

Road to Ruin

By Jack Hall

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CHARACTERS

Elaine and Dave - A married couple

Pastor - Joel Osteen (Just kidding! Or am I?)

Elaine is at a table, typing on a laptop. Dave is nearby in a chair, reading. Elaine stops to read something on the screen.

ELAINE: Oh? *(pause)* Ohhhhh.... *(pause)* Oh my. Mm mm mm.

Elaine types a little. She pauses.

ELAINE: Dave, what's our bank account number?

DAVE: Hmm?

ELAINE: Our bank account number. Do you have it?

DAVE: Why?

ELAINE: I need it. The bank is updating our online account.

Dave stands up.

DAVE: What?

ELAINE: They had a server crash, and they need us to re-enter--

DAVE: *(having a panic attack)* What are you doing?

ELAINE: I was--

DAVE: For goodness sakes, you didn't send anything, didn't you?

ELAINE: Dave, you're scaring me.

DAVE: You're scaring me! Here. *(pushes her aside)* Let me handle this. *(starts clicking frantically)* Delete. Delete. Delete. And... Mark as Spam. *(sighs)* Okay. There you go.

Dave walks back, sits down.

ELAINE: What just happened?

DAVE: You almost gave away our life savings.

ELAINE: I did not!

DAVE: You did!

ELAINE: The bank emailed me for our information. It's our bank, Dave.

DAVE: It's called phishing, dear.

ELAINE: Fishing?

DAVE: With a P-H. People send out emails that look like they're our bank to try to steal our bank info. Then they go into our account and clean us out.

ELAINE: Is that legal?

DAVE: No.

ELAINE: Does it happen a lot?

DAVE: It almost happened here.

ELAINE: Oh my! I didn't realize-- I'm sorry.

DAVE: Yeah... I'm sorry I reacted like I did.

ELAINE: I understand why you were so crazy now. How do I keep that from happening again?

DAVE: You just have to be careful. Any email you get from the bank or our investment companies, you have to make sure they're legit.

ELAINE: How?

DAVE: Go to the source. Go to the company. If you log in to the web page, and it asks you for information, give it. But don't click on just any link in an email. They'll just divert you to another website and steal your soul.

ELAINE: My soul?

DAVE: Okay, maybe not your soul. But once they get you on their path and not the right one, boom. You're toast.

ELAINE: Got it.

Elaine goes back to typing.

ELAINE: I always forget there are dangerous people out there.

DAVE: *(puts down his book)* It's a mad world, honey. *(picks up the TV remote)* If you're not careful, you'll find yourself on the road to ruin.

Dave clicks on the TV.

PASTOR: Good evening, brothers and sisters. I'm Pastor Dan Feelgood of Mega-Flock Community Church, broadcastin' live over 150 satellites to God's children around the world.

DAVE: Huh.

PASTOR: I know many of you out there in our viewing audience have grown up with this image of a mean, angry God who hates sin and wants you to grovel for forgiveness.

DAVE: Tell me about it.

PASTOR: Well guess what, friends? The God I know is not a hater. He's a lover. He loves you. He thinks you're just the bomb. And as for all that grovelin' and repentin', that's all hogwash.

Elaine looks at the TV in disbelief. Dave sits up, attentive.

DAVE: No foolin'?

PASTOR: No foolin', my friend. God's not lookin' for you to put him on a pedestal. He wants to put you on the pedestal. It's true! It says so in the Bible!

DAVE: Where?

Elaine exits, shaking her head in disbelief.

PASTOR: I can't remember where right now, but it's in there. God wants to put you on a pedestal. You know what else he wants to put up there? Money. Lots of it. Money and good health and a good IRA. Matter of fact, if you act now and buy my book, "Amazing Grace, Amazing You," God will throw in a brand new car and a two percent reduction in your mortgage.

DAVE: Really?

PASTOR: Yes, really! My friends, it's a new day in Christianity. It's pay day, and God's cut a check paid to the order of you! Don't you wanna claim it?

Elaine enters with a Bible.

DAVE: Yes I do!

PASTOR: Grab your Visa card, pick up the phone and dial 1-800--

Elaine grabs the remote and clicks off the TV.

DAVE: Hey! What are you doing?

ELAINE: You were right. If you're not careful, you'll find yourself on the road to ruin.