

THOMAS T. PROUSALIS, JR.

December 27, 2013

Dear Christina:

With a heavy heart, your father has carefully reviewed your so-called “open letter,” regarding the recently released film, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, which was edited and published by the *LA Weekly* on or about Christmas Day. The article was published under the byline “By *LA Weekly*, Thursday, December 26, 2013 at 5:00 a.m.” Unfortunately, your article has gone viral on the Internet, and it is referenced on the initial pages under the *Google* search term “Thomas T. Prousalis, Jr.” This letter represents my “open response” to your open letter.

In such article, you and the *LA Weekly* disparage the personal and professional integrity and character of Messrs. Martin Scorsese and Leonardo DiCaprio, two of America’s leading artists, along with that of your father, in a public forum – the world wide web no less. The content and motives of your petulant, ill-advised article are outrageous, vile and ugly in a self-evident, sensational attempt at garnering 15 minutes of illicit fame. You should be ashamed of yourselves. Your father cannot represent the concerns of the other targeted individuals in your letter, but, for your father, and our family and friends, you have brought much unwarranted embarrassment, hurt and sorrow during this Christmas holiday. Your 86-year-old grandfather in Richmond, Virginia, a proud, decorated World War II combat veteran of the Pacific Theatre, is especially sorrowful of your disparagement of his namesake and our proud Hellenic family name, and his favorite film director.

Your article bristles with serious false statements of fact, shrill accusations and raw jealousy, combined with a haughty admission of illicit substance abuse, which have shocked your father, your grandfather, our family and friends. With regard to your admission, please seek immediate professional help.

In the matter of the *LA Weekly*, your editor and publisher, it is fundamental in journalism that a competent, professional editor would fact check an article before publication, especially one that engages in the character assassination of two of the most celebrated icons of your profession, and your own father. In my life, I have never witnessed such an utter lack of journalistic judgment and integrity, which shocks the conscience. As a direct result of such hack journalism, your article’s false statements surround events that occurred as much as 19 years ago, when you were all of nine years old. Be that as it may, your editor and publisher had a journalistic and professional duty to contact Messrs. Scorsese and DiCaprio, or their legal representatives, and your father, regarding the *content* and *veracity* of your article before going to publication, especially on the Internet. Truth and fairness are the hallmarks of the work of professional journalism and a free press in America, protected by our Constitution. But the *LA Weekly* was grossly negligent in the protection of these ideals, and it will be held accountable in a proper legal forum.

As a gifted, but struggling actor and writer yourself, you should know your theatre history. Since the time of *Thespis*, the role of an actor (Gr. υποκριτεζ – meaning “one who interprets”) is not that of a philosopher king, judge or priest. A good actor is a gifted storyteller – an interpreter of events, be they good or evil, drama or comedy. Christina, you have not reached the pantheon of *Aeschylus* (at least not yet), but you have done a shameful job of putting our family’s Greek tragedy on the front page for all to see. (As your older sister has expressed to me in the past, “Our family has color now, Dad.”) With the Internet, it’s more like Technicolor®. Your editor and publisher have made errors in judgment in not properly fact checking your story. As a result, your false statements have hurt people dearly, personally and financially, including the film you denigrate. Investors, including pension funds, have invested millions of dollars to produce the film, *The Wolf of Wall Street*. Contrary to your belief, Messrs. Scorsese and DiCaprio do a critically-acclaimed job in telling the story of a very small part of the underbelly of unregulated capitalism. As sordid as the financial shenanigans and moral depravity are, you must know that it is *far worse* than the film depicts. As a corporate securities lawyer for more than 25 years, I know. As an example, in recent years, more investors’ money was lost in a *single* trade of fraudulent mortgage-backed securities by Lehman Brothers, a so-called “white shoe” firm managed by proper Harvard MBAs, than was ever lost by Jordan Belfort and Stratton Oakmont, Inc. And the Lehman debacle nearly brought America and the world to its knees – millions of individuals and businesses worldwide lost trillions (yes, trillions) of dollars in brokerage accounts, savings and pensions, not including the loss of their homes. And while Mr. Belfort struggles with his conviction and restitution, for which the Justice Department haughtily touts with press conferences and Internet releases, the golden-parachute billionaire partners of now bankrupt Lehman Brothers are enjoying Courchevel and St. Barts for the holidays, before returning to their manses in Manhattan and Southampton in Gulfstreams in time for high tea. And not one of them was brought to task. So please spare us your shrill, uninformed Belfortian drama.

And now for some fact checking of several of your scurrilous accusations. Your father has never stolen your identity. Your father did not leave you \$100,000 in debt. Your father has never laundered money. Your father was a corporate securities lawyer, not an investment banker or financier. Your father never represented Mr. Belfort or Stratton Oakmont. Your father represented several corporations that were taken public by Stratton Oakmont several years *after* Mr. Belfort sold his interest in the firm. Stratton Oakmont was represented by its own corporate securities counsel in connection with its IPOs. More importantly, at the time of my corporate clients’ IPOs, Mr. Belfort was not an officer, director or shareholder of Stratton Oakmont, or of any of my corporate clients. Read the prospectuses. Neither your father nor any of his corporate clients has ever been charged by the government or any investor with wrongdoing involving IPOs underwritten by Stratton Oakmont. You also brazenly and falsely state in your article that “none of these companies actually existed,” citing my former corporate clients MVSI, Inc., e-Net, Inc., Octagon Corp. and Czech Industries, Inc. You are flat wrong, Christina. Each and every one of these corporations were in good corporate standing, with millions of dollars in revenues audited by national accounting firms and reviewed by the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”) prior to going public. See <http://www.sec.gov/MVSI, Inc./e-Net, Inc./Octagon, Inc./Czech Industries, Inc.> Each company was led by an experienced, serious businessman, one of whom was a dear friend of our family – a retired, highly decorated, three-star Air Force general and one of your father’s best friends, a fellow pilot and a mentor. Until his untimely passing in 2004, you may recall that the “General” and his lovely wife of 50 years brought you and your sisters

homemade holiday cookies and presents every Christmas to our home in McLean. Your callous disregard for the truth is disgraceful.

Christina, I know you are bitter from our reversal of fortune, but please keep it in perspective. You want to know misfortune and heartbreak (and depravity) – try looking in the eyes of a 19-year-old young man in a U.S. federal prison facing 25 years of harsh incarceration for a nonviolent victimless crime. Pull yourself together, Christina, and stop bitching about a Hollywood film, when there are a lot more important issues in life.

On Christmas Eve 2012, after a long courtship, your father married a beautiful Hellenic woman in the chapel at William & Mary, my *alma mater*, a university graduate fluent in five languages, who, by the way, is not 30, as you so jealously professed at the conclusion of your article. But she nevertheless appreciated the backhanded compliment.

Recently, I have worked very hard to be a good husband and establish my investment banking business. It has not been easy, while continuing to litigate with the government to right a serious wrong. But fighter pilots never die and we do not fade away. Your father has always tried to be a good father and do the right thing. Your father is very proud of you and your beautiful sisters, and I have regaled my wife with so many wonderful stories about you. And she looks forward to meeting you someday. Your father is also proud to be a former decorated commissioned Air Force officer and aviator, and a good lawyer. And, despite the false accusations of nefarious representatives of the government, I have never lied, cheated or stolen – it is not in my constitution. Your father is truly sorry that we lost our beautiful family home of 20 years in McLean at the hands of the government. Your father is also sorry that I am not now able to fly you and your sisters to Vail in the winter and to our former vacation home in Nantucket in the summer in our King Air, and provide you with a Range Rover to go clubbing in Hollywood. Get over it, Christina. Better times are ahead.

I know that you have personally struggled with your profession as an actor and writer, and you well-know that success for such artists in your town is seldom anointed. You are not yet a chosen one, but you must not give up on your dreams. Dreams come true with hard work and integrity, and, sometimes, good luck. So keep the faith. As you have discovered, Hollywood is chock full of very talented and gifted individuals, such as you, my dear, young, disarmingly beautiful and daring, but distressed daughter. Please save your drama for the stage and screen. The accusations in your letter are entirely misplaced and you did a terrible injustice to two of your fellow artists. Please write them an apology.

For me, I'll always be your Dad. You don't need to write me anything. I miss you and I love you, more than you know.

Love always,

Dad

