



The Manager Sandwich The Facts

- Cathy, a bright, aggressive, 30-ish corporate climber, quickly ascends to Director of Technical Publications in a major corporation, using her husband (a director in an associated department) as a stepping stone. She leaves a *bloody* path.
- You are a manager, one of Cathy's four direct reports, supervising four writers, a graphic artist, and two desktop publishing specialists.
- While one of your writers, a self-proclaimed *wild thing* does good work, he also delights in the shock value of his pony tail and dangling eye-ball earring. He is infamous for his pointed, public-questioning of the CEO and VPs in divisional meetings.
- Shortly after the word of Cathy's pending divorce hits the grapevine, rumors abound of an affair between her and someone in the department. But Cathy's righteous indignation quells any discussion of the matter, at least in public.
- As weeks and months pass, you begin to realize that Willie is completely aware of every private, management-related discussion between you and Cathy, especially concerning Willie's antics.
- You find out accidentally and after the fact, that Willie has called a high-level executive in another division a "pinhead"-in writing no less-and that Cathy has purposely kept the matter from you. When you approach her about the matter, you are told the matter is closed.
- More and more, you and the rest of the publications department become aware of the unmistakable fact that Cathy and Willie are having an affair, and that you are caught between the two in a *manager sandwich*.
- Cathy's continued denial of the obvious makes a direct approach difficult.
- Cathy's boss, a senior VP, seems to prefer to look the other way.

What Do You Do?

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The Elusive Engineer: Some Solutions

1. If the elusive co-author does not answer his phone or return messages, try his pager if he has one.
2. Use e-mail or, if you're really lucky and gutsy, get your network admin to slip in a network broadcast message just for Dr. Habbibi.
3. Use hall talk--if you see someone in the hall who knows Dr. Habbibi, mention that you're waiting on critical files from him.
4. Send Dr. Habbibi a fax.
5. Make Security your friend, especially Security attached to Dr. Habbibi's building.
6. Find out what kind of car Dr. Habbibi drives, and leave notes on the windshield.
7. Find out what meetings he is scheduled to attend and, if possible, hover outside the meeting room door.
8. If you know someone else is going to the secured building, send a message with that person.
9. If Dr. Habbibi has an officemate, have that person leave notes on Dr. Habbibi's computer.
10. Inundate Dr. Habbibi's admin with urgent pleas. Find out when Dr. Habbibi will be in the office so that you don't waste your messages.
11. Have your manager talk to his manager.

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