

A Fly in the Oval Office

By Dennis Knight

His desk was stacked with briefs yet to be read after another long, busy day in the oval office. It had been a stream of hobnobs, brief moments with staff, and ceremonial events with everyday citizens. It had also been a day of ducking incoming grenades and lobbing them back to a Congress he had often scolded as recalcitrant.

Recalcitrant? Now that's just too polite; constipated would be more like it.

The chief executive reflected on matters of politics and state as he put his feet up and leaned back in the comfortable old chair which has served presidents since JFK. It squeaked in protest.

Wonder what Boehner would say if I oiled this thing?

Chuckling at his private joke, he sensed himself dozing off. Blinking to fight off sleep, his eyes focused on the wall left of the Rockwell painting. It was a big old fly.

Now, how did that thing get in here?

The fly flitted about the big room and alighted on the Presidential blotter.

Sit there, bugger, and let me get a look at you. You got a microphone? A camera? Did Putin send you? Nah, you're just a fly, but how'd you get in here? Was it one of the girls? Biden?

The head of state put his feet down, squared around, and reached across his desk. The fly retreated to a bust of Lincoln as the President picked up a report, a small one of thirty pages, and tried to get to work. It was one of those rare moments of distraction when words on paper refuse to register in his mind.

That stupid bug is hiding, but he's in here. Is he on the Remington? In the apple bowl? Somewhere around here there must be a fly swatter.

The president opened each door and drawer of the old desk, and searched the room, looking behind drapes and checking secret doors, nooks and crannies. It's a masterpiece of design, the oval office, with windows and a door to the rose garden, built-in book cases, a fireplace, handsome furniture and tasteful furnishings, but no fly swatter.

If he was to get any work done tonight, that fly had to go. He picked up the document he was trying to read, rolled it into a weapon, set his jaw, and began to stalk his prey. The fly played with him, landing here and there, always within a swat's reach, but always just escaping. One more whap and a floral arrangement toppled to the floor. Then, like the last election, the game tilted in the president's favor. With his opponent finally cornered in a room without corners, he paused, considered the fly's daring courage, and had a change of heart.

Okay, Mr. Fly, you're mine now, but I'm giving you a presidential pardon. When I open this door to the rose garden, you will be free to fly away, but do me a favor. There's a fellow over in the Senate...