

Overview of our book *Fortune's Impasse*:

Dan Fortune gave up his personal dreams and aspirations on the sudden death of his father to salvage a rundown community food market, and to provide for his mother. Through hard work, skill and good luck, Dan grew that local market into a major chain of markets and a vertically integrated food business.

Despite this apparent success, Dan felt that things were out of control. Life was complex, too complex. His wife Marnie felt that their family was falling apart and internal strife between his two eldest children, who were both vying to run the business, threatened to undo everything that he and Marnie had worked so hard to build.

For those who are involved in a family business or a business family in any capacity, *Fortune's Impasse* will provide inspiration, hope and guidance on how to achieve clarity, control and a good outcome for everyone involved.

Another Shoe Drops

It is said that bad things, such as celebrity deaths, come in threes, but if you pay close attention, good things often happen that way as well.

The second piece of good fortune that came Dan's way happened just over a week after RJ had started working in the Market. Dan had been duly impressed by her work ethic and noticed that she cheerfully took on any task that needed to be done and was competent both behind the scenes and at the front end of working life at the Market.

Observing her helping unload a truck one day had been a revelation. The driver from the produce supplier and Dan's brother Peter were sending cases of product down the rollers out of the trailer as fast as they could, and RJ was stacking them with time and energy to spare. As he often did, Dan had come back to help out but by the time he arrived the order had been offloaded.

He was just about to sign off on the bill of lading for the shipment when he heard, "Uh-oh. Don't sign that, Dan. We have a problem." She had opened one of the boxes of lettuce to find some of the heads with a less-than-market-fresh look to them. She grabbed one of the more wilted heads and advanced on the driver.

“What are you trying to deliver to us?” she asked with a look that told the driver he might be force-fed the greens if he didn’t come up with some sort of explanation. With Dan in her peripheral vision she faced the unfortunate man with a gaze that was all icy vehemence. “This won’t do for Fortune Family Markets, my friend.” Turning back to the stacked boxes, she told the driver and Peter to help her look through the remainder of the shipment to check it. In the end she found 18 of 30 boxes were in various states of decay.

Interrupting the terrified man’s protests that he was only the driver, RJ said, “Here’s what you’re going to do for us. First, I want whoever runs your company to give Mr. Fortune or myself a call to explain your firm’s quality standards because those standards let us all down today. These look like they were picked a week ago. Second, you’re going to load these cases back on that truck, go back, get us replacements and be back here stat. That’s good, right? Oh and when we’re happy, we’ll pay for this shipment and not before that.” The offending cases were loaded back onto the truck. Eyeing RJ cautiously, the driver edged away toward the cab of the truck, nodding, and drove away.

Dan watched all this unfold more as a spectator than a participant and shook his head. He was just starting to feel like he could put a mental framework around making the Market a better business, and in his heart he knew that the foundation of his vision would be on building out from himself; one day the business would require a nucleus of passionate people. He realized that RJ was going to be part of that and that she had the personality to push things forward. It might even help Peter, he thought.

“Uhh ... good job, RJ, but its Fortune Family *Market*, not *Markets*,” he murmured, thinking she was already out of earshot. RJ had moved on with Peter to get the good portion of the shipment uncrated and out to the counter.

“Well, it will never be ‘Markets’ if we don’t start making sure the people of this town get the very best we can be provide to them and their families. It won’t even be ‘Market’,” came her loud, sharp retort as it volleyed across the produce counters toward his back. Dan noticed several shoppers look up with a start.

Knowing she was right, but smarting from her aggressive way, he thought of rounding back on her and reminding the brash younger woman just who was boss. He continued to stare away from her, pretending to look at the time clock and thinking better of making this conversation bigger than it needed to be. He smiled inwardly and thought, well she's as tough as nails but she's a keeper.

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By Tim Maloney and Randy McLachlan available on Amazon and www.fortunesimpasse.com