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When Pigeons Launch Missiles

In this animation by Martell Animation, a secret agent is on break and about to enjoy a bagel when a pigeon throws his day into chaos. At first, the pigeon innocently eyes the agent's bagel and the agent throws it to the pigeon. When the pigeon goes after the bagel, it smacks into the agent's suitcase and gets shut inside, now able to access all sorts of buttons, gadgets, and weapons. At the climax of the story, a button is accidentally pressed, setting off a missile headed for Moscow, Russia. Through this animation, the creators are commenting on the way a series of unlikely coincidences can balloon into a national emergency. By using a spoof of Mission: Impossible, the animation makes fun of the idea of a serious mission. Furthermore, it uses dramatic irony to make a comment about how dangerous it can be when those who are not knowledgeable come to have power, and situational irony to suggest how a situation can be made worse when trying to solve it.

The premise and title of the animation are a parody of *Mission: Impossible*, a series of action spy films. The foundation of the humor comes from the contrast between the high-stakes, intense plots in *Mission: Impossible* and the mundane, bumbling events of the animation. In Mission: Impossible, highly trained, skilled agents take dangerous missions head on, tackling them with ease. On the other hand, in Pigeon: Impossible, a clumsy rookie agent has trouble handling a mere hungry pigeon and even sets off an intercontinental missile by accident while feuding with the pigeon. It raises the question of why this clearly incompetent agent even has access to a weapon of this scale. Through the humor that comes from the spoof of Mission:

Impossible, the creators draw attention to the consequences of giving unskilled or unknowledgeable people power they are unable to wield.

Throughout the animation, dramatic irony is used to show how chaos can ensue when someone who is inept is given power and tools they don't know how to use. As soon as the pigeon gets trapped in the suitcase, viewers see a logo light up that resembles the CIA logo, raising the stakes of the situation. However, as a pigeon, it doesn't understand the significance of the logo and therefore does not understand the stakes, creating dramatic irony. Inside the suitcase, all the pigeon sees are shiny buttons that are fun to peck at and not the labels that say "FIRE." It even presses the big red button that viewers understand should never be pressed. Observing the scene from outside the suitcase, viewers see the pigeon firing lasers. A woman runs away screaming and cars honk as she goes off screen, using slapstick humor to enhance the feelings of chaos and danger. Afterwards, the pigeon starts hitting the fire button even faster and smiling, seemingly enjoying this newfound sense of power. This creates a juxtaposition between the pigeon's naive happiness and the fear of all the civilians nearby. Through the pigeon's unaware joy and the harm it is causing to surrounding civilians, the artists are commenting on how those with power who don't understand their power can be blind to the destruction and harm they are causing those around them.

While the pigeon is getting high on its power, the agent does nothing to stop the pigeon, cowering from the pigeon and its lasers. This creates a sort of situational irony because a secret agent, someone who is supposedly level headed, in control, and effortlessly handles things, is in fear of a mere pigeon. Throughout the animation, the agent has been shown to be clumsy and incompetent. When the secret agent is introduced at the beginning of the animation, he is nearly hit by cars while crossing the road and almost runs into a tree on the sidewalk, juxtaposing his role as a cool secret agent with his clumsiness. Later, just as he almost catches the pigeon, he accidentally throws his bagel onto the big red button, setting off a missile headed for Moscow, Russia. This scene exemplifies how his awkward, clumsy personality causes him to make

matters worse when trying to solve them. Through its use of situational irony, the animation demonstrates how unskilled individuals can create problems despite trying to improve the situation.

In conclusion, *Pigeon: Impossible* makes a humorous point about how a mundane scenario can quickly devolve into catastrophe when incompetent people are put into positions of power. In this way, the text sends a larger message about the world and can even be seen as a criticism of world leaders. The message can be interpreted as a call out against governments that carelessly incite war and violence, acting as if they are completely unaware of the consequences of their actions, almost as if they are run by pigeons.