

What You Don't Know
by Kyrie Dunphy

“Sir, it’s a brain eating amoeba,” Sam said as he fidgeted with his nametag.

He didn’t want to tell his boss this, but the other coworkers sent him to give the bad news regarding the recent incident at the water park.

“Thank you, Sam. That’s all,” Wayne Davis, CEO of Davis Mountain Park, said as he sat in his leather chair in front of various concept art for the park’s expansion projects.

His large office overlooked the park and the beautiful North Carolina mountains. Every now and then, you could hear people screaming from the roller coasters.

Sam left as fast as he could. Wayne turned to his chief operations officer, Ralph Winter, and said, “I can’t believe it! What’s a brain eating amoeba anyways?”

“Remember, Wayne, they told us that this amoeba grows in the summertime in all bodies of water in the south,” Ralph said. “I’m afraid we’ll have to shut down the water park. We already had one person infected.”

“We’re not shutting the park down! Next weekend is our biggest attendance days because of the holiday. It’ll hurt our business.”

“But Wayne, they have the rest of the park to enjoy, not just the water park.”

“The temperatures are expected to reach the nineties. It’s perfect weather for a water park. Think of the revenue in towel and float rentals! Plus, we always get a big spike in food and drink sales from the water park crowd,” Wayne said.

Ralph said, “I can’t believe you would want to risk our patrons and reputation for money. What happened to you, Wayne?”

“Look around, Winter! How are we going to pay for this expansion?! One kid is infected, but if we don’t expand, attendance will drop and we’ll have to lay off hundreds of people.”

Sam ran back in, his face pale from shock. He didn’t want to be here to once again inform his bosses about the terrible news.

“What now?” Wayne asked. “Sam, you should be knocking before running in.”

“I’m sorry, sir, but...that kid who got infected with the brain eating amoeba just died.” Sam said before running back out. He hated his job and wished he wasn’t the one who had to deliver the bad news.

“Don’t you see the consequences? The health department will be coming to check the park! I better go see what I can do with the family. We don’t want a lawsuit,” Ralph said.

Wayne sat in silence as he pondered what to do about this situation. What was the best solution to handle something like this? He looked out the window at the park as the tourists laughed and walked around. When he started his park, he wanted people to enjoy it and tell everyone about it. Wayne didn’t know it was going to be so complicated. He needed to expand to stay afloat. Hundreds depended on him for their livelihood.

“That’s it,” he said. “I have the idea for the PERFECT cover up!”

Wayne then called his secretary and asked her to send in the head of marketing.

A few hours later, he talked to Ralph about his idea.

“Zombies? Really?” Ralph asked.

“What else eats brains?” Wayne said. “The conspiracy theorists will love it! It’ll become an urban legend and will increase our profits for Halloween!”

Ralph shook his head. What was he going to do now? People were going to be at risk and his boss only cared about the money. Hopefully, the statistics were true and the infection was very rare.

“I talked to the family of that kid and made a deal with them. They’ll be quiet, so that’s taken care of. What about the health inspector? The bacteria is still there.”

“Remember what you told me, Ralph, the bacteria is there all the time and it’s very rare that someone gets infected. People will attach themselves to the zombie urban legend because medical and science stuff is boring to them.”

Wayne walked up to Ralph, put his hand on his shoulder, and said, “Relax, Ralph. Look at them out there having a good time. What they don’t know won’t hurt them.”

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