

Mr. Lithium

BACKGROUND

This is a satirical story about Mark Latham, opposition leader of the ALP who in 2004 very nearly became Prime Minister. The following year The Latham Diaries was published which was a scathing attack on his political party and the broader political landscape. Many described him as a loose cannon and not quite right. Not long after the release of his book, he disappeared from public life and faded into obscurity. Until now, this is where I pick up the story.

The beginning is based on two tragic real events totally unrelated to Mark Latham and are used to set up the story. Two expat Australians were involved in separate incidents that sparked worldwide media coverage. The first incident involved the Chinese government's detention of a Rio Tinto executive on suspicion of spying. The second incident was the shooting murder of a young expat working at the Indonesian Freeport Copper mine.

Imagine recruiting for the replacements....

BEGIN

Rio Tinto has an exciting opportunity for a Data Mining analyst within their Industrial Espionage department and I'm told the incumbent must hit the ground running. An exciting opportunity also exists at the Freeport Copper mine for a Trouble Shooter after the previous incumbent simply hit the ground.

The former Australian Prime Minister aspirant, Mark Lithium now Freeport company spokesperson has been fired for making insensitive comments in a media statement released earlier today. In it he said, "Look, we are saddened by the tragic event and are reminded of the dangers faced by those working abroad in remote parts of the world. Regrettably there's no silver lining to this story nor is there a silver bullet to fixing lawlessness up here." And without warning Mr. Lithium grabbed a young cadet reporter from the dozen or so reporters within Freeport's press gallery. The frightened cub journalist was violently spun around and what lay before his eyes was the world's largest open cut mine and the biggest, heavy machinery he'd ever seen. "Do you know why there are no silver bullets up here, kid?" barked Mr Lithium.

"No I ddd... don't" stammered the nervous reporter. "Because this is a Copper mine you imbecile" said the smug Lithium pleased with his ironic stage show so far. He added further, "And I'm here to tell youse all that that this is a fucken big hole too. Bigger than the one I dug in Canberra and to all the arse lickers in Canberra I salute you!"

Yes indeed, it appears that Heavy metal runs through the veins of Mr Lithium.

Freeport management has confirmed that Mr Lithium was fired immediately after his outburst today and when he emerged from the Kiln badly burnt had a message. If the maniacal stare and glazed eyes weren't enough, the defiant, "I'm not done yet!" remark certainly created a stir. He spent two days recovering in the Freeport Infirmary before being released.

Prior to his charter flight out, Mr Lithium had said his final goodbyes and was making his way back to his quarters when he noticed the hazardous chemicals storage facility open and unattended. Unknowingly, he'd literally come to the fork in his road. Curiosity got the better of him and as he proceeded through the entrance, was tripped by the fork of a forklift parked at right angles to the doorway. After cursing whoever had decided to park it there and after very nearly head butting the second fork, he noticed a solitary plastic container resting on top of the fork. It looked like a school lunch box and definitely seemed out of place. It looked as if it belonged in the kitchen mess and so when Mr Lithium read the label, "Yellow Cake" he decided he'd do the right thing and return it to the kitchen. Unfortunately, he never made it. Lithium was hungry and chowed down much of the cake that was nothing like the Butter cake he hoped it was.

Mr Lithium was in a bad way. Back in the infirmary, the deadly man lay on his back wondering how the hell he was going to spend the next 24,000 years. That's only the half of it. Cash was going to be a problem. Royalties from his book," The Lithium diaries" and his parliamentary pension would last for the first 10,000 years. Beyond that, he had no idea how he could ever climb out of the very sizable hole he was in. Mr Lithium was in a whole lot of trouble. He was in a Black hole where nothing matters, not even matter.

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