops).

HERBERT

Hey, people, six pizzas are going to be enough, I think. You're already exceeded the prescribed acceptable pizza-to-beer ratio. So it's either less pizza or more beer. I

vote for (B). So, Paula, you are the designated beer-fetcher.

PAULA

In about three more beers I won't be.

HERBERT

Why do you people want me to get that third blockage? They don't give you extra points for that.

DAVID

Hey, Pops, half the precincts in Bellbrook are in and we're up by 400 votes.

CASSIE

Up? We should be getting killed in Bellbrook.

DAVID

Who knows? This is virgin territory. They're all Republican areas. I think we need to win big in Springfield but I'm flying blind.

HERBERT

Am I going to have to make a speech? I've got some Churchill books around here somewhere. "We will fight on the beaches...."

DAVID

You probably will. Didn't you see those TV trucks out there?

HERBERT

Is the cute blonde from Channel 13 going to be here?

DAVID

Are you drunk?

HERBERT

I asked you first.

DAVID

We'll have a media training session later. One rule is that you don't call your interviewer "honey" under any circumstances.

HERBERT

Rules are made to be broken. Oh, hell, let's just let all of them in. Paula, order five more pizzas. They can supply their own beer.

DAVID

Sure. They might know something we don't know.

HERBERT

And when I have the big one they can get the up-close footage. It'll be like Howard Beale.

CASSIE

Howard Beale?

HERBERT

Never mind.

DAVID

I don't know how significant it is, but nobody has seen Stryker.

HERBERT

I can't lose to a wife-beater, can I?

DAVID

He's saying, "I can't lose to a geezer with a bad heart, can I?"

CASSIE

Look at this. We've got 30,000 votes with 55 percent of the vote in. Heller had 30,000 total in the primary last time.

HERBERT

I'm winning?

CASSIE

By 1,000 votes with hardly anything in from Springfield.

(David's phone rings)

DAVID

Hello? Yes, I'll hold, of course...Hello, Governor. Fine, and you? Sure, I can tell him. How do you know? Right, of course, you're the Governor. OK, I appreciate it.

HERBERT

What?

DAVID

He says you're destroying him. You might get 60 percent.

HERBERT

Is that right? Well, maybe you should practice bowing down to me every time I walk into the room.

CASSIE

First, let's go into the kitchen.

(they hold hands and bow heads)

Father, thank you for giving us the strength to run this race. Thank you for Herbert and the way you have given him the energy and the wisdom. Thank you for David, my best friend and my love. Please guide us in whatever we do next and, if we're fortunate enough to win, help us make a difference. In Jesus' name, Amen.

HERBERT

And thank you for letting us kick this guy's ass.

DAVID

I think the Lord might have hung up on that one.

(He looks down at his phone.)

Look, Pops. Lance just texted. He congratulated us. Said he actually enjoyed it and wished you the best of luck. Said he'll be heading into rehab and hopes he can change his life. I don't know why he was telling me this.

HERBERT

I doubt if he's confiding in his wife these days. But, hey, I don't wish him any harm. That was nice of him to say that. He might not be a waste of skin after all.

(opens door)

OK, friends and neighbors. And there's Walter! Come on in, my friend. Your floor is my floor.

SCENE 15

(Six months later. Herbert is in Columbus, for the swearing-in)

DAVID

I thought that once you learn how to tie a tie, you never forgot. I think you forgot.

HERBERT

You mean the ends aren't supposed to be the same size?

DAVID

OK, let me mess with it. They're going to take pictures, you know.

HERBERT

And why are we doing this on Jan. 1? I might not get home in time for the Rose Bowl.

DAVID

You look good. How do you feel?

HERBERT

Those stents are great. Blood is flowing pretty good.

Maybe I should get two more.

DAVID

Well, the next surgery is for your car, because we can't drive you around anymore. Or you could always break down and get a new one. They got this thing called zero percent down, and this other thing called zero percent interest.

HERBERT

Yeah, but I promised these yokels I wouldn't take a salary, remember?

DAVID

You're so tight, limbo was invented the first time you went to a pay toilet.

HERBERT

And damn proud of it, boy. When you getting married, by the way?

DAVID

Come on, Pops. We almost lost our jobs getting you elected. We've got a ton of stuff to do.

HERBERT

I think they're calling us.

DAVID

Not us. You.

(Herbert goes into the chamber, puts hand on Bible)

I, Herbert David Granger, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the duties of the Ohio State Senate to the best of my ability, without fear or favor.

(The Senators applaud. Herbert walks to his desk. He finds a recliner, a footstool and a pair of slippers. He turns to address the body.)

HERBERT

So you think I need all this stuff, huh? All this time I was afraid I'd be the only smart-ass in this chamber. Thank you so much. All I've got to say is: Enjoy me while you can.

(end of play)