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PETER: Thomas, was it really necessary to go into this investigation behind my back?

STOCKMANN: Yes, until I was convinced myself, there was no point it...

PETER: And now you are convinced?

STOCKMANN: Well, certainly--aren't you, too, Peter? *(Pause.)* The University chemists corroborated...

PETER: You intend to present this document to the Board of Directors, officially, as the medical officer of the Springs?

STOCKMANN: Of course, something's got to be done, and quick.

PETER: You always use such strong expressions, Thomas. Among other things, in your report, you say that we *guarantee* our guests and visitors a permanent case of poisoning.

STOCKMANN: Yes, but, Peter, how can you describe it any other way? Imagine! Poisoned internally and externally!

PETER: So you merrily conclude that we must build a waste disposal plant--and reconstruct a brand new water system from the bottom up?

STOCKMANN: Well, do you know some other way out? I don't.

PETER: I took a little walk over to the city engineer this morning and in the course of conversation I sort of jokingly mentioned these changes--as something we might consider for the future, you know.

STOCKMANN: The future won't be soon enough, Peter.

PETER: The engineer kind of smiled at my extravagance and gave me a few facts. I don't suppose you've taken the trouble to consider what your proposed changes would cost?

STOCKMANN: No, I never thought of that...

PETER: Naturally. Your little project would come to at least three hundred thousand crowns.

STOCKMANN: *(Sitting.)* That expensive?

PETER: Oh, don't look so upset--it's only money. The worst thing is that it would take some two years.

STOCKMANN: Two years?

PETER: At the least, and what do you propose we do about the Springs in the meantime--shut them up, no doubt! Because we'd have to, you know. As soon as the rumor gets around that the water is dangerous, we won't have a visitor left. And that's the picture, Thomas--you have it in your power to literally ruin your own town.

STOCKMANN: *(Rises.)* Now look, Peter! I don't want to ruin anything.

PETER: Thomas, your report has not convinced me that the condition are as dangerous as you try to make them.

STOCKMANN: Now, listen, they are even worse than the report makes them out to be. Remember, summer is coming, and the warm weather.

PETER: *I* think you're exaggerating. A capable physician out to know what precautions to take.

STOCKMANN: And then what?

PETER: The existing water supplies or the Springs area s fact, Thomas, and they've got to be treated as a fact. If you are reasonable and act with discretion, the directors of the Institute will be inclined to take under consideration any means to reasonably and without financial sacrifices make possible improvements.

STOCKMANN: Dear God, do you think for one minute that I would ever agree to such trickery?

PETER: Trickery?

STOCKMANN: Yes, a trick, a fraud, a lie, a treachery--a downright crime against the public and against the whole community.

PETER: I said before that I'm not convinced that there is any actual danger.

STOCKMANN: Oh, you aren't? Anything else is impossible! My report is an absolute fact. The only trouble is that you and your administration were the

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ones who insisted that the water supply be built where it is, and now you're afraid to admit the blunder you committed. Damn it! Don't you think I can see through it all?

PETER: All right, let's suppose that is true. Maybe I do care a little about my reputation. I still say I do it for the good of the town; without moral authority there can be no government. *And that is why, Thomas, it is my duty to prevent your report from reaching the Board.* Sometime later I will bring up the matter for discussion. In the meantime, not a single word is to reach the public.