

Jon Hersey – Family Man

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Preface

A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles

Christopher Reeve

It all started - 1993

Two men were charged with the task of developing new methods for use in clandestine operations. These new methods were to provide the skills to accomplish assignments without anyone knowing an agent was there - like ghosts. Their research included movies, books, college thesis, field agent interviews, situation reports, retired agent interviews, and comic books. Their two year project report was submitted to their risk-adverse section chief who was under intense scrutiny for two failed field operations within the past year. Their 47 page report was strategically mis-filed in an archived, retired agent's personnel file and the document scrubbed from the computer system.

The two report authors, believed to have been idling for the project's duration, were reduced in grade and transferred to basement jobs. Their careers were poisoned by a section chief who is the illustration next to the definition of the Peter Principle.

Daryl Alexander and Peter Stone left the CIA after 12 years of service, two of which were lost (much like their 47 page report). Daryl went to work for an uncle as an insurance agent. Peter used an inheritance from a favorite aunt to buy the first of seventeen businesses over the next six years.

It was 2005, over dinner with a close friend, Undersecretary of State Albert Hollier, when Peter learned that a surprising 1.3% of small businesses supplying the government, are suspected of illegal sales or service to "the enemy". The GSA, short on resources, has enough staff to inspect only the big businesses.

In 2006 Peter founded Zeta Consulting Group. Daryl was Zeta's first employee. Daryl arrived at Peter's home with their 47 page report.

Peter's 17 small businesses, ranging from \$12M to \$142M annually, provide the funding for the private clandestine operation that is known only to its employees. The nine employees of Peter, Daryl, Anna, three investigators, and three "disrupters" make up the Zeta family.

Initially Peter did investigating to find the criminal companies. Daryl accepted and excelled at finding the specific individual(s) responsible for the anti-American activities then disrupting their lives without leaving a trace of their involvement. Daryl's communication, analytical, and people skills made him the logical choice for employee recruiting.

They quickly discover the need for a well educated specialist in computers, science, and all things forensic. Anna was found when she was the only applicant to respond to their classified ad:

Wanted, a computer know-it-all. On-call 24-7. Top 1% of class. Enjoys complex problem solving with critical time restrictions. Reports to demanding boss.

Anna's application contained an essay, with attachments, on how she hacked:

- the classified ads database to discover who placed and paid for the ad
- her college's computer to acquire copies of her transcripts
- the databases of all Peter's companies to determine how much he paid himself
- Peter's home computer just to show it could be done

She also sent a copy of her 207 page doctoral thesis "Artificial Intelligence - Green Thinking - Natural Living" which according to the synopsis is the " ... application of artificial intelligence and research to discover the natural plants and organisms which ease, reverse, or cure chronic diseases."

The last piece of her application was a photograph of Anna in a wheel chair labelled - "Paraplegic. Skiing accident 37 months ago." Taped on the back was the hometown newspaper article describing her courage to "move on" with a picture receiving her doctorate degrees in computer sciences, and organic chemistry.

As their skills at finding the target companies and executing disruptions improved, additional investigators and disrupters were hired.

One of Peter's companies, Arc Systems, having problems with fast growth, and wanting to provide assistance for a recently promoted President, hired a business analysis firm to help it through the difficult times. Biz Planners LLC sent their most capable Analyst / Consultant ... Jon Hersey. Jon's unique style, quick and clever adaptation to new data, accelerated the recovery. Peter was very pleased ... and impressed. Jon's name was forwarded to Daryl ...

Today

Four months after his resignation dinner with Paul, Jon is still on-the-job for Biz Planners - 32 days past their agreed resignation date. The physical drain of flying was complicated by fitting all the demanding schedules together of Zeta Consulting Group, Biz Planners LLC, and Cincinnati Studios Schooling.

Four Zeta disruptions in Philadelphia, Toledo, Oakland, and Seattle were spaced out to accommodate travel for Biz Planners. Peter Stone was now starting to hint it was time to move-on.

Paul Tyler, owner of Biz Planners LLC, was taking advantage of Jon's good nature and friendship. Paul was demanding Jon's attendance on visits to customers, and every interaction with Fly Fishing Wholesale Group. It appeared Paul was dragging his feet finding Jon's replacement. Jon, needing to help Michelle with Cincinnati Studios Schooling, gave Paul a new final last day - three Fridays out.

Michelle is doing her job well: - nine new students, - applying for accreditation, - finding a second location, - developing tutor interview and testing programs, - and finishing the student reward systems. However, the newness is wearing off the new job, and her time is totally consumed by the coffee cart, tutoring, night classes, growing CSS, office manager responsibilities, ... and sleeping 4 to 5 hours per day.

Each of Jon's "families" are struggling because of Jon's ultra busy schedule: - Biz Planner wants more time to ease the transition to the future analyst / consultant, - Zeta is scheduling some of Jon's disruptions with other disrupters, - and Michelle is unfairly being taxed by the added responsibility of a business growing faster than expected.

Jon growing weary from the physically demanding schedule, and the mental gymnastics of keeping Zeta discussions from Paul and Michelle, needs a weekend to re-charge. Jon contacts Peter and Daryl, then Paul asking for a no-calls-mini-vacation this Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. They all agree and thank Jon for his efforts. Now Jon begins to worry about the next call ... to Michelle. He could hear the strain in her voice the past 10 days, and it made him feel guilty for not being there. He was about to call when her email message found its way to his computer...

Partners

In four months, give or take, the business relationship between Michelle, Cincinnati Scintillating Sinnamon owner, and Jon, Cincinnati Studios Schooling owner, has become one of trust, integrity, and friendship. Michelle has proven she can handle any obstacle and solve any problem, except the need for two more hours each day. Michelle's day starts at 7 AM selling "Everything Sinnamon", - then at 2 PM she begins her five hours of tutoring, accounting, projects, and so on as the Office Manager for "everything studios", then night school for 2 to 3 hours, then late dinner and study until after midnight.

For three months the challenge of it all was energizing. Michelle measured her accomplishments and deposited the extra pay check. Now she is starting to have doubts about the tutoring part of her life. Does she really need the extra money? She did ok before, and was not so tired. And, Jon has promised to be available full-time after his resignation, which was just re-scheduled again.

Then the Cincinnati newspaper article in the Sunday Money section wrote about her, Michelle Silasa. The article, page two, half a page, focused on the unique teaching methods and style, the impending accreditation, clever study / reward system, growth from Saturdays only to four nights per week, the average 3x improvement in student performance at school, the development of student good study habits, and Michelle's crazy schedule starting with the coffee cart and ending with college homework. The last line of the article came from the tip bucket at the cart - Please generously give to a poor college student that needs to buy books, pay tuition, and eat. Tutoring i\$ extra.

Jon proofread the article before publishing, insisted he not be mentioned, and advised the writer that Michelle's title was vice president of operations. The euphoria wore off a few weeks later, but her attachment to Cincinnati Studios Schooling was strong. *[Can not leave now. So how do I solve the time crunch]*. She had two days to think of a solution which she would propose to Jon at their random Saturday dinner meeting.

These dinner meetings were something to look forward to. Always at the best restaurants, Michelle and Jon dressed for business, and their "meeting" turned into good conversation, good food, and great company. On a couple occasions they walked out with the staff at closing time. Jon, always a gentleman, made sure Michelle was safe at home before returning to his hotel room.

Michelle's email message to Jon - "see you Saturday 7-ish PM. I have found a new restaurant which specializes in authentic Italian food, not the Americanized stuff. I need to discuss proposal for your consideration. My Best, Michelle."

Re: - "Michelle, I had planned to spend weekend in Empire, but am curious about your proposal and will rest in Cincinnati. Please arrange reservation at Riverside Business Apartments and Suites. Best regards, Jon."

Jon arrives in Cincinnati at 8:43 PM - drives to his reserved "business apartment" - walks over to White Castle for sliders - takes a hot shower, - and goes to sleep about midnight.

For the first time since Alissa's death, Jon has dreams of Alissa. Not just dreams ... Vivid dreams ... Dreams that startle the observer from a cold sweat and make them afraid to go back to sleep ... Alissa met Jon at "their" bluff - she was dressed in a white dress shirt and white jeans - perhaps an angel without wings - she glowed from some force behind her - Alissa whispered "it's time you take care of yourself" - the dream replayed over and over in his mind ... until the alarm went off. Jon's bed shirt was soaked.

Jon decided he should do different activities to get the rest he needed. He started the day with breakfast in the cafe across the parking lot, spent the morning enjoying two art museums, had lunch at a sports bar showing the local hockey team on the 21 televisions, and the afternoon was spent photographing interesting architecture in downtown Cincinnati.

Jon returned to the "apartment" to dress for his meeting with Michelle. He drove to Michelle's apartment, went to her door to escort her to the car, opened the car door on the passenger side, then drove to the authentic Italian restaurant.

The business discussions go well - everything is working out - Michelle is struggling with the time commitments - might need to hire another tutor and rent another space - cash flow is good - margins are better than expected ... The food is very good. Michelle continues to impress and entertain Jon with her grasp of the business. The business

portion of the evening ends and is replaced by tales of old boyfriends, old girl friends, life in high school, favorite professors, fly fishing ...

At 11:30, the restaurant owner delivers two coffees to their table and informs them the restaurant is closing, but he is happy to stay as long as they want. They casually finish the coffee, leave a large tip, and receive hugs from the owner Walking back to the car, Jon asks what was it Michelle wanted to talk about?

- "oh, I forgot. I was enjoying the evening so much ... I am thinking about selling the cart. My time is being consumed by the cart, tutoring, running CSS, and school. I've max'd out the carts potential and see a better future at Studious Schooling. I want to invest the money from the cart sale into Studious Schooling and be a partner."

- "interesting proposal. What do you think the market is for Sinnamon? We will have to establish a value for Studious."

- "Daryl was in again on Wednesday. Third time in four weeks. Stopped by to say hello. He commented on my tired appearance, and suggested I give up something. I am trying to get the best situation for me and Studious. Studious could use a full time manager, I can make more money expanding Studious, I will have less stress, and we could use the money to expand into another area ... I think I can sell the cart for \$27,000."

- "your time setting up the company and dealing with the growth has value also."

- "what are you saying?"

- "partner ... tell me what your cart plus labor equity is worth. Let's value Studious together."

Michelle had been prepared for a longer debate / spin / sales job. She was elated by Jon's quick favorable response. She hugged him ... And kissed him ... "thank you!" Jon caught off guard, had a sense of guilty pleasure - enjoyable, but wondered what Alissa would think?" Michelle caught up in the moment, grabs Jon's upper arm and holds on as they walk to the car.

After dropping Michelle at her apartment, Jon in an attempt to avoid another vivid dream, drove around Cincinnati for a while

Synthetic Plague

Closed chemical process plants are man's answer to controlling creation. Every, every, detail is scrutinized and crafted. The maze of pipes, valves, vessels, and motors are designed to turn natural gas into something else: - polyethylene, polypropylene, nylon, ... Qentex7. Redundant motors, long radius pipe bends to reduce back pressure and wear, special welding wire to match the composition of the pipe steel, every weld is x-rayed to insure it is free of voids, and every weld is honed to match the pipe's inside diameter. Oil field veterans tell of high pressure ... steel ... pipelines splitting open for miles from improperly welded joints. A well tuned system can account for every

milligram of material. It's a thing of beauty when it functions properly ... It's a cantankerous dragon when the parameters are upset.

Qentex7 is a new light-weight military grade explosive that is extremely stable. It will not explode when struck by bullets, cannon shells, tank weapons, or missiles. Special coiled caps attached to timers, or remote devices, are needed to set-it-off. A single ounce creates a crater twenty feet deep by forty feet in diameter. It makes a big boom when it is detonated. Qentex7 is the latest invention of Chem-Productx.

Military branches are purchasing Qentex7 in five pound cases of ten half pound cakes. Base warehousing is receiving the cases by count - 200 cases per pallet.

Chem-Productx employees are required to wear Tyvek jumpsuits, safety goggles, and respirators. Respirator cartridges are changed every-week. During processing, exposure to precursor chemicals can create a condition called "synthetic plague" where lungs are scarred. Three hours after exposure the patient needs oxygen. Four weeks after exposure, the patient is dead. There is no known cure, or antidote, for Synthetic Plague. Normal Qentex7 processing is within a safe closed system of pipes and vessels; however, without a respirator, the tiniest flange leak can lead to four weeks of hell.

Armed security walks the fenced plant location. Video surveillance covers every square inch of the facility, except the employee locker rooms.

Donald Seastrim, recently appointed company president, discovered the amount of material input into the system is more than the material shipped plus waste by just under 0.55%. Donald knows the criminal consequences of not accounting for every ounce of military explosive material. His first instinct is to call his former Arlington, Virginia neighbor ... Daryl Alexander.

- "Daryl, Donald Seastrim here."
- "Donald, how's the family?"
- "Don junior got a basketball scholarship to Xavier, and Amy graduated with a degree in architecture. Helen went back to work and is loving it."
- "its been too long. I miss our neighborhood bar-be-ques, and those chrome tipped boots of yours - you still an Aggie's fan?"
- "Maroon and white, all the way! ... Say, I have just been appointed president of Chem-Productx and I think I have discovered a problem that requires a professional investigator. I recall you were involved in law enforcement and hoped you could recommend someone."

... Daryl has been working this disruption in Columbus, Ohio the past six days. Daryl's disruption objective is to uncover how the thief is stealing one tenth ounce per cake on average ... And where it is going.

Daryl, Chem-Productx' new Director of Quality Assurance and Compliance, spent his first day filling out paperwork and attending safety classes. Day two was job training, some in-plant safety exercises, and schematics of the quality system measurement devices. Day three, he started earning his pay. Left to himself to monitor the monitoring system. Daryl, looking official with the clipboard and safety uniform, begins planning which cameras he will tap and when is the best time to install the coil transmitters. On the outside, the transmitters are marked as "Video Noise Reduction Transformer", but on the inside they are state-of-the-art electronic wonders - low power, twenty day, high output, induction bugging devices that filter out noise then transmit it's collected data to a receiver up to 0.9 mile.

From his after hours tours of the area, Daryl has determined he will need to plant a signal booster / repeater. The nearest available living space is 2.2 miles from the dragon's location. The boosted signal can now be received at his new un-humble abode at 43761 Hope Lane. His temporary home has a room without windows where he sets-up the three large monitors that will each display up to six camera feeds, and the large storage server to hold the camera feeds for viewing later. ... The coil transmitters will be installed tomorrow.

When Daryl enters the control room, both operators point to the door that is access to the "stove pipe" - the narrow area without air-conditioning behind the control room where all the wires, hoses, tubes, circuit boards, RF receivers, and video cables are pinched together and producing heat. Daryl is happy the wire, tubes, and cables are well marked. Installing the transmitters takes eight minutes. As he leaves the stove-pipe, one operators says, "you lasted longer in there then the last guy. Welcome to Chem-Productx."

Daryl's evenings and nights are take-home food and fast forwarding through the footage of eighteen cameras looking for the slightest deviation from procedure. Two nights of nothing so far. The weekend starts tomorrow.

At 3:12 PM, the motor service technician arrives at the entrance gate for weekly maintenance. After the security check, he parks in the space provided for vendors, lifts his large metal tool box out of the back of the van, presses the intercom button, then enters the building before the buzzer stops. Daryl watches the whole gate-to-buzzer episode go from camera to camera - because quite frankly - it's more entertaining than the other stuff. Daryl quickly realizes that the receiving area has no video surveillance.

The properly dressed technician shows up on mini-screen marked 12A six minutes later. Something is different, but Daryl can not quite resolve his concern. The tech pulls a gas sensor out of the plastic toolbox, waives the sensor near the motor flanges. He completes the maintenance procedure on the idle motor, flips the start button on the redundant motor, then presses the red stop button so he can service the other motor. It is during the maintenance on motor set #2 that Daryl realizes the tool box is different.

Daryl gathers his employee badge and keys as he leaves the monitors to get a closer look at this technician. The drive, security check, and safety clothing takes 22 minutes. With the clipboard prop, Daryl estimates the technician is on motor set #4. He turns right when exiting the locker room and nearly runs into the technician getting a drink of water. Daryl spends twenty minutes "doing his Chem-Productx job" before determining the tech's position. Again, he almost collides into the technician working on the separator vessel motors. *[could I have worse luck!!!]*. Daryl moves ahead to motor set #7 to watch the technician from behind the the pipe rack. Nothing worthwhile appears to be happening. Daryl decides to check motor sets #6 and #5 on his way back to the locker room. At motor set #6, there is a surging noise and the temperature readout on the precursor tower is 12 degrees higher than normal. As taught in the safety class, Daryl jiggles his respirator to insure it is tight around his nose, chin, and cheeks. Looking down at the motor's discharge flange, Daryl can see a misty stream of precursor exiting the flange gasket. Within seconds he notices a sweet paint thinner aroma has filled his respirator. Recalling his safety training ... THIS IS BAD!!!! ... He pulls the alarm then races to the safety showers. After ten minutes in the neutralizing solution, Daryl inspects his respirator to find a faux cartridge made from a home heater filter.

Per company policy, everyone exposed to chemicals at the plant must spend 24 hours under a doctor's care. Three hours after his room assignment his labored breathing is noticed by the nurse. After placing the breathing tube, the nurse leaves to find the doctor. Daryl calls Peter Stone ...

Family

Jon's schedule is starting to slow down. He arranges an over-night layover in Cincinnati to surprise Michelle. At 6:30 AM, he leaves the hotel to walk over for a large-Sinamon-Italian-mocha-coffee. As he enters the lobby, he meets Mark Dayton.

- "Jon how is the tutoring business? Nice article in the paper about three weeks ago."
- "what a surprise! Best marketing money we never spent. How's the family?"
- "kids can bounce back from nearly anything. We took them to a specialist who said it would take a year to ease their minds. Three weeks later they were playing little league, chasing girls, and back at school. Karen got involved with the ladies at church and is quilting her way to healing. The person I am concerned about is Sally Walters. She has taken this pretty hard. I hired an extra person so she is not alone in the store. She is refusing help from a specialist."
- "hope Sally can move-on soon. Good to hear everyone else is ok."
- "say, I have two tickets to the Greater Cincinnati Homeless Fundraising Extravaganza. We can not go. It is fun, good food, a nice evening, it's this Saturday night, and for you - it's free. Take Michelle, she needs a break from that schedule."
- "good idea. Glad I ran into you."

As he approaches the cart he can see Michelle's engaging smile and his usual coffee drink.

- "what a surprise!! I am happy to see you. Why didn't you call?"
- "I found a couple spare moments in my schedule and thought I would stop by to see if I can help."
- "oh, when are you leaving?"
- "tonight at 7:43. But... I'll be back on Saturday. How about something different this Saturday?"
- "what did you have in mind?"
- "I have two tickets to the Greater Cincinnati Homeless Extravaganza. It's a black tie fundraiser event. I hear it's the place to be this Saturday."
- "I feel like Cinderella - dinner, dancing, formals, handsome escort - I'm in. Oh ... and it's my birthday."

Jon spends his morning going over the books to develop a fair method for valuing the company. After a long lunch, the afternoon is spent with Michelle going over projects and where Jon can help out. The clock chimes four times, Jon has to catch his flight for a one day training class with two new business analysts at Biz Planners, ... and Michelle has a student.

Saturday mid-morning - Michelle has tried on two business suits and three dresses. She is still wrestling with what she wants to say with her clothes - is she a successful business woman, or is she going to impress with her fashion sense? What she really wants is the black pant-dress with the flowing legs and waist length jacket that is wonderfully displayed on the mannequin. After 10 minutes of bartering to remove the clothes from the mannequin, Michelle will be the successful business woman with fashion sense.

Jon arrives at Michelle's apartment, dressed in full black tie tuxedo with two exceptions: - the lapels of the jacket are an explosion of tropical flowers, - and Alissa's Angel pin on the right lapel. Michelle opens the door in her new black pant-dress, jacket, and Angel pin on the left lapel. As Jon extends his elbow, "you look wonderful!". As Michelle places her arm through the elbow, "you look pretty good too!"

They checkout the silent auction items for some office decor. Place a few bids, then monitor the bid sheets. Michelle manages to take another trip by the jewelry table to admire a necklace made by a local glass artist. The heart shaped piece purposely contained bubbles which reflect light like a prism. The outer edge was a thin pure crimson color, the rest of the piece was clear with the exception of the small crimson heart just slightly off-center. There are five names on the bid sheet: - Michelle Silasa at minimum bid of \$250, - Erin Blackman at \$275, - Margie Colman at \$315, - Erin Blackman at \$335, - Hon Jersey at \$500. *[Hon must really want this to jump the bid that far. Oh well.]*

The silent auction closes with three high bids out of the six items. They find their seats with time to meet their table mates before dinner is served. After desert, the dance floor is cleared. Jon and Michelle continue talking at the table.

- "it must be nice to receive a birthday card from your mom."

- "it is. She has had a hard life, but she never burdens anyone with it. She just plugs along singing-a-happy-tune. She was a mom: - dedicated her life to raising me and an older brother, - school lunches, - helping us with homework and study habits, - making costumes for school plays, - fundraiser cookies, - kept us quiet in church, ... Made my 'father's' lunch each day, did his wash, ironed his clothes, put him through college with odd jobs, and he left her ... the day I left home for college. Now she struggles to make a living. No college ... She was busy being mom. Now she has nothing to fall back on. Mom is still madly in love with my 'father'; and, I think she is waiting for him to change."

- "do you have any contact with your father?"

- "if you don't count the one time he helped with my chemistry homework ... Eight years. My 'father' is an ok guy who is an ultra-focused, brilliant bio-chemist, searching for the formula that will add his name to the history books. Any deviation from him thinking about his work turns him into a raging madman whose tongue can cut a child deeply. His temper and focus make him a horrible people person. He can not keep staff. Consequently, he has to do his own books and reports. He is always out of money and late on his reports ... Whoa, enough about my parents, tell me about yours..."

- "they were soul-mates. Always winking to each other, holding hands, talking late at night on how to raise two sons, never a raised voice between them. My brother and I did manage to alter their volume occasionally. On weekends we did everything together: - swimming, yard work, camping, high school ball games, wash cars, skiing, indoor games on snow days. We planned and voted on summer vacation ... They struggled adjusting to the life without Matthew, after he was killed by a hit-and-run driver - but their love helped them deal with the loss. Then three years later they died in a tour bus with bad brakes."

- that's so sad. I am sorry."

-"thank you.... How did you get interested in business?"

- "my senior year I worked for Gorge Recreational Products in Lebanon, Ohio. Don was like a second father: - including me in his family's activities, giving me dating advise, paid for my senior ball gown. I was fascinated by their enthusiasm for quality and clever solutions to manufacturing problems. It was fun!"

- "Still see your brother?"

- "he was shot in an undercover investigation of a car theft ring. He died on the way to the hospital. He was my protector. He "interviewed" and threatened my dates. ... Is it ok to talk about Alissa?"

- "we met in high school. Fell in love in college. Married our junior year. We "click": - we can finish each other's sentences, - we have similar interests, - we are "orphans" in that we only have each other. She gave me the Angel pin when we learned her cancer had won." (Michelle notices Jon talks of Alissa as if she were alive).

- "mom gave me my Angel pin last Christmas. It came with an embossed card - I will always watch over you. My life changed when I pinned the Angel on my collar: - I

bought the cart, started tutoring, met a nice guy named Jon, and soon I'll to be a business partner."

- "dance?" ...

The announcement to pick-up the silent auction items is given by the dance band. Jon pays for the three items bid on by Michelle and the glass necklace bid on by Hon Jersey. He hands the black velvet lined box to Michelle - "Happy Birthday!". She slowly opens the box, as if in a dream. She enjoys the moment, then kisses Jon on the cheek - "thank you, it's beautiful!!" Jon takes the necklace out of the velvet box and places it around Michelle's neck. Even the guys are enjoying this

Jon drives Michelle home. At her door she grasps both Jon's hands, then kisses him - "I had a wonderful time, best birthday so far. Thank you! You are a good man, Jon."

- "I had a great time. Good night!"

Michelle understood ... there **IS** a third person to consider

Jon is filled with a smorgasbord of emotions. He is happy but feels guilty as if breaking his marriage vows. He wants to spend more time in Cincinnati, but his home is in Colorado.

At his room, he falls asleep quickly. His dreams are of Alissa, at their bluff, in the same white dress shirt and white jeans. She is wearing a clear heart necklace with a crimson outer edge. There are flickers of light coming from the clear portion. She softly says, "Jon ... set your heart free." the dream repeats, and repeats, and repeats, and ... Jon's bed shirt was again ... soaking wet

A Good Friend

- "hello Peter."

- "Daryl, unusual time for you to call."

- "there is a high probability that I have synthetic plague. My respirator was tampered with. They, whoever 'they' are, knew I was there. Somehow the motor maintenance man, and his toolbox, is involved. Get Jon to finish this disruption. He should be able to finish after I give Anna my report, hopefully before that nurse gets back."

- "you are in the hospital?!!"

- "with under four weeks before I die. Two weeks before I won't be able to talk. Peter, my friend, you promise me that you will insure I will not live my last two weeks as a cucumber. Peter, you know I would honor your last wish!"

- "Daryl, I will take care of it."

- "I have left a complete log of my activities and findings so far, in my computer bag hidden in a hallway closet. Before I forget tell Jon, there is no video surveillance in Receiving. When I get done here, I will call Anna and give her a situation report."

- "I will get security for your room, in-case they attempt to hurt you more."

- "the doctor is coming back, I'll call you later with details."

Bio-chemist

- "hello Anna."
- "hi Peter, what can I do for you on a Saturday night?"
- "Daryl may have synthetic plague!" (the line is silent for about 20 seconds) "Anna get security for Daryl."
- "synthetic plague is so rare no one is willing to spend time or money on something that happens once in two years. It's a slow death that is more agonizing because of the long time the patient has to think about dying. The precursor does not exactly scar the lungs. It makes the lung's air sacks brittle and they break like a wine glass. Only the air sacks, nothing else in the body is affected. There is a theory if a neutralizer existed, the precursor's progression could be stopped. Any air sacks that have not shattered would become useful after a period of time. I can get a list of bio-chemist together that have skills and education to help. You can do your magic to acquire their cooperation. I need about 45 minutes ..."
- "thanks Anna."

Thirty seven minutes later, Anna emails the bio-chemist list to Peter and calls him on is cell.

- "Peter, are you near your computer? I sent a list of bio-chemist to you seconds ago. Number one is in the Russian interior. Number two is very interesting - it's Dr Philip Silasa, Michelle's father - Jon's Michelle. Dr Silasa is a brilliant mad-man who thinks way outside the box. Number three, Dr Paul Thomas Norton, is with the Department of Defense and with your contacts, maybe you can free up his time. The next two are in Japan."
- "I will go to work on Dr Norton. You find out what you can about Dr Silasa."

- "State Department, how may I help you?"
- "Peter Stone for Undersecretary Albert Hollier."
- "Peter ..."
- "Al ... I need a favor. Daryl is in critical condition from exposure to Qentex7 precursor. We are attempting to develop a neutralizer and need a dedicated bio-chemist yesterday. Dr Paul Thomas Norton is working at the D.O.D. And we would like to "borrow" him ASAP. Do you still have cards you can play at Defense?"
- "Willy still owes us for that drug cartel / tire problem we fixed. I will call you back in a few ..."

The clock reads 00:08 on Peter desk when his phone rings.

- "Peter. Willy has contacted Dr Norton. He is on a C-130 from Honolulu. He was on vacation in Hawaii. Should be here in eight hours. We equipped him with a laptop and a satellite link. He's on the job as we speak."
- "thanks Al. I owe you dinner."

Anna is researching Dr Philip Silasa. Her findings are pretty grim. Four blogs are dedicated to his impossible people skills from those who know him first hand. Yet, at the same time they compliment his brilliant mind. Several of his published papers are on the Internet, others were hacked. She contacts her old organic chemistry professor - "tread lightly, he goes mad at the slightest interruption. It is all about him trying to save the world through chemistry. He is the kind of nut that works from 9 PM to 11 AM"

Anna has what she hopes is enough information to risk a call to Dr Philip Silasa.

- "Dr Philip Silasa. I am Anna Smithson. I would like to hire your services to develop a neutralizer for Qentex7 precursor. Our colleague has been exposed and we are trying to save him."

- "I can not help you. I am in the middle of a contract with another customer. I can help you when I get done with the contract, in about five weeks."

- "Dr Silasa, I would be happy to pay for any resources you need to meet your contract date if you can help me now. Plus double your normal fee."

- "which part of 'when I finish my contract' don't you understand."

- "doctor..., sir..., this is a life and death situation."

- "**call me in four weeks! GOOD BYE**" (the line goes dead).

[maybe I will start a fifth blog!]

Anna calls Peter to update him on Dr Philip Silasa: - it is all about him, - won't even consider it until contract is done, - can you imagine - he has a contract, - what a Peter will "call him later." "we have Dr Norton in transit."

Peter's desk top clock reads 02:37. He decides it's time to call Jon

Jon is asleep and dreaming of Alissa and Michelle. They are at their bluff, Alissa in the white dress shirt with white jeans, and Michelle in her new black pant-dress suit. Alissa hands the clear heart necklace to Michelle. She then turns to Jon to say "time to move on..." Jon's phone wakes him, it's Peter

- "Peter, what's up?"

- "Daryl is in serious condition. He was exposed to some chemicals, and may have less than four weeks to live." (Jon is fully awake)!!

Peter continues: - disruption at chemical plant, - cover blown, - cameras, booster, split screen monitor, - motor maintenance man, - no Receiving area surveillance, - notebook hidden in closet, - tool box, - temporary house, - Anna has more from Daryl, - can not risk another under cover job, - have to find a better way, - bio-chemist in route, - create neutralizer.... "Jon, we need you to takeover Daryl's disruption."

Jon decided he could risk being seen in Daryl's hospital room - whoever did this would not watch the room of a man with no hope of recovery. He would tell Michelle about Daryl's on-the-job accident and hospitalization. Daryl and Michelle had become good

friends - she will want to visit him. *[She can keep me updated on his condition]*.... He schedules a flight to Cincinnati and will drive to Columbus.

On his way to the airport he calls Anna.

- "Anna, Peter says Daryl gave you some info on his disruption."
- "I will send it through the Scrambler."
- "I am going to need you frequently over next couple days. How is your schedule?"
- "one day I will send you the help wanted ad I answered to get this job... I can free up my time to help you."
- "not too many chemistry classes required for a biz degree, what's your assessment of Daryl's chances?"
- "we have the nation's top bio-chemist working on a neutralizer formula. I estimate a 30% chance of success. I know it's not your kind of "certainty" comfort, but that's high for chemistry."
- "I am just leaving Empire. This early morning flight to Cincinnati is usually short of full seating. Can you manipulate the seating so I can have a row to myself?"
- "no problem, my cousin works for flight reservation services ..."

Jon, has a row of seats to himself - and the row behind him is empty. He uses the plane's WiFi to log into the Scrambler. He reads the information twice. Daryl had emphasized: - no cameras in Receiving area, - they knew he was there, - the maintenance technician changed tool boxes, - 'old' friend and neighbor, Donald Seastrom, may be involved. Between Peter and Anna they had given him all the information compiled in the report. Also, sent was a 47 page CIA report titled Operation: Ghost.

If Jon pushed it he could talk to ~~Alissa~~ a..., Michelle before she left on her Sunday morning run. He pulls into the visitor parking space, then walks over to Michelle's apartment. She looks through the peep hole and is shocked *[Jon ... Here on a Sunday ... Very serious looking ... At my apartment without calling ... ???]*. She opens the door as Jon wipes a tear from his eye - "Michelle - Daryl has had an accident at work, and maybe dying."

- "where is he? What happened? How can I help? ... Come-in."
- "I am on my way to Columbus to see what I can do to help."
- "you look like you could use some coffee. Come into the kitchen... I can close the cart tomorrow and we have no students on Monday's. I want to go with you to see him. I can take the bus back if you need to stay."
- "Daryl is a new, but close friend. He is a rare man. I need to find out ...what happened."
- "I can be ready in about half an hour. Make yourself at home."

An antsy Jon, looks at the framed photos, the CD titles, souvenirs, cherished keepsakes, magazines, then sits on the sofa. About fifteen minutes later, Michelle is shaking his shoulder - "maybe I should drive!"

The drive to Columbus is quiet. Michelle drives, Jon sleeps. When they arrive, Jon puts on a cap and sunglasses. They are directed to the fourth floor intensive care quarantine area. Daryl is sleeping and his breathing can be heard through the intercom. Jon recognizes the instruments from his dad's short one day after the bus crash. All his vital signs are normal, except his oxygen is low. "Can you stay here. It would be good for him to see your smiling face. He is quite fond of you. I want to go to his house and see if everything is ok." - "yes, go ... "

Michelle began thinking about Daryl's visits to the office. He was such a natural conversationalist. Talking to him was enjoyable, and always a pleasure. Jon and Daryl had a special bond ... like a father and son. Michelle knew what it was like to be without a father. A father so focused on his bio-chemistry career and getting his name in the history books. A father so focused ..."

Michelle takes a cab from the hospital to the Dr M.A. Bernelie Chemistry for Life Center. The M was for Margret and the A for Anne. Margret Anne was the single heir of the wealthy Bernelie family. The family responsible for importing 80% of the medicinal teas sold in Europe and America. Margret graduated from college with a degree in chemistry and a love for the business of healing teas.

Out back was the secluded lab of one Dr Philip Silasa ... Michelle's father. Margret tolerated Dr Silasa because he could formulate new teas and synthetic healing solutions in days. She would wait up to three or four weeks to get the same results from her other bio-chemists. One of Dr Silasa's conditions was freedom to work on "his" research.

It's Sunday morning and 'father' is still working ... Alone. Michelle enters the double outside doors into a vestibule which contains a chair, small table, and an intercom. She presses the intercom - "hello"

- "go away. Come back during office hours tomorrow."
- "father, it's Michelle." (There is a silence for ... Forever!) "Hello ..." (Michelle is startled by the buzz. She enters the lab of her 'father').
- "**what - do - you - want?**"
- "I need your help desperately."
- "I have no money to give you."
- "I don't want any money. I need you to be you - a brilliant bio-chemist."
- "I am in the middle of a contract, and I may have another job in four weeks - a couple wants me to find a neutralizer for a sick friend exposed to an explosives precursor."
- (confused) "who called?"
- "some woman - Anna was her name? And, some man - his name was Peter. I remember him - he threatened me. **Who does he think he is?**"
- (Peter?, maybe coincidence?) "Father, my friend, Daryl, needs your brilliant mind to do its magic so he can live."
- "funny ... Their friend was named Daryl."

- (no coincidence!) "It really does not matter, if you help them you help me. A life can be saved if you can find a way to break your one-thing-at-a-time rule."
- "we have not spoken in eight years and you want me **to break a rule!**"
- "I don't have a lot of money, but I can pay you after I sell my coffee cart - maybe \$27,000."
- "coffee cart ... You are no different from your mother. She worked menial jobs: - political campaigns, Christmas help, auto parts driver, waitress, ..."
- *[You crossed the line. You smug ...]* "some of those people live happy lives, some are college students, some are raising wonderful children... A job does not make the person. Look at you, brilliant bio-chemist who can **not break a stupid rule to save a life!! Stuck here in this lab, alone, ... no friends, ... no life, AND MOST OF ALL, NO FAMILY, ... NO ONE TO LOVE!!!!**" (she had crossed several lines. She knew what she had done. This was the last useless meeting between this daughter and her 'father').

Michelle turned and walked out of the lab through the sterile vestibule and up the sidewalk. She never looked back. Dr Philip Silasa knows ... He watched her walk away.

Dr Silasa retreats to his office to stare at the walls. The anger inside is bubbling - how dare she accuse me of not caring - I have spent my entire life looking for healing solutions - I have saved many lives with my work - **how dare she accuse me of not caring!!!** With an anger filled motion of his right arm he swipes the desk top clean, then falls into the worn chair. Ten minutes later he pulls out a fresh lab book and writes Synthetic Plague Neutralizer on the cover.

Monitors

Jon finds 43761 Hope Lane - his new home with three flat screens displaying 18 cameras showing the "happenings" at ChemProductx 2.2 miles away - Daryl's version of cable tv. The spare key was where Anna's report indicated. The "cable system" was operating flawlessly. After taking a few minutes to figure-out the controls, he rewinds the video containing a view of motor set #6 on Saturday ... Mr Motor Maintenance performs the scheduled service on motor set #6. He places the tools in the plastic tool box. Then, he looks all around - twice. He slides something between the motor flanges, looks around again, then puts his full weight into pushing the metal item into the gasket. The shadows make getting a full face shot impossible.

Jon scanned a few other camera archives. Nothing interesting and no clear face shots of the service technician. Jon watches Daryl's precursor exposure, and the maintenance crews repair. Jon also reviews the archives containing the motor service technician's van - no markings on outside, but a clear shot of the license plate BZT35701.

All the partial facial and the license plate photos are sent to Anna via the Scrambler. Using the Blotter, Jon requests what can be done to fast scan the video archives and save only video with action or people only. Anna said she would send a laptop set-up to scan the videos and store the desired video on the drive.

Jon has accomplished what he needed. He is in a holding pattern waiting for information from Anna and the special laptop. He has a 25 minute drive back to the hospital.

Michelle went to the window to look at the medical monitors, again, - all good. Daryl's hand moves toward his ear. Michelle picks up the intercom handset. Daryl's speech is soft and slow

- "hi Michelle. Where Jon?"

- "he is checking your house to see if everything is ok. Said he would be a few hours."

- "have you thought about our discussion?"

- "yes. I am interested and understand, but I need to talk with him first."

- "a women, Anna, will contact you. She has my letter for you. I think I see Jon. Be patient. It will be good."

- "Daryl, the house is ok. Your DVR is still recording all your shows - it will take you several hours to watch all that stuff. The washing machine guy stopped by, again, and left his phone number this time. I will get Peter's gift tomorrow and ship it to CP for his birthday.

(What Daryl heard) - the house is ok. Video system still recording. Anna is helping to compress the video. The motor technician is on several days' video. Anna is tracking the technician by license plate or phone number. Jon is sending something to ChemProductx to video the theft.

- "have you asked any nurses out yet?"

- "nice girl on night shift."

- "how you feeling?"

- "feel good except for this breathing thing... Don't let her get away."

- "I hear that. My mind wants what the heart can not deliver... Get some rest. We will get some dinner, a couple rooms, and be back."

Daryl did not speak, but gave Jon the thumbs-up sign.

Odds 'n Ends

Monday early, Jon goes down to Michelle's room. He sets his bag down as Michelle opens the door, offers to take her bag, and they are off to the hospital.

At Daryl's room, they find Daryl is awake. He points to Michelle and gestures to pick-up the handset.

- "letter arrive today on your phone. Please read alone."

- "roger that. How are you feeling?"

- (Daryl gives thumbs up, then points to Jon).
- "Michelle is going to be here for a couple hours while I check your house, make sure your DVR has got enough space, and purchase Peter's gift."
- "good, be careful. Leader is very careful and ruthless."
- "see you in a few hours."

Jon has been gone five minutes when Daryl pulls his cell from under his pillow.
"Anna, send the file."

Michelle's cell buzzes to notify of a text message receipt.

Michelle: I have very much enjoyed our visits these past few months. I want to be the first to welcome you to Zeta Consulting Group. Peter sends his welcome. We are excited to offer you the position of Researcher. This is a first for Zeta and we believe you will strengthen the Group. Peter has agreed to buy the cart at \$25,000 and will make up any difference needed to be a partner at Cincinnati Studios Schooling. The tutoring business is a perfect cover for you and Jon. Feel free to discuss with Jon.

On a personal note, please be patient with Jon. He was deeply in love with Alissa. Still is. He will require some time. But, I have noticed a change in him lately. Your understanding of the situation is right-on-target. My best to you. Daryl

1994, a year into their special assignment, Daryl sketches and specs-out a pencil camera. His sketch had case length, diameter, focal length, battery life, cache size, and transmission distance. Once turned on, they are the perfect little robots - recording what they see for one minute then transmitting the cached video to a repeater, or storage unit. Today's model matches the specifications, except for transmission length. The battery power required to match Daryl's transmission length spec would require changing the name to rolling-pin camera. The "pencils" maximum transmission length is 1500 feet, about a quarter mile. At 1500', the signal has to be boosted by a repeater for more distance or recorded on a remote storage unit. Nice feature of the remote storage unit is the ability to stream the data by remote control.

Jon stops at an office supply store to purchase a large printer. A printer packed in a large box with typically lots of space or padding to cushion it from the Chinese manufacturer to this store. A printer large enough for a chemical processing company, but too expensive to simply write a purchase order to clear it through receiving exceptions. But, not too large it can not be put on a shelf.

Jon knows the risks: - the printer could be refused and never leave the carrier's delivery truck, there may not be a shelf to put "receiving exceptions" on, the iffy shelf could not have full view of the receiving area, it could be hidden behind other packages, purchasing department might be efficient and get it returned in one day, and more disturbing what-if's. If this does not work, it means night work.

Jon arrives at Daryl's house and hauls the printer inside, grabs Daryl's equipment bag, modifies the heavy corrugated box, mixes the epoxy, installs the four 5-day pencil cameras three inches from the bottom at every corner, tests the camera functions, re-assembles the printer and packaging into the box, types up the fake packing slip, places the slip in an exterior clear envelope with the imprint "Packing Slip Enclosed", then finally attaches the mailing label. Thirty minutes later, the delivery service swipes Jon's credit card then exchanges the "not-so-too-large" printer for the laptop from Anna

Anna had placed hook-up instructions, with pictures, on the laptop. Nine minutes to install the cables and complete the instructions. The message on the screen "16 hours 43 minutes to completion". The screen blinks a couple times before a report from Anna appears.

Zeta Consulting Group

License plate BZT35701 belongs to Jacob "Arty" Arton.

Last known address:
8729 2nd Avenue #236
Columbus, Ohio 46328

5' 11" 190 lbs

Served prison time in Michigan State Prison. 4 years 3 months.
- transportation of electronic equipment prototypes

1. Two convictions for transportation of stolen goods
2. Suspected of involvement in five other similar crimes
 - A. Art from gallery in Chicago
 - B. Microchips from St Paul
 - C. Design specs from Des Moines
 - D. Recipe trade secrets from Battle Creek

E. Shampoo formulas from Cincinnati

End of report

Press ENTER to return to countdown

Jon returns to the hospital, tells Daryl he "bought Peter a printer and it should arrive tomorrow for his birthday". Daryl taps his forefinger on his temple, points to Jon, followed by a thumbs up. Michelle winks to Daryl then places her open hand on the window, and he winks back. As they walk down the hallway both are wiping a tear from their cheek.

They are 24 minutes outside Columbus when Michelle breaks the silence.

- "Jon, what will Peter Stone and Zeta do without Daryl?"
- "who and who?" (hoping the conversation would evaporate).
- "Peter Stone the founder of Zeta Consulting Group."
- *[she knows more than she should; unless, ...]*. "let me get my bearings for a few seconds ... Who and where did you learn about Zeta? ... Let me guess ... Daryl?! ... Now I need to know, why?"
- "I am going to be a Researcher and help the Investigators with finding disruption targets. I will be doing for the Investigators what Anna does for you... I now understand why you were so tired - all that scheduling and flying for Biz Planners, Zeta, and Studios ... Can you tell me about this disruption and how Daryl got so sick?"
- "ChemProductx manufacturers Qentex7, a very stable explosive with a fatal production problem called "synthetic plague" ... (Jon continues for 17 minutes).
- "I have not told anyone, but Sunday morning after you left I went to visit my 'father' to ask if he would help cure Daryl's condition. It ended badly! **He refused to help, because he has a contract** ... I lost my temper and got angry with him ... A lifetime of anger! ... I may have killed Daryl! (she turns to stare out the window)."
- "Daryl was setup by, I believe, the president Donald Seastim. Surprisingly he walked into a trap. My thoughts are that Seastim called Daryl - needed someone to try and figure out if they could get caught during a military inspection - Daryl shows up while the theft was in progress - they could not take a chance, so they rig his mask, which he would not check if he was in a hurry - then expose him to the precursor.... They are about to be exposed. Normal disruptions leverage the suspect to just go away. If Peter agrees, these guys are going to prison."

Michelle was still upset and crying when they arrived at her apartment. Jon hugs Michelle and whispers, "I don't know how, but Daryl will be ok. Be pleased with your efforts. Your dad is wrong - he knows it - he just can not break old behaviors ... Where did that temper come from?" - (she giggles) "my dad." Jon kisses her on the forehead.

Jon arrives in Columbus at 1:36 AM. Before he returns to 43761 Hope Lane, he detours by the van parked at 8729 2nd Avenue #236 that belongs to Arty ... future cellmate.

Then travels across town to the home of Donald Seastim where he attaches a video storage device to the under carriage of Donald's work car.

Jon falls asleep. The previous Alissa dreams parade through his mind like a tv mini-series - Alissa in white, - Alissa with heart necklace, - Alissa with Michelle, ...

Receiving

The delivery truck backs up to the dock door. It holds 13 packages for ChemProductx. - "looks like someone is getting a new printer." The Receiving Clerk signs the hand held carrier's computer, then begins receiving the packages. He has received six packages when he cuts the packing slip off the printer - enters the PO into the computer - the computer responds "Purchase Order not on file" - he enters the PO number again - same result. Puts the printer box on the shelf and slaps a "Purchasing Exception" label on the box knowing it will be at-least five working days before the Purchasing Agent will come back for more information.

The pencil cameras have been sending signal since being epoxied in the box. Now their signal is being saved on the storage unit Jon placed under Donald Seastim's car which is parked inside the 1500 foot transmission radius.

The day is spent reviewing the compressed video. One of the coil transmitters must be loosing power because the video is intermittent. The transmitters are programmed to stop, let the battery rest, then transmit again. It takes 35 minutes of three second video clips to piece the whole "show" together. Jon rearranges the sequence of clips to create the "producer's cut" - an interlaced slow motion mini-documentary. The documentary shows the four high speed extruders each with a cake cutter, dropping the cake on a scale where it is trimmed to weight, if necessary. Every fifth cake of extruder number two is trimmed. Each trimming, about the size of a saltine cracker, is swept from under the cutter into a neatly stacked sleeve 14 inches long. In Jon's 35 minute documentary, he watched two-thirds of a bag of crackers packaged.

By policy the Director of Quality Assurance and Compliance picks up the sleeved product, records the weight, then inserts it back into the extruder to blend in with the fresh material. If the Director is absent, the Plant President is required to collect the crackers. After three weeks of filling in for John Smythe, Seastim could not believe how easy it would be to take a sleeve of crackers from his own plant, and find customers for the sleeves. In Seastim's time there have been four Directors of QA and Compliance: - John Smythe, an Englishman who retired two weeks after Seastim arrived, - Maureen Westman, who could not handle the "confining" respirator left after three weeks, - Samuel Brooks, no one knows too much about Sam who lasted two days, - and Daryl Alexander, lasted three days ... and is dying in a hospital bed.

Jon calls Peter to report the disruption's status.

- "Peter, I now know who is transporting the stolen Qentex7. I think I know how it's being stolen, and I am certain the inside man is Seastim, but I need evidence. Peter, we need to break Zeta policy and arrest these criminals."
- "I agree. The evidence must be bullet proof."
- "who in law enforcement can you get to help us?"
- "I have a contact at the FBI. He likes these types of cases."
- "Peter, if you can get them to stand-by mode, I think we can let the FBI catch-them-in-the-act tomorrow evening."
- "it is short notice. Are you THAT sure?"
- "I can let you know tonight. ... How did you make the connection with Michelle?"
- "it was all Daryl. He said from his first meeting with her he was impressed with the anticipation of your questions, her thoroughness, quick mind, her business understanding. After a little research he found out her IQ is off the charts, her GPA is 3.96, her father was the brilliant bio-chemist, and her mother has a zest for life."
- "will she be safe?"
- "yes. Daryl would not put her in harms way. She is Anna for the investigator side of our business ... By-the-way, what am I going to do with a coffee cart?"
- "what?"
- "I bought Michelle's cart so she could start right away for us. She will be able to buy into the tutoring business to become a partner. The tutor business is a good cover for both of you."
- "Peter, I need to leave to keep this disruption on track. I will call later."

Jon parks two blocks from the ChemProductx entrance / exit waiting for the blue Ford of Donald Seastim. At the next intersection Jon is one car behind Seastim. The receiver on the passenger's seat is streaming off the video from the storage unit under Seastim's car. The receiver beeps indicating the storage unit has been reset and all the video has been retrieved. Seastim goes straight, Jon turns right.

At the un-humble abode of Daryl Alexander, Jon watches the perfect evidence play-out on the monitor. At 6:08 PM, Seastim, wearing his signature chrome tipped cowboy boots, carries four sleeves of Qentex7 crackers into the Receiving area, places them in Arty's large metal tool box, Arty hands Seastim an envelope, and Arty sitting on the toolbox by himself for twenty minutes before the camera images stops. *[Donald's car must be out of range]*.

Jon goes through Daryl's equipment bag to find the cigar camera, sandbag, baseball cap, video monitor, and storage unit they used at the Persian Rug Imports disruption. He calls Peter to review the evidence and go over the plan for tomorrow evening. Peter instructs Jon to call if anything goes wrong - he wants to respect his contacts time.

Jon reviews all the critical videos before sending them to Anna for cleaning up. He cleans and repackages Daryl's cable system. *[Now what! Don't want to sleep. Don't want to dream. Can not risk the disruption by visiting Daryl!]*. He contacts Anna to insure the videos are strong evidence. Tells her he is bored. She invites him to play Letter

Race over the Internet. They play until 2:35 in the morning when Anna takes a message from another disruption... Jon falls asleep

The dream is peaceful. Alissa, Michelle, and Jon are at the bluff sitting, watching the sun set. Alissa turns to Jon on her left and says "things are not always as they appear - Jon." Alissa sets down her drink, stands-up, then kisses Jon on the cheek - "I will always love you." She walks off down the trail back toward their home. When Jon turns to his left, he is looking into the eyes of Michelle as she says, "I have always been with you - Jon." Michelle is holding both Angel pins in her right hand. She squeezes them tightly. When she opens her hand an Angel flys from her palm to the departing Alissa. Michelle kisses Jon on his other cheek and says, "Alissa and Silasa, we are the same." Jon's cell alarm goes off. He goes for a run to think about "we are the same"

Although the disruption is idling and waiting on a few key events later today, Jon is completely occupied by his unsettling lack of clarity. The run was invigorating; however, it produced no tangible results into the "we are the same" mystery and the confused emotions he can not grasp. To fill the time, he calls Anna for another game of Internet Letter Race. The first 10 letters Jon draws are A, L, P, B, A, S, I, T, G, S. He shuffles the letters around to find out how many words he can make from his ten letters. Jon has five words, Anna has eight. Jon is going for word number six when the clarity he sought earlier rushes through his mind - ALiSSA and SiLASA - they are the same.

Disruption #9

Jon hauls the equipment bag and his luggage to the car - drives to two blocks outside the ChemProductx gate. Jon leaves the strip mall parking lot pulling onto the street three cars behind Seastim. A black car appears in the left lane and continues ahead. When it is behind Seastim's blue Ford, the passenger's window slides down and an arm sticks a red flashing light on the roof. Jon can hear the loud speaker, "Donald Seastim, this is the FBI. Pull over now." The command is repeated. A second black car, sporting a similar flashing red light, passes Jon and pulls along side Seastim's. Seastim looking around like he was going to run, from professionally trained drivers, must have decided differently when the second car appeared. He pulls over. John slows down as he passes. He can see the chrome tip of his left boot exit the car.

Donald Seastim's arrest took ten minutes. Jon drives back to the ChemProductx gate because he is uncertain where Arty goes for delivery. Looking around Jon sees six black sedans. Two waiting on each direction of Arty's options. Arty's unmarked van pulls up to stop sign. He turns right. It is like a ballet - sedans turning around - first the front sedan - then the second sedan - lights on front three sedans are turned on, - then the back three. Jon is car number seven, recording everything. Within two blocks the six sedans have surrounded the van and force it to the side of the street. One agent holds up a piece of paper and the search begins. Arty is handcuffed as the toolbox is opened. An agent holds-up a sleeve of Qentex7 crackers in one hand and holds up four fingers on the other.

Jon drives to the hospital.

Daryl is now being fed by a plastic tube connected to his arm. He is awake, Jon gives the thumbs up sign to Daryl. A look of satisfaction graces Daryl's face. Jon gestures he is going to eat. Daryl waves his hand as if saying - go. Walking down the hall toward the cafeteria, Jon observes a well dressed man wearing an English racing hat. They make eye contact. The other man asks, "how is he?". From the accent, Jon recognizes Peter Stone.

- "he is not good. Seems to be progressing faster than expected."
- "I have the same observation based on Anna's description of the disease."
- "I am going for dinner. I can report on the disruption's conclusion."
- "let me talk to my old friend first."
- "it's nice to finally meet you."

Over dinner they talk about the arrests, Arty's confession for less jail time, Michelle's job, CIA days, Daryl's easy effective manner, Jon's clever disruptions, tutoring cover, and so on. Jon checks the wall clock and begins to bus the table. "I need to drive to Cincinnati to pickup Michelle". Peter extends his arm over the table and makes a sit down motion with his hand, "I will send the driver."

Like sentries, Peter and Jon trade off in two hour shifts. Jon avoiding sleep even when off shift - afraid of dreaming ...

Mostly Natural

Dr Norton has been working four days straight with 3 to 4 hours sleep per day. His progress is astounding, but at the current pace he is three to four weeks from completion.

Dr Philip Silasa is at the meat packing plant buying pig lungs, one dozen pair. Back at the lab he exposes all 24 lungs to the precursor in the test chamber for one minute - 15 times the estimated exposure Daryl experienced. The air sacks begin to crystalize 14 minutes later. Dr Silasa sprays a set of four every fifteen minutes and records his observations. His formula is part exotic tea, three healing oils, and two synthesized chemicals. Three hours later set number one shows signs of reversing the progression. Six hours later the air sacs look normal - for a decaying pig's lung.

Dr Silasa calls his ex-wife, "do you know Michelle's cell number?"

- "it's 840-555-1298. Why?"
- "I have a cure for her friend ... Sandy, I miss you ... I am sorry about me ... Good bye."

Michelle and Peter's driver are 15 miles from the hospital when her phone rings - "unknown caller". Apprehensively, she answers the phone, "hello, this is Michelle."

- "Michelle, I am sorry. Please listen. I have a cure for your friend. When can you get here to pick it up?"

- "we are about thirty minutes from the research center ... Dad ... Thanks."

Michelle ran down the Dr M.A. Bernellie Chemistry for Life Center sidewalks to the lab out back. Dad met her at the door, handed Michelle three perfume atomizers filled with a blue-ish green liquid, then started on the instructions, "two sprays in the throat every seven to nine minutes, keep from swallowing, as much formula as possible needs to make it to the lungs, each application requires a deeper breath, two atomizers should be more than enough, this stuff tastes terrible, hold the patient down initially, give them a seltzer tablet before the first dose so they won't get sick, more upright with each dosage. Now go ... Help your friend ... If you have time later, please stop in, we can talk..." Michelle hugs dad and kisses him on the cheek, "thank you dad. This is a wonderful thing you did." She turns and runs back toward the car. At the edge of the front building she stops long enough to wave, but dad has already returned to work on his waiting contract. *[One step at a time ...]*.

Michelle runs down the hall toward the quarantine room holding Daryl. She explains the use of the atomizers, yucky taste, deeper breaths, and so on to the attending doctor, nurse, Jon, and Peter. The doctor starts to speak, but Peter interrupts, "I'll do this. I am as close to family as he has, and Doc don't worry about insurance."

The whole process is repeated for Daryl's approval - thumbs up. Each spray is met with a grimace and the look which asks "are you sure about this?!?"

The three sentries watch thru the night. At sunrise, it's obvious that Daryl is breathing easier. Daryl puts his hand by his ear - Jon picks-up the intercom.

- "I am feeling great. You and Michelle get out of here. You have stuff to discuss. She will love Empire. Jon - you do nice work."

- "thank Michelle. She talked her father into making the formula."

- "put Peter on the phone. Go home!"

- "Michelle, how would you like to visit Empire, Colorado?"

- "thought you would never ask!"

The Bluff

One long flight - one long drive from Denver to Empire

Jon does his host thing: - guest room, lights, bathroom, bedding, towels, kitchen down the hall, breakfast at 7:00, hike at 8:00.

Jon Hersey - Industrial Spy Series by *Leo N. Ardo*

Website: www.LeonardoStories.com

www.facebook.com/LeonardoStories

Email: info@LeonardoStories.com

Watch for the opportunity to win a pair of binoculars – like the ones used by Jon Hersey. Check the website, Facebook, and the Newsletter.

Short Story #1. Jon Hersey - Industrial Spy

Short Story #2. Jon Hersey - Fly Fisherman

Short Story #3. Jon Hersey - Family Man

Short Story #4. Jon Hersey - Industrial Training

Release date: June 18, 2012

Short Story #5. Jon Hersey - Chemistry Mystery

Release date: July, 2012

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Short Story #6. Jon Hersey – Silver Bullet (in pre-production)

Short Story #7 Jon Hersey - ????? (in development)

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Parkinson's Disease: Donation

25% of all Jon Hersey – Industrial Spy series sales will be donated to Parkinson's Disease research and education.

Parkinson's Disease (PD) affects 1 to 1.5% of the population. To add some perspective – an average major college football game is attended by at least 50,000 fans – there are 750 people in the crowd with some form of PD. It is a progressive degenerative disease that eventually robs the patient of mobility, balance, and normal motor functions. PD does not discriminate; it affects people of any race, culture, sex, or age. Modern medicine can delay the full impact of the disease, but eventually the disease will disable its host.

PD reveals itself in a long list of symptoms. The most visible is a shaking hand, chin, arm, leg, or foot.