

Jon Hersey – Industrial Spy

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Preface

2005 was the record-setting year for category five hurricanes: - Emily, Katrina, Rita, and Wilma. 2005 hurricane records included the highest number of major hurricanes to hit the United States: - Dennis, Katrina, Rita, and Wilma. The record setting 28th storm Zeta ended the 2005 season on January 6, 2006 when downgraded to a tropical depression. The next day it dissipated southeast of Bermuda.

Tropical storm Zeta began December 29, 2005 and forecasted to dissipate in a few days. Like the record setting, unpredictable 2005-hurricane season, Zeta reached Tropical Storm status. Zeta did not reach land. There were no recorded deaths, or damage. Zeta received little attention for its growth to Tropical Storm status. Zeta's limited recognition came from its record-setting statistics.

The Atlantic Rowing Race delayed until a late-November start because of the unusual hurricane season. Most rowing crews ran into unfavorable racing conditions after completing about a third of the race. During the early January re-start several crews crossed through the southern edge of Tropical Storm Zeta.

A Good Day!

Jon needed a spoon, a bowl, and maybe a chisel. The ice cream was frozen and hard like the tundra. He got a bowl from the cabinet right of the sink, a spoon from the top drawer under the bowl cabinet, and an ice cream scoop from the next drawer down.

There they were - two dried spaghetti noodles with a little sauce. They had taken the shape of the seldom-used kitchen accessories they were laying on. Jon carefully picked them from the accessories. As he held them up, their profile reminded him of the mountains he drew as a kid - two-dimensional. How those two noodles got in that drawer was three-dimensional.

Jon thought back to that evening, it was just four months ago.

Alissa had enjoyed teasing Jon that her family's secret sauce had more people attempting to "steal" the recipe than there were Italian restaurants ... in Italy. On special occasions like their three-month anniversary, 25th date night, Jon's birthday, etc., she would spend the four hours needed to chop, stir, spice, boil, simmer, and taste.

It was his favorite pasta sauce. It was passed down to Alissa, through four generations. She enjoyed teasing him about "knowing something he would never know." When she made her great-great-grandmother's recipe, at the right time, she would LET Jon boil the pasta.

Jon started the whole mess when he leaned over Alissa as if he were spying to see how the sauce was made.

In his best imitation of Colonel Klink, Jon said, "We have ways of making you talk!"

That was when the feisty Alissa defended herself with a spoon of heirloom pasta sauce. Jon tossed some raw pasta at Alissa. He actually threw it hoping to miss her, but she "ducked" right into its path. He started laughing at their version of the Keystone Cops. "Feisty" started laughing and reloading the spoon. Splat! It hit Jon mid-forehead then dripped down his face. Jon grabbed the raw pasta and took a defensive position across the kitchen island. The heirloom sauce and raw spaghetti collected on every surface until the ammunition was gone.

Out of ammo, they slid to the floor laughing at their mess and the outrageously great time they had just had. While they leaned against each other, Alissa fell asleep. She was exhausted. The four hours of preparation, the food fight, and the chemo treatments drained her frail failing body. He carried her upstairs so she could rest. Then he returned to clean up their skirmish. He giggled for three hours as he cleaned-up the battlefield.

Now staring at these two hardened noodles, Jon smiled.

Another Good Day ... Almost

Jon Hersey left the meeting knowing his boss' objectives were satisfied - the final price was under budget, the contract was extended an extra year, and a long-term relationship maintained.

He knew his boss, Paul Tyler, for seven years - the last three and a half years as an employee of Biz Planners LLC. Jon was in his third year of college, and recently engaged to Alissa, when he met Paul the first time. Paul called every two to three months after that meeting to keep-in-touch with Jon. When Jon became an employee, Paul called every two to three DAYS.

Paul had started Biz Planners LLC with 'inherited' family money. Jon thought it strange that Paul changed the subject, or placed a call, when asked about the benevolent family member.

Jon met Paul Tyler and Suzie Anne Carpenter-Tyler at a wedding reception. Suzie and Alissa had attended the same high school in San Diego. Suzie was from the right-side-of-the-tracks with money, privilege, social parties, new cars, and many friends. Alissa was from the same side, but much closer to the tracks - two working parents, car and house payments, Alissa had to borrow dad's pick up, and she had a few close friends.

Suzie and Alissa talked as if they were childhood friends. Jon and Paul struggled to keep a conversation going for more than a few minutes until Jon asked Paul about his consulting business. Paul began a lengthy explanation on why he started a business analysis company instead of a consulting business. Jon watched the clock behind Paul for those lengthy 12 minutes.

Jon glanced toward Alissa to see her happily engaged in conversation with Suzie. He decided she was enjoying the evening, and he was going to ensure she spent as much time as she wanted with Suzie.

Jon thought, "This was what a real man does - keep the dull boring guy busy while the gals chit chatted."

Jon hesitated, then asked, "What has been your most interesting consulting, I mean, business analysis project?"

Paul's interest in their conversation perked up, "My third customer had a desperate need for two CNC controlled lathes. He had been to nearly every bank, but could not qualify for a loan because his personal debt was too high. His wife had a couple of surgeries to fix a heart valve. The customer was about to cancel our agreement simply to reduce his costs. I talked him into waiting while I looked for a couple used lathes and found financing. The search for the "right" used lathes was more involved than I expected, but I found two in Maryland. The seller needed the cash in two weeks. Finding the money was even harder. I tried secondary sources, capital equipment

services, and the Small Business Administration. It looked like the deal was going to fail. I was tying flies for a fishing trip, when out of nowhere the solution hit me. I would arrange a private loan with Suzie's uncle, and he would own the lathes, until my customer could pay for them."

Jon thought for a few seconds then replied, "Why not write the loan yourself and make some profit on the interest? Even below prime would be better than no payment for your efforts."

Paul was silent for 10 to 15 seconds. Jon thought he had said something wrong; or, maybe embarrassed Paul and he was holding his tongue or was preparing to teach Jon a lesson.

Jon said, "Sorry, if I said the wrong thing."

Paul replied, "Not at all. I like your suggestion. How would you like to talk about a job?"

Jon surprised, said, "I have another three months to finish my Business degree, then I have been accepted into the Masters program. Long term, I think finishing my Masters of Business Administration will be the right thing to do."

Paul handed his business card to Jon, "Call me when you are done - let's talk. I like the way you think."

Paul continued selling, "Biz Planners partners with its customers. We provide third party analysis for small businesses on a retainer, partial ownership, or payment plans. You would have a lot of freedom over your schedule, and your analytical team. We are growing, which means many opportunities. We offer above-average pay with generous bonus plans."

Jon answered, "I will call you when I complete my MBA."

Jon and Alissa mingled alone for thirty minutes before they ran into each other.

Alissa said, "Thanks for keeping Paul busy. Suzie and I did not have the same circle of friends, but it was fun to see someone from high school. Dana, the bride, was also in our class. Dana and I won three music awards together. Dana and Suzie were close friends."

Jon replied, "Paul offered me a job when I finish my MBA."

Alissa smiled, and then teased, "You are so lucky to have me around. You would not have met Paul without me."

Jon smiled as he thought of that day from six years ago. It was a significant day. Jon met Paul. Actually, Jon impressed Paul. Alissa enjoyed her time with Suzie. Alissa and Jon had a good time - always a good time with Alissa.

Jon's thoughts returned to today. He felt good about closing the renewed and improved agreement. Jon decided a celebratory local brew was the reward du jour - followed by a run through the Gastonia suburb of Charlotte. Running was cherished private time for thinking, planning, and problem solving; and, time to try out those new "accelerating spring" running shoes.

Jon was a private man by nature, and necessity. Jon's view of the world required him to suffer through Alissa's death on his own. When he suffered enough the 'universe' would release him from his vows to Alissa. Furthermore, he was afraid he might lose control and bore someone to death about life, or lack of, without Alissa. He had thought many times that their marriage would be like nesting Osprey - mates for life. He was ironically alone in the crowded pub.

The Thor's Ale was smooth and flavorful. His comfort level tested, as more people crowded into the bar. To avoid the attention given to guzzlers, Jon had deliberately paced his beer while the crowd closed in. Jon looked at his mug and thought the remaining twelve ounces translated into maybe another twelve to eighteen minutes. Jon thought the crowd was growing too fast. He left the bar with about 8 ounces left in the mug.

The new shoes were like running on a cloud. After ten minutes, usually Jon's mind began the logical progressions that separated critical thoughts from nonsense. However, the next assignment was in the town where his soul-mate lost her 426-day battle with pancreatic cancer - 94 days ago. Jon hoped he would not need to start-over, again. There had been some progress in the separating-of-thoughts process the past six months since Jon and Alissa found out the chemo regimen was not working.

The short two months of travel, theatre, art, and holding hands were the time of their lives. Alissa's request to rest a few days turned into 28 days of home movies, laughing at photographs, cooking experiments, and one food fight.

Room service, hot shower, red wine mini bottle, and six hours of channel surfing did little to calm his mind. Two hours of sleep in the past two days brought to an abrupt end by his alarm clock and a wake-up call a minute later. Three hours later the airplane approached the Tulsa International Airport.

As scheduled, Jon was in Tulsa on a Friday. His public job and his private job took place in the same city for the first time since he started the second job 79 days ago.

As he looked out the airplane's window, Jon's thoughts drifted to his first meeting with Daryl.

DENVER TO DALLAS

Jon waited for a flight to Dallas in a concourse coffee bar across from his gate. He wanted something new, fresh, and exciting to provide some relief from the agony of Alissa's death; it was always on his mind.

A man dressed in business casual khakis, Polo shirt, and sport coat approached him then asked if he could use the other table chair. Jon thought he meant to move the chair, but the man sat down. Jon looked around and determined the chair was the only available seat.

Daryl extended his hand, "Thanks for letting me sit. My name is Daryl Alexander."

Jon shook Daryl's hand and replied, "Jon Hersey."

Daryl asked, "Where are you going?"

Jon offered, "Dallas. I work for Biz Planners LLC."

Daryl offered, "I work for a private consulting group."

They talk for about 25 minutes. Daryl's pleasant nature and enthusiasm made the conversation easy. They exchanged stories, and a few laughs until Daryl's zone "one" was called to board.

Jon thoroughly enjoyed the conversation.

Seventeen minutes later, the last zone announced. Jon collected his carry-on, presented the boarding pass, and walked down the jet way. He entered the passenger compartment.

Daryl was in first class. He made an effort to catch Jon's attention and said, "See you in Dallas."

Near the end of the 92-minute flight, Daryl strolled back to the cheap seats - row 31 seat E.

Daryl asked, "If you are not in a hurry to get to the job-site, can I buy you a beer at the Dallas airport? I have a long layover and would like the company."

Jon answered, "Sure. I would like that."

Jon arrived at the top of the jet way and noticed Daryl on his cell phone.

Jon heard only Daryl's portion of the conversation, "Yes. I know. It seems quick. (Pause) Just do the check please. (Pause) It is time to take this project off hold. (Pause) It is going to work out. (Pause) I know, just do the check, gotta go, bye."

In three seconds, Daryl ended the call, stowed the phone, touched Jon's shoulder, and then pointed the way to the pub.

They talk for three beers: - college days, sports, headlines, cars, bow hunting, back packing, but not family, or business.

Daryl checked his watch then said, "Thank you for an enjoyable layover. I need to go."

Jon was surprised by the speed of Daryl's departure. Daryl reached for his computer bag, and then shook Jon's hand. He walked off through the concourse. He was gone in ten seconds. Jon again realized how "normal" he felt. Walking toward the baggage claim, Jon thought he saw Daryl boarding another plane.

DALLAS TO FIRST CLASS

After five days of work in Dallas, Jon approached the gate and saw his new friend Daryl Alexander sitting in the waiting area. Daryl had his phone in his lap, and a thin cord dangled from his right ear.

Jon heard Daryl's half of the conversation, "The check was good? (Pause) Good! (Pause) Please stop harassing me about the time; it is going to be fine. (Pause) Then I will terminate the - agreement. (Longer pause) Gotta go; bye."

Again, Jon was surprised by the speed at which Daryl ended the call, and packed the phone. Daryl looked up from the motionless shoes in front of him, recognized the angel pin on the computer bag, and smiled when his eyes met Jon's. They shook hands, and Daryl offered to buy another round at the pub across the concourse.

Daryl asked, "How did your business analysis go this week?"

Jon replied, "Very well. I renewed a contract with an old client."

Daryl said, "I am recruiting my company's newest - consultant."

Jon asked, "How is that going?"

Daryl replied, "Really well at the moment"

Jon thought a lot about their meeting four days earlier and Daryl's positive energy. He wanted a change that might help him set aside the pain of losing Alissa and focus on

the great life they had together. The current job was OK. A new friend might be the answer.

Jon asked, "What's the name of your employer again?"

Daryl answered, "Zeta Consulting Group. We are named after the Tropical Storm Zeta. It was the record setting 28th storm, which few remember, in the extended 2005-hurricane season. It never hit land, did not alter any ship lanes, it did not disrupt commerce in its extended under-the-radar existence. It was, however, a surprise; it defied the experts; it was a rare occurrence; it grew from a tropical depression to a tropical storm then like a ghost it disappeared."

Anticipating Jon's next logical question, Daryl needed to control the direction of the conversation.

Daryl continued, "A little know fact - much like Zeta - the Coast Guard rescued a ship's crew which had three members on the terror watch list. The ship was not sea worthy to begin with and the swells almost sank it. Peter Stone, the founder of Zeta, was in the delayed Atlantic Rowing Race when Zeta was reaching its full strength. He described the adventure as once-in-a-lifetime-experience that he hoped he never had again."

Jon teased, "So. You work for a company that no one's ever heard of, that causes little disruption, and tracks rescued terrorists?!"

Daryl chuckled, then responded, "Two out of three - not bad for a bow hunting, almost Navy Seal, back-packer from atmosphere deprived Denver."

Had Jon told Daryl about his Navy Seal mis-adventure? Maybe? There had been a lot of "bromance" during their short time together.

Over the hum of 20+ pub conversations, Jon barely heard the announcement that flight 348 to Denver was now boarding zone one.

Daryl said, "That's us; you can board with me, they won't say anything."

Jon presented his boarding pass. The pass reader began its alert cycle and printed out a new seat assignment slip. Jon was moved to first class, and it was not a bulkhead seat - double bonus! His boss must be happy with the last negotiation. Jon was shaken from his moment of joy by a pat on the back from Daryl.

Daryl said, "You must not fly first class often."

Jon replied, "This is only the second time my company has anted-up for a first-class ticket. First time I landed my first 250 million deal."

Daryl said, "About that ... "

Jon did not hear the rest as he was wondering why Paul had upgraded his seating on a short flight.

DALLAS TO DENVER

Jon had the window seat and Daryl the aisle seat. Both grabbed a couple file folders before placing their computer bags in the overhead. Daryl's folders had the Zeta Consulting Group logo ... Jon had no logo on his mass-produced plain manila folders. Jon was almost certain he saw the letters JH on the bottom folder before Daryl placed them in the seat pocket. The flight attendant returned with their drinks.

Jon's sixth sense was tingling - several happenstance meetings, and beers with a new friend. Jon's mind went to full strength and separated the critical from the nonsense for the first time in several months. First, what are the chances Paul upgraded him to first class? Then second, he was assigned the seat next to Daryl? Moreover, the folder with JH was suspicious. Did Daryl say he arranged the upgrade as they were boarding?

At 10,000 feet, the flight attendant announced the pilot had approved the personal use of electronic devices. The entertainment-portion-of-the-flight was Daryl's queue - he knew most of the passengers would be in their own e-cocoon.

Daryl started the conversation, "Jon; It was not pure coincidence that we met in Denver and Dallas. I arranged our first couple of meetings to get to know you. I also arranged this first class upgrade to see if you might be interested in a new job. We, Zeta, have been interested in you for 28 months and put your 'recruiting' on hold so you could focus on Alissa."

Jon's focus was razor sharp when he asked, "How do you know about Alissa? Why is Zeta interested in me?"

Daryl calmly responded, "I have two files for you to review - one about Zeta. It's about who we are, what we do and why. The other folder explains - why you. If after you read these two files, you are not interested, you can decline and never hear from Zeta again."

Jon still instinctively protecting Alissa, "How do you know about Alissa?"

Daryl said in a calm soothing voice, "Jon, it's all in the files. Please trust me. The files explain everything."

DALLAS TO DENVER ... with Zeta

Daryl handed Jon the first folder labeled 'Zeta Mission'. Jon paused for a moment, then took the folder.

Jon thought, "This is a very unusual recruiting / job interview. Something must be out of the ordinary with this Zeta group!"

Jon opened the folder to find a single sheet of paper.

Zeta Consulting Group

Mission: Through the use of clandestine methods, we shall bring about the disruption of American companies involved in illegal anti-American activities. Government, legal organizations, and targeted companies shall not know of our existence and activities. Our goal is to keep the goods, and services delivered to the government without anyone knowing of our existence.

Scope: Targeted companies shall be located on American soil. Companies / Individuals suspected of, and / or involved, in anti-American activities shall be targeted. Innocent employees will keep their jobs. Targeted companies will not be closed for investigations, and the goods and services provided to the government will not be interrupted.

Responsibilities:

1. Board shall be responsible for approving and recruiting personnel.
2. Board shall maintain a priority list of target and suspect companies.
3. Board shall authorize personnel assigned to analyze target companies.
4. Board shall keep all records and activities confidential.
5. Personnel shall have final Disruption plans approved by the board.
6. Personnel shall not recruit or solicit outside personnel or services in the execution of Disruption plans.
7. Personnel shall keep all records and activities confidential.
8. Personnel shall conduct Disruptions in complete secrecy outside of Zeta Consulting.

Funding: Funding shall be by anonymous donations only.

Peter Stone 1-26-06

Jon closed Zeta folder one, then stared out the window for - forever. His mind was racing. An organization like this really existed? Why were they interested in him? What does Disruption mean? Who was on the board of an organization like this? How did they know about Alissa? How would someone make anonymous donations to a ghost company? Where have I heard of Peter Stone? Who? Where? Why? When?

Daryl's experience told him to let the recruit deliberate at the recruit's pace.

Jon did not hear the pilot announce the upcoming turbulence, but was shaken from his thoughts by the violent jostling of the plane. Jon turned to Daryl.

Before he could ask his first question, Daryl interjected, "I will be available as long as you need me and will answer ALL your questions - in Denver. Let us trade folders. This folder will explain a few things."

Jon opened the second folder. Like the first folder, it contained one page.

Zeta Consulting Group

Recruit: Jon Hersey (no middle name or initial)
4341 North Aspen Drive
Empire, CO 78432

Age: 29 Single (see below) - no children

Current employer: Biz Planners LLC
6932 Orchard Plaza
Boca Raton, FL 23758

Employer Notes: - Biz Planners analyzes growing companies looking for opportunities to improve client's net income. Biz Planners offers funding at below prime and consulting services at negotiated contract rates. Revenue sources are: - fee for service, - percentage of future client revenues or gross margins, - percentage of ownership, - interest on loans.

Recruit Job Function: On-site analysis of potential clients. Reviews: - potential client's status, potential for product growth, operating and accounting systems, and stability plus quality of management. Analysis takes about three weeks to compile. Contract presentation and negotiations take about three days. Analyst manages a team of three, but is the only client contact. Note: Jon is highly successful.

Experience and other conclusions:

1. Nearly completed Navy Seal training. Suspended training on final day after call from spouse regarding cancer (first diagnosis). Jon was granted seven-day leave, then family hardship emergency leave. (NOTE: - Jon and Alissa are without other immediate family members to assist with treatment demands. Jon's parents died in a tour bus accident. Younger brother, Matthew, (age 11) killed by hit and run driver while running from a bully. Alissa is an only child. Her parents died from asphyxiation - gas vent covered during a routine roof repair).
2. Attended University of Colorado. Graduated with Bachelors of Science in Business within three years. Acquired MBA 18 months later. Top 3% of class.

3. Has demonstrated a unique ability to find relationships between odd business facts and what appears as unrelated data. This makes him highly successful at finding the changes that improve Biz Planner clients. This talent will be extremely useful in analyzing target companies.
4. He has progressed up the Biz Planners organization rapidly. Four promotions since Naval discharge.
5. Appeared to take the job with Biz Planners because the flexible scheduling gave him the time to take Alissa to appointments and treatment sessions.
6. Peter Stone met Jon during a presentation at Arc Systems. Very impressed with the ability to assemble new data and determine its importance to the proposal.
7. Jon quickly responds to new problems in a thoughtful professional manner. He has a quick mind.
8. Recruiting terminated - temporarily - Jon focused on Alissa's cancer treatment (second diagnosis).

Conclusion: Jon's business abilities would be extremely useful to ZCG. Seal training has given him the ability to handle covert operations. Recommendation is recruit.

File: 12-3567RR JH

Jon was overwhelmed, and impressed, with the accuracy of data and by the implications of two single sheets of paper. The discomfort of the Zeta 'page' was soothed, to a degree, by the ego feeding 'JH page'. Yet, he was surprisingly uneasy.

Jon's mind went into the automatic analytical mode again. He was collecting facts, data, and information to be prioritized: - clandestine, illegal anti-American companies, Disruption, analysis, Seal training, unique skills, and so on. Jon's mind also began reviewing the possibilities of what was not in those two pages: - Disruption not destruction, clandestine (without weapons) and analysis, illegal anti-American not just anti-American, and so on.

The flight attendant announced the entertainment portion of the flight was over. Jon turned to Daryl, returned the JH file, and gave Daryl a single nod - the kind of single cautious nod you gave to a new acquaintance.

Daryl had felt good about the recruiting process up to now - felt a small twinge, and for the first time had doubts about Jon's recruiting.

DENVER TO EMPIRE

Jon and Daryl exited the plane together, but walked down the concourse separately. Jon wanted some personal time and space. Daryl wanted to avoid being recorded on the airport video system with Jon.

The long walk down the concourse plus the wait for their luggage gave Jon some valuable thinking time. At the transportation curb, Jon boarded the Rocky Mountain Rental Car's courtesy mini-bus - followed by Daryl. They sat on opposite sides of the bus.

Terri, the courtesy bus driver, stopped in front of Jon's Jeep Grand Cherokee.

She gave Jon a big smile and said, "Good to have you back in Colorado."

Jon grabbed his bags from the rack, gave Terri a five-dollar tip, exited the bus, then began the where-did-I-put-my-keys ritual.

He heard Terri laughing as the bus door closed. Terri drove Daryl and four other passengers to the rental counter.

The keys were found in the pocket next to the small Angel Pin flap of his computer bag. Jon stared at the pin for a few seconds, smiled, unlocked the Jeep, started the engine, then stowed his bags in the back. He looked into the rental counter area and saw Daryl was last in line. The Jeep was ready, but Jon was not. He toyed with the idea of leaving Daryl at the rental counter. As always, when his mind went toward a little devious, the voice of 'his' Angel reminded him to 'be good'. Jon drove the Jeep under the canopy then entered to pay for his regular parking spot. Terri sat at the desk where parking fees were paid.

Terri teased, "Found your keys again, I see."

Jon replied, "Yes. I've got to start storing them in the same place."

Terri offered, "Leave them with us next time."

Jon answered, "I might do that next week, but I will miss your laughter when you drop me off."

Terri thought, "Me too!"

Terri continued, "See you Monday morning."

Daryl was one away from the rental counter. Jon walked up to Daryl.

Jon initiated the conversation, "We sat by each other on the plane? Didn't you say you were going to Empire?"

Daryl responded, "Yes; I am visiting a friend in Empire this weekend."

Jon teased, "Are you sure your friend is home?"

Daryl answered, "He is driving home and should be there about the time I find Empire."

Jon said, "I have to be back to the airport early Monday morning, and can bring you back. Empire is a small town, so I can drop you off at your friend's house, and I wouldn't mind the company on the long drive home, and back."

Daryl was thankful he would not need to find Jon's house in the dark.

Daryl said, "That works for me."

Jon continued, "Let's get your bags; I am parked by the front door."

Daryl replied, "Really appreciate this, thanks."

They left the rental lot in silence.

It was a few miles before Daryl decided to break the silence, "If you need groceries, stop by a store, so I can buy us a few meals. I am a pretty good cook."

Jon replied, "Not to worry. The retired couple down the road watches our place and stocks the fridge on Thursdays. So you can cook? What kind of food?"

Daryl answered, "Italian and Greek."

Jon asked, "Alexander - your heritage - English?"

Daryl answered, "English, yes. My mother was a Home Ec teacher in a town full of Italian, Greek, and Slavic miners."

Jon decided to get to the point of this weekend job interview. He said, "Tell me about you, this Peter Stone guy, and Zeta."

Daryl did not waste any time and began his Zeta story: - He and Peter were longtime friends. He was Zeta's second employee. He was a recruiter, mostly. He had a strong belief in Peter's cause. He completed some Disruption assignments. First was a water purification company where the owner was sending profits to his brother in the North Korean government. His favorite Disruption was the raft manufacturer selling bulletproof rafts to Somalia - still used his bullet-proof raft for fishing.

Jon was sure Daryl was vague on purpose. He would get the details before he made any decisions.

Daryl continued talking, "Peter is from a politically active family. In his younger days, there were frequent visits by presidential and state candidates vacationing, partying, and fund raising at Stone Farm.

Peter is the shy type and prefers to be in the background. The candidates would bring their election teams. Peter met those that made others successful. He watched intently and learned their skills. Through them, he discovered the power of trust, research, networking, and secrets. All talents he has honed to a razor's edge. There are rumors that Peter has yet to reveal a single secret. His relationships in Washington DC are solid, deep, and old.

He can get difficult if he thinks his relationships are in jeopardy; he will start tinkering with your projects. He is addicted to helping others; and, he can micro-manage an activity to death. In contrast, he is not afraid to bend the rules to the breaking point. I think he will rely on his influence and family money to bail him out if he needs it. Peter hates publicity because it limits the possible solutions for problem solving. When Peter was six to fourteen years old he spent his summers with his great uncle. The uncle left him over \$20M dollars, which Peter used to buy four small businesses. Those four businesses turned into the bank that funded the purchase of 13 more businesses over five years. The seventeen total businesses are the de-facto anonymous sources of Zeta funding. And he is Zeta's only true board member."

Jon added, "I remember Peter Stone. Biz Planners went into Arc Systems hoping to land a new customer, but never heard from them again. Paul felt slighted, because I had offered a fresh solution to their problem."

Daryl added, "Peter was completely impressed with you and your solution. He wanted you at Zeta. He wanted to be sure that you are not an employee, or a supplier. He did not want to put you in a conflicting position. He has been monitoring your situation for quite a while."

Jon felt like they were having beers in the Dallas concourse - Daryl the storyteller was completely at ease, paused for effect, added an occasional embellishment, used the right words, and sequenced the main points for a climatic ending. Jon did not enjoy listening to anyone this much, except for Alissa.

Jon thought, "I really miss you, Alissa."

Daryl talked about Zeta from outside the rental-car lot to the gravel road leading to Jon's home. Five minutes later they pulled into the driveway of Jon and Alissa Hersey according to the sign next to the mailbox. Jon pushed three buttons on the overhead console: - the garage opened; the path between the garage and house was lit, - and the lights in the mud-room came on.

Each man gathered his bags. Walking along the path, Jon separated his keys so the house key was ready. When the door was unlocked, the garage door closed. .

The guest room was down the hallway from the mud-room and next to the guest bath. Jon does the host thing: - light switches, towels, closet, hangers, directions to kitchen, and alarm clock.

Jon said, "Meet you in the kitchen in about 15 minutes."

Ten minutes passed before the fine aroma of good food drifted through the house. Daryl made himself at home - pots, spices, plates, carving chicken, and stir frying vegetables.

Daryl brings two plates over to the table.

Jon asked, "Are you married?"

Both noticed the long pause before Daryl took a deep breath.

Daryl explained, "Peter is the only one who knows the whole story. I told him when we started Zeta, so there would not be any secrets between us. Cecilia Sanchez was, and still is, the girl of my dreams.

I was in my fourth year in the Army Cryptology Department. I met Cecilia at a small diner just off base. She was in a hurry to catch a train. I had just sat at the last table. I offered her the table and planned to wait for another one. She accepted my offer, but only if I stayed and ate with her. We walked out with the owner at midnight.

We started dating, and every date was the same - time flew by, and we enjoyed each other's company. On the six-month anniversary, I proposed. She said yes. Three months later, we had a traditional Spanish wedding - many friends, big dinner, dancing, and it ended well into the night.

Three months pass before I was sent to the field to upgrade hardware and software at a remote listening post. Sorry, I cannot tell you where, except that it was a warm, sunny, vacation kind of spot. The rebels were quiet for nearly a year. We really did not have a honeymoon, So we bought Cecilia a commercial airline ticket. I flew military transport and met her. For two days, I got a day pass, left the base, and met Cecilia. We were having a great time.

On the third day, an Army Special Forces team escorted me into the jungle to complete my assignment. We arrived at the listening post and informed that if I completed the job, I would never see Cecilia again. The Special Forces leader convinced me they would find Cecilia, as soon as we returned to base. They looked for two weeks before they were re-assigned.

A sealed envelope handed to me as I boarded the transport back to the U.S. Basically, it said Cecilia was alive, but I would never see her again, because I had not followed their instructions.

I completed my crypto tour in four months. The next day I enlisted for Special Forces training. My crypto experience sealed the deal. I was a model soldier for two years. When it was over, I returned to find Cecilia.

I used all my Special Forces training and developed a few new skills. Two weeks in the jungle, I must have been close. A teenage girl approached me, she handed me another sealed envelope. It was a letter from Cecilia, which said she was blackmailed into marriage to keep her capture from killing me. In addition, if I continued to look for her, she would be sent to jail for life. I could not put her in harm's way. Occasionally, I hear rumors of her. I still love her.

Now I am unable to maintain a relationship with another woman for more than a few weeks - they never measure-up to Cecilia."

EMPIRE TO ZETA

It was an evening of good food, and good company. Good night - Jon's first full night's sleep in months.

Next morning, Jon awoke to the smell of coffee filling the house. He looked out the window. It was another good, crisp, cool Rocky Mountain morning. Jon gathered up two pairs of gloves, two autumn jackets, and two sock hats. He arrived at the kitchen; he pulled out a chair to hold the jackets and stuff. Daryl began breakfast as Jon sat with a cup of coffee.

Daryl asked, "Are we going somewhere cold?"

Jon replied, "Thought I might take you for a hike to my favorite place on earth."

Daryl asked, "What do you want in your omelet?"

Jon replied, "Ham, cheese, peppers. Tell me about the raft manufacturer."

Daryl said, "American and NATO member ships were, still are, just less frequently, being hijacked off the coast of Somalia and the crews held for ransom. Omega Boats manufactures military grade - bullet proof, actually bullet resistant - rubber rafts that scoot across the water at high speed. The boats are similar to the Zodiacs used during your Seal training.

They were marking the shipping crates and documents as water storage bladders. They had United Nations markings on the crates, and everything looked official. We could have leaked the discovery to State Department, CIA, NCIS - pick your agency; But, during the investigation, the Navy and Marines would be without their much-needed boats, and 152 people would have lost their jobs.

I befriended the president, who after two weeks gave me a raft for fishing - can you imagine? Anyway, he just sent me one out of eight from a shipment to Somalia - the UN markings painted over and the original address blacked out. Peter Stone arranged for a forensic specialist to "reveal" the original images under the crate blackouts.

I slipped into the freight carrier's building dressed as an employee, marked the crates with some graffiti, attached some RFID tags, and took some photos with the freight carriers name in the background.

Peter sends a forensic specialist to Somalia to photograph the crates with my graffiti and read the RFID tags. Now we have the evidence to leverage the President / Owner: - my boat in a crate marked as a water storage bladder, pictures of my graffiti and RFID tags at the freight carrier - photos of graffiti and RFID tags on seven crates with sunny Somalia in the background, and readings from the RFID tags.

I present the evidence to the owner and convince him to sell the company to the employees, return the money he personally received from the Somalia deal, fire the three other employees involved, and retire. The owner was presented with a copy of the evidence and the knowledge that two copies, and the originals are waiting for him to screw-up - and I got to keep the boat."

Daryl served breakfast.

Jon finished his first bite and said, "Super secret agent, and you can cook. You are going to make some girl a nice 'wife'."

Thermometer showed 46 degrees and from his research, Daryl knew the elevation was 8500 feet.

Daryl commented, "Cold, thin air with a hike - not a good combination."

Breakfast was over. They put on the coat, hat, and gloves.

Fifty yards from the house, Daryl said, "I told you about Cecilia. Tell me about Alissa."

It was Jon's turn to take a deep breath.

Jon said, "We met at the bluff. Separately, we camped out overnight between summer and autumn semesters. Next morning I hiked to the bluff using a map drawn by my roommate. I turned the last corner of the trail, and Alissa was there sitting on a rock. She flinched when I said hello. We talked for about an hour then she had to go. Later autumn semester at the University of Colorado library, we met again when we wanted the one available CD for a music class. It was the night before the test, so we shared the CD. Afterward, we studied together over a pizza. We promised to get our grades together when they were posted. She received an A. I received an A-. We dated the following Friday, Saturday, Sunday afternoon, next Friday, etc. Two months later, we were engaged. We married late summer. It was a small wedding - both of us had lost our families - the guest register had 26 names. We were on the same wavelength: - thoughtful gifts; notes left in books; rented movies for date night; timely humor; flowers for no particular reason; the extra small effort; - that kind of thing. We could discuss anything anytime. We camped frequently at the bluff."

A 45-minute hike ended at the bluff. Daryl was impressed with the view that must go on for 100 miles. Jon spent a few minutes taking-in the view.

Jon continued, "This is where I first met Alissa. I proposed to Alissa here. She teased me, claiming she could not say no in front of God. This was the location of our honeymoon camping trip. We decided to buy the house property here. This was where she gave me the Angel pin - the one on my computer bag. The pin she claimed would hold her soul, so she could protect me after her death."

Both enjoyed the view for a few quiet minutes.

Daryl asked, "Why did you want to be a Seal?"

Jon answered, "I wanted to fight terrorism. Innocent people were dying: - soldiers, sons, daughters, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews on both sides were being killed because the enemy violated human rights.

If I take the Zeta point-of-view, the owner who knew he was building inferior bus-brake-master-cylinders is also a terrorist. He willingly built bad product for profit, which ended up killing my parents and a bus-load of other innocent people. It is like a terrorist, for his reasons, who carries a bomb into a marketplace.

Matthew, my brother, and Matthew, my friend had their rights violated by careless drivers who, for their reasons, drove off after striking them."

Daryl asked for clarity, "Is that two Matthews?"

Jon replied, "Yes. Matthew D Hersey, my brother, was named after a close friend Matthew Digettes, who at around ten years old, taught me statistics, observation, trends, drawing conclusions from the available facts. He was a little guy with a big mind."

Daryl asked, "Only Ten? And he taught you statistics, and trends?"

Jon replied, "It was about mid-October when Matthew transferred to Lincoln Elementary School. He had on brown corduroy pants, black lace-up-ankle-work boots, blue-green checkered shirt, an orange sock hat, and black impact resistant glasses that rested midway down his nose. Even with the heavy dark-blue P-Jacket, anyone could tell he was in for a miserable first two months of school because Matthew was 10 pounds lighter and 3 inches shorter than the average 10-year-old fifth grader. Matthew was nine years old. After registration, he was escorted to my home room.

I felt sorry for Matthew, because he was "blessed" with the new kid "opportunity" to tell a room full of strangers "all about yourself." Through the chuckling noises coming from the back row and the occasional spit-ball, Matthew described himself: - Nine years old, liked mathematics, liked baseball because it was played by the numbers, skipped second grade, dad was the new JC Penney store manager, enjoyed dinosaurs, he was five years older than his twin sisters, and Gandhi was his hero.

Each fact presented by Matthew became fodder for the four super friends / bullies in the back row. The laughing grew louder, the heckling more frequent, and the spit-balls more "spitty".

Matthew finished the exchange-of-facts-for-heckling episode with a dignified walk to the only open desk in front of me. I was impressed by the self-confidence oozing from the diminutive new kid.

As Matthew took his seat, I told him not to worry about those guys, they wouldn't bother you. He said that Gandhi would disarm them with kindness.

After class, I asked him if he wanted to come to the soccer game. We were playing our biggest rivals - Roosevelt School fifth and sixth graders. They won the past five years.

After the game, he could come over to my house for dinner. Mom made great barbeque after the big game.

We took the field and there was the usual banter between the players. You know, the kind of stuff you did not tell your parents until after high school. Half way through the first period, we were down three to one. By the end of the first period, we were down four to one.

Matthew wandered over to the sidelines to talk with me. He said he had some ideas for the game.

I must admit I was a little embarrassed. But, I remembered my parent's talks about good friends are with you to the end - that is why the last three letters of friend are E-N-D.

I walked over to Matthew, and he looked around as if he were about to pass the secret missile launch codes. He told me that player number 12 could only kick with his right foot, player nine likes to pass with his heel, player number 7 has scored all their points and likes a pass from his left to setup his goals, and the goalie will not dive to his left.

I received a scolding from the coach for talking to people not on the team. He claimed Matthew might be a spy for the other team. I told the coach Matthew was my friend.

The second period started. I stole the ball from player number 9 when he attempted a heel pass to number 7. As I approached the goal, I tapped the ball to the right, then kicked it to the left for a score. I shadowed player number 7 for about six minutes. He began to push me off with his right arm trying to shield me from the pass. He was so pre-occupied by me that Brian stole the ball and scored.

I looked to the sideline for Matthew and spotted the coach alternating looks at Matthew and me. He gave a thumbs-up gesture to Matthew.

We won the game 5 to 4. Matthew and I walked home arm-in-arm. I thanked him. He really saved us. He told me Yogi Berra was his favorite baseball player. Yogi was a coach now. Yogi always said - you can observe a lot just by watching.

One evening a couple of years later, Matthew was struck by a car in a hit-and-run incident.

My brother was born two weeks later, and my parents named him Matthew D Hersey."

Daryl was very impressed, "Matthew Digettes was an important influence in your life. That says a lot about a ten-year old."

Again, both men took a few minutes to enjoy the view, and ponder the information provided.

Daryl broke the silence, "Jon you are the type of person we need. Your adapting skills, thought process, patriotism, analytical skills, business knowledge, quick mind, and seal training would be a great fit at Zeta. Peter takes care of his employees. I would enjoy working with you. I would like to stay another day if you have questions, or you can take me to the airport if you are not interested."

Jon replied, "I want to be part of Zeta Consulting Group. I want to help. I want to fight terrorism and illegal anti-American activities. I want to stop the senseless deaths of innocent people for profit. And, I want the pay for my Disruption activities to be anonymously donated to the cancer treatment center in Tulsa."

Daryl relieved as if he had won a marathon, "I can arrange that."

Jon finished his reflection on that whirlwind week. In six days, he went from alone and in agony, to new friends and an extra job. He was now very busy analyzing businesses for Paul at Biz Planners LLC, and fighting terrorism for Zeta Consulting group.

Tulsa ... The Return

A quick taxi ride took Jon by the Tulsa offices occupied by the prospective Biz Planner's client, then dropped him at the new Best Western in the nearby retail development. He checked in, unpacked, and decided to get some lunch. His next stop was the Chick's OK Grille. The waitress recommended Tulsa Chicken Pie - it was tasty, unique, and filling.

Jon spent most of the afternoon in the hotel room, where he reviewed the files on Grindell Injectors Inc. Grindell was a third-generation company manufacturing auto fuel injectors. Their claim-to-fame was customer service, quick delivery, and a quality design. 'A', one, single design was their problem. Grindell rapidly needed an engineering department expansion, new injector designs, updated production machinery, training programs, building expansion, and - money!

Grindell would receive the standard three-day presentation and negotiation. The Biz Planner's presentation process took a year of department meetings to develop. Then Jon spent another three months to develop his unauthorized detours.

He spent the balance of the afternoon with the Tulsa street map and memorized a course. That evening he planned to run by Injector One Industries - the target of the private job; and, major competitor of Grindell Injectors Inc.

Tulsa ... The Return + "One"

Jon laced up the new accelerating spring running shoes, Jon was anxious to start this run - actually; it was the first run for his private job that excited him. The course he mapped out gave him three passes by Injector One Industries. Jon put on the reversible orange glow-in-the-dark runner's vest as he left the Best Western. Eight minutes later, he ran past the east-side of Injector One's building. Jon's mind started 'running': - one large room on the corner with 16 cubicles, no one at work in that room, clock said 7:10, and a janitor vacuumed the hallway. There were probably two more janitors in the break-room. Staff - still at work on a Friday night, occupied two of six smaller offices. Either career builders or promoted to a position they could not handle. The double lobby doors, common in the south, designed to keep the hot air out. There was a controlled access door on each side of the receptionist's desk. Only two chairs in the lobby, which meant few visitors. Another janitor was in the large office at the other corner. The office

had window-blinds - probably the boss. A new SUV and a small German coupe parked in reserved parking spots that belonged to, hopefully, career builders, Jed Boyington and Denise Dallor. 25 marked parking stalls (16 cubicles, six middle management, one receptionist, one boss, one visitor). There was a private entrance door by the boss' office. Several lights were burned out on the Injector One sign. The lit part read "In or One."

Jon's mind started sorting the facts of this afternoon's Zeta file, and the information gathered so far during the run: - Injector One suspected of selling military-grade titanium injectors to Iran, and the production of Humvee's was held up by a shortage of injectors. The titanium supply alleged to be far more than the units shipped for Humvee production plus scrap sold to local recycler. President Ian Breck traveled frequently to Greece, Turkey, and Egypt.

Jon turned right at the corner, ran a few blocks, and then reversed the vest to put the fluorescent green side out. Just-in-case anyone happened to notice him as he ran by before.

Twenty seven minutes later, Jon ran by the south side of the Injector One building: - 35 parking stalls, two spaces by the employee entrance marked for the shift manager, poorly lit parking area, three dock doors with two occupied by freight trailers and one with eight smokers. An open-top train car partially filled with scrap metal was alongside the far end of the dock, the rail spur behind the train car was lit by light that spilled through an open door, a forklift behind the smokers loaded palletized material onto a shrink wrap machine, and past the forklift were 7 to 9 CNC lathes.

After a couple turns, Jon stops long enough to fold and store the reversible vest in a zippered vest pocket, then turned the green side of his tee shirt out.

Twenty-two minutes later, he returned for his third pass. The north side of Injector One's site was dark. A single light of eight worked. No security cameras observed. Bonus, there was easy access to the rail spur on the west side. Jon inched up to the open door behind the rail car; Jon found the phone junction box, the gas line, and heard the high-speed ramp-up and ramp-down of the CNC lathes. He peeked along the bottom corner of the open door and counted 35 CNC lathes. The open door was only ten feet away from pallet racking that could be used for cover.

Jon returned to the street and ran back toward the motel. He reversed his tee-shirt and put the vest's orange side out.

Tulsa - Day Two of "One"

Saturday - it was more Injector One surveillance. Jon rented a car at the Best Western counter - mid-sized, white, Buick, and plain. Forgettable!

9:11 AM - the yard maintenance crew loaded their equipment. There are no cars in office parking area and two pickups in the employee lot. Only one commercial freight trailer parked at the dock - Tulsa Southern Express. Same rail car, but the door behind the rail car was closed. A forklift backed out of the trailer.

Jon thought, "Wonder if this is an illegal shipment? - is that Ian Breck with the paperwork? - Ian drives a pickup?!"

Ian Breck was the high school designated outdoorsman, and voted most likely to break-his-neck. Other classmates were into cars, girls, basketball, football, etc. Ian was into hunting, fishing, survival skills, and motocross. He was a risk taker. He was fearless; and, he was young. His nickname was Evil - after Evil Knievel. Ian did not have time for school, or a job; he was too busy enjoying life and being Ian. Instead of getting a job, he sold stuff. Anything he thought he could turn quickly. He developed a reputation around town as one who could broker deals, and he was networked well enough he knew all the available stuff, and what customers needed.

At 32, he was the youngest president ever at Injector One. He received several back-to-back promotions. Plant personnel that knew Ian were surprised by his rapid advancement for one that never went to college. Rumors that he had something on the owner circulated with each promotion. Ian was world wise, and smarter than most college graduates were. For a person that never opened a textbook for six years of middle and high school, he has survived very well. He was known as a guy who could get things done.

A Tulsa Southern Express semi-tractor, without trailer, passed Jon going in the opposite direction. Jon turned right and drove around the block. Now parked about 100 yards away the license plates were readable through the Nikon telephoto lens: - newer White Ford F150 plate was UW2 57X and a license frame read "2Phast4U", - the older blue Dodge 3/4 ton was TK5 84F, - and the tractor plate was CO F276A6. The driver backed under the trailer, hooked up the hoses, retracted the front wheels, and secured the coupling safety pin. Ian closed the dock area gate behind the departing semi. Jon took a couple of pictures of the two men - certain that Ian was one, and hoped the other could be found by Peter Stone's forensic guy. As the trailer pulled away, he took a couple of snapshots of the plate - CO 354801. Jon opened the backpack, removed the GPS unit, entered Tulsa Southern Express, and attached the receiver to the windshield.

Jon arrived before the semi. Jon witnessed the trailer, # CO 354801, dutifully follow the tractor into the Tulsa Southern Express lot. The semi rig pulled over to the side, stopped, the driver exited the cab, and walked to a new pickup truck with a temporary

paper permit. The driver pulled just outside the gate, stopped, closed and locked the gates, then drove off. Jon wondered if the driver was part of the scheme.

Jon made a small detour by the cancer center before he returned to the Best Western. He parked across the street and stared at the entrance door. He wanted so much to talk with the doctor and thank him. However, he felt certain the visit would bring back too many painful moments that he was not prepared to re-live.

He would send the photos to Peter's forensic guy later.

Tulsa - Day Three of "One"

It was Sunday in the Bible belt and not a single car in the entire industrial park but Jon's white rental. He parked a block away behind some shrubs that kept the car out of sight. Yesterday, when Jon saw Ian, he determined there were no security cameras to record Ian's secret shipments. From Friday's first pass, Jon saw the little magnetic alarm switches on the doors and windows. If the phone lines were cut, Ian and the police would be called. From his Seal training, Jon knew that induction-overload was the method of putting more signal on the lines than they could handle. The overload prevented the passing of normal phone frequencies. The equipment needed for induction overload was a small signal generator, induction snap coils, and two 6-volt cube batteries - all stuff that fit in a backpack. With the induction process setup, Jon had about three hours of alarm system silence.

To his astonishment, the rail door opened about four inches providing access to the padlock. Two minutes later Jon closed the door behind him and started the stealth portion of this Disruption.

Jon picked the lock on Ian's office door. The blinds closed. The safe was a simple double cylinder rotary combination mechanism. One stethoscope, two attempts, and three numbers later the safe was open revealing a single old-fashioned lined ledger book sitting on one of eight shelves. The ledger book was full of numbers; and what appeared to be randomized letters. Jon took pictures of the ledger pages. Code breaking was the job of the forensic guy. Jon surveyed the desk, credenza, two bookcases, and the medicine cabinet in the private bath. He checked the desk, chairs, flowerpots, walls, ceiling, and floor for secret compartments. Three personal photos were hung behind the desk; two store bought pictures on the side walls, and a well crafted inspirational poster / picture with the saying - Be The Glue, problems become chances when people stick together - was opposite of the desk. The personal photos on the wall and the two under the desktop glass had something in common; Jon felt it, but "it" was not obvious. Jon took three shots of each photo. Jon checked the back of all the pictures and photographs; and, found the safe combination on the back of the inspirational poster.

On the walk back to the rail access door Jon noticed several clues that Injector One had money problems: the carpets were very dirty, the clock still read 7:10, offices had mismatched side chairs, - mismatched lunchroom furniture was being held together by duct tape and bubble gum, - and the lunchroom sink dripped frequently.

Jon thought, "Probably because Ian took every spare dime out of the company.

The padlock was re-latched; the rail door closed those four generous inches, and the induction overload equipment returned to the backpack.

He detoured by the cancer center. Again, he parked across the street for about 20 minutes. He could not muster enough courage to visit the fine people that cared for Alissa.

Tulsa - Day Four of "One" with Grindell

Monday. The Biz Planners presentation started at 10:00 AM on-the-dot. Fred Goldman, President and COO, was punctual - a quality his father-in-law, Harold P. Grindell Jr, admired. Present were Harold (CEO), Fred (president, COO, son-in-law, and instigator of this meeting), Tony (engineering VP), Sam (CFO, Samantha), and Jon.

Jon started out with the history of Grindell Injectors Inc. An auto parts manufacturer whose first customer was Ford. Grindell supplied the short gravity fuel line. They moved to machined parts when screw couplings replaced solder. Their first international order was from Saab for brake lines, fuel lines, and injectors. The Saab order put Grindell on the automobile-parts-quality-map.

Harold Sr liked the whir of automated machinery and the fact they never called in sick. Harold Sr spent weeks figuring out the best design for "the stick" fuel injector. Seven injector bodies for the various auto manufacturers had "the stick" core. The days of Harold Sr's uni-design core were fading fast - new engine designs required better injector designs for improved power, alternate fuels, and high mileage.

Harold Junior benefited from a good economy. Car buyers purchased a new car every three to four years. So many car models that enough factories annually purchased more and more Stick injectors. The economy got goofy and car manufacturers scaled back on models and production capacity, just as Fred Goldman was promoted to COO by the board. After 20 months on the job, Fred convinced the board to approve the meeting and potential deal with Biz Planners.

One of Jon's detours from the presentation was a two-hour lunch break on Jon's nickel. It was amazing what secrets were discussed in Jon's presence that would never come-up during the "formal" presentation. Jon heard: - Ford their first customer was threatening to drop the Stick, Fiat negotiations stalled, the "antique" automated lathes

were slow and made cost reduction difficult, and Saab's tenure was iffy. The team members left the luncheon about 30 minutes before the session-two start time.

Ten minutes before 1:00 PM, Fred's assistant called the meeting members so the presentation continued on schedule. Session two reviewed the current status of Grindell. Loaded with lunch tidbits, Jon held everyone's attention as he blended thoughts, and facts he overheard at lunch, with his prepared material. The perception of Jon's secret knowledge and optimistic presentation style created an atmosphere of confidence and openness. The last hour of discussion was very lively. Jon ended session two at 3:00 PM on-the-dot.

Jon thought, "When in Rome... "

Jon said, "We will pick-up this discussion tomorrow at 9:00 AM.

Jon took his detour #2 and passed out business cards with his cell number hand written on back. Occasionally, this was good for a late night confidential call or two. Fred was the last one to leave the room.

Jon was interested in some feedback on the presentation asked, "How are things going?"

Fred heard a different question and responded, "Honestly we are struggling. We do not have enough engineering staff to design the five injector types our customers want. If we had the staff, our production equipment does not have the capacity to make enough units. Our funds are stretched nearly to the limit. I am thinking of scaling back to a point where we can at least break-even, consistently."

Jon replied, "Hopefully; Biz Planners can help out. Let's see how tomorrow goes. By the way, do you have the latest financials for me?"

* * *

Tuesday. Jon started the day two presentation at 9:00 AM, on-the-dot. The financial statements review session, usually held in the afternoon of day two, was good for putting everyone to sleep. Jon's detour #3, moved financial review session in the morning. The detoured session went well. Everyone was prepared with their expense details, and was well versed on the company financials.

Lunch break was again two hours, but each participant was on-their-own. Jon had a sandwich brought in and sequestered himself in the conference room to put "The List for the Future" together. The action items designed to save Grindell Injector Company. Jon's version of "The List" included a couple of throw-away items sprinkled within the listing to get the discussion moving (detour #4). The draft version, used to begin the discussion, was ready about 30 minutes before the next session.

Grindell Injector Company - List for the Future

1. Increase revenue to double in size over five years.
 - A. Expand Sales Department
 - B. Secure all current contracts
 - C. Estimated cost of expansion \$1.7M
2. Expand production capacity
 - A. 280,000 sq ft addition to north end of facility
 - B. Purchase 52 new CNC Machining Centers
 - C. Organize machinery by product types
 - D. Estimated costs of expansion \$62.4M
3. Expand Engineering Department
 - A. New design center on vacant lot on Cypress Drive
 - B. Lab, testing center with equipment, machining center, new computer system
 - C. Hire through Biz Planners recruiting services
 - D. Nine design engineers, two manufacturing engineers, one lab technician
 - E. Estimated cost \$17.9M
4. Remodel office areas
 - A. Re-organize by product teams
 - B. Add skylights, open up office areas, eliminate offices
 - C. New cubicle furniture
 - D. Estimated cost \$2.2M
5. Expand inventory management
 - A. Purchase new portable mini-cranes
 - B. Purchase new auto feed systems for new CNC and old automatic centers
 - C. Rebuild overhead crane system in existing building
 - D. Design rail car unloading system
 - E. Estimated cost \$7.7M
6. Company airplane and Limousine service
 - A. Lear jet for executive and sales department use
 - B. Local limo service for executives and visiting customers
 - C. Estimated cost \$35M
7. Training and customer center
 - A. 8,000 square foot expansion on east side of offices
 - B. Employee classrooms and customer presentation areas
 - C. Staff
 - D. Estimated cost \$12.6M
8. X?

The cooperation of the Grindell team made "The List" completion easy.

Thirty minutes to spare, Jon decided to see what the forensics guy had discovered - logs in to zcg.com - enters his password "Da37-)jS2" - enters the case number "12oNeH3" - enters childhood pet's name "Spot". Ten seconds later, he was ready to read the report.

Jon:

Ledger book still in cryptography. A key code would dramatically speed up analysis.

Truck plates are registered to Ian Breck and Charles Johnson. Paper car permits are not registered in OK, 3rd person cannot be found through temporary permits.

Pictures are of Tulsa mayor, county commissioner, OK's governor's son, his church pastor, and two unknowns.

Forensics ZCG

Jon closed the scrambler link with the ESC key. Each time he laughed to himself that someone wrote a super-secret program that you pressed the escape key to exit.

He was stuck on the report phrase "and two unknowns." Where could he have seen those two faces? Best Western lobby? Flight to Tulsa? The restaurant? Cancer center? Grindell tour? Injector One?. That's it, one was the forklift driver, Saturday, at Injector One's dock; and, the other, the truck driver from Saturday.

The Zeta file on Injector One indicated Ian grew-up and graduated locally from Kennedy High School. Maybe those two were high school friends. They had to be someone he could trust with his secret. Or, they were trusted to keep quiet because they were also being paid from the illegal sales. It was going to be a night at the library.

* * *

The fourth session started a couple of minutes late as they waited on Fred and Harold Jr. Both apologized for wasting the team's time. Jon quickly displayed "The List." Jon spent the next 45 minutes going over the detail that could not be compiled on the report. Upon completion, several members of the team, in choir like form, said item four and six were not necessary - both sent the wrong signals to customers and did not add value to the products and services. Pleased with direction of the team, Jon began the validation and budgeting portion of his session four.

Three hours of uninterrupted number crunching always drained Jon. However, he was extremely pleased with the results. Fred stayed in his chair as he stared at the expansion budget, then closed the door after the last person left.

Fred said, "I cannot see how we are going to pay for this expansion. The funds to pull this off are two to three years gross revenues. It is too much of a burden for this company. Our gross margins would have to increase by 50%."

Jon offered, "I will present several options tomorrow, which make this project achievable. Please spend a little time to determine under what conditions you would move forward with the proposal."

Fred replied, "I can do that."

* * *

His hunger pains were satisfied with the Tulsa Chicken Pie. The location of the library programmed into the GPS unit. The car was full of gas. His next stop was the library.

The Librarian helped Jon setup on a terminal compatible with the recent electronic conversion of local yearbooks. "Ian Breck" entered into the search function. Five search results reported.

Result 1 - picture of Ian Breck with Charles Johnson after a hunting trip. The caption read - "Record deer shot near Marlow in Grady County".

Result 2 - picture of Ian with other members of Future Business Leaders club

Result 3 - Ian's class picture

Result 4 - list of honor roll students

Result 5 - picture of Ian and Andy Toliver in motocross gear holding a first place trophy from the Oklahoma Ornerly Oval. Adjacent is a picture of Ian and Andy riding off.

Something caught Jon's eye.

Jon thought, "Is the motorcycle license plate the same as the pickup's custom license frame."

Jon enlarged the license plate area of the photograph. The motocross license plate and the truck license frame were the same – 2PHAST4U

Jon thought, "Too Fast for You. Ian you may not be fast enough!"

Jon enlarged the areas of the other photo faces. Charles was the forklift driver, and Andy was the Tulsa Southern Express driver.

Jon returned to the Best Western to finalize the plan that revealed the illegal activities of Ian, Charles, and Andy.

Tulsa - Grindell Finals

Wednesday. Jon's final detour was breakfast before the last session - the session he affectionately called "The Finals" because this was the test of all his efforts. Like the lunch after session one he hoped for some clues from the team on this deal's direction.

At the table, Fred was in the adjacent seat and talked about scaling back. Jon only heard tidbits, partial phrases, and pieces of sentences: - "... Expansion is huge, maybe too huge" ... "can we get this done before it's too late" ... "I hear Injector One has two new designs ready for introduction" ... "it might work if we scale back the expansion plan" ... and so on.

Jon thought the ultra-conservative nature of Grindell was placed on the back burner during session two. He then thought it confirmed by the enthusiasm of yesterday's session four. He excused himself from the table. He must determine what his next step would be. He had 23 minutes. How could he have missed the conservative, low risk under current? Even Fred was semi positive after yesterday's private meeting. He had to salvage this deal. How can the deal be maximized for Grindell's needs with minimal change? Not sure Grindell survived without at least half the expansion plans.

Jon's thoughts collided in a fireworks display, "Ooooo Eureka! That's the answer!!!"

Tulsa - #8 becomes one

Jon entered the room three minutes late and apologized the second he closed the conference room door.

Jon obviously excited, "First let me apologize for my tardiness. Second, let me apologize for trying to sell you on an expansion beyond your comfort zone. I have a solution that gives Grindell the production capacity, new equipment, and trained engineering you need. Its number 8 on the list - give me a couple of minutes to put it up on the screen."

Jon grabbed the mouse, made a few clicks - oops, one click too many - hit the "x" and there it is on the laptop monitor "8. X?". Jon strikes-through the X and ?, adds a space and began to type. A lifetime of 20 seconds passed as Jon prepared item 8 - he proofed item 8 - took a deep breath - then pressed control-D to display item 8.

8. X? Purchase Injector One Inc

- A. Production capacity of ~35 nearly new CNC Lathes
- B. Trained Engineering Department
- C. Three, not two, new products on drawing boards
- D. Remodel current Grindell facility into Design Center and Customer Center
- E. Purchase mini-cranes for material handling
- F. Estimated cost \$65M

Fred and Harry Jr caught the vision immediately, and their smiles gave away their approval. Fred gave a nod to Jon and held up his hand so that only Jon could see it, which indicated he wanted the other team members to catch the vision before they moved on. About a minute, another lifetime for Jon passed before the other team members nodded and smiled to each other. Fred nodded which signaled - OK let's go. The lively discussion went into the noon hour past the scheduled ending time - "perfect fit to our needs" - "not too much" - "a logical step" - "they have customers we would love to have" - "three new designs, you are sure it's three and not two?"

Fred took over the session. He had sandwiches ordered. After lunch Sam, Harry Jr, and himself would meet with Jon to finalize the deal with Biz Planners. The lunch conversation was full of excitement, with a hint of the Phoenix effect.

Lunch cleared from the table; and Fred, still in command, asked the \$65M dollar question,

Fred began, "Now, how do we pay for this?"

Jon replied, "Biz Planners can lend you any amount you need at prime minus half percent. Or we can buy part of Grindell and be your partners - you can still keep a controlling interest, and we act more like consultants than partners. We can broker the deal with Injector One and you pay the commission as a monthly fee. Or you can shop for a loan, broker the deal, etc on your own. We will invoice you for my time and 10% of the final agreement if you strike a deal with Injector One."

Fred informed, "Harry, Sam, and I have already talked about the amount we are comfortable with. It is \$57.5M with payments over ten years. We need the whole package to be maximum \$57.5M. We want you, not another Biz Planner employee, to broker the deal with Injector One."

Jon thought, "You are about to get the deal of a lifetime."

Jon said, "I can meet with them early next week."

Fred added, "I'll get the team together this afternoon and work out the amount for each phase and project. Can you come back tomorrow afternoon; say 2 PM on-the-dot-ish?"

Jon replied, "See you at 2-ish."

Jon was happy about the favorable twist of fate and the blessings he received from his Angel, Alissa. So happy he knew it was time to thank the people that put so much time, energy, and effort into making Alissa's last three months livable.

Another Good Day ... Really!!

Thursday morning. A text message from the forensic guy was short and to the point.

Jon:

*2PHAST4U was the code key.
Deciphered ledger attached.*

Document packages sent.

Ledger also reveals Ian has purchased Injector One from Jerry Williams.

Forensics

Jon reviewed the decoded ledger for 17 minutes. Ian, Charles, and Andy had been selling injectors to Iran for three years. Which included 1.5 years before Ian became president. They sold just short of \$15M worth of injectors. The money split evenly. Forensics followed the transactions listed in the ledger and found that only \$121,935 was missing from the \$14,995,304 they stole. Three new pick-ups totaled \$104,784. The rest \$17,151 was not accounted for.

At 10:30 AM, three phone calls made before the trip to the center. Jon first dialed Ian's private, direct number.

Jon began, "Hello, Ian."

Ian replied, "Who is this and how did you get this number?"

Jon ignored the question, and said, "Ian; I have a copy of your private ledger. I know you, Charles, and Andy are selling military-grade fuel injectors to Iran. I can meet with you on Monday to discuss the sale of your company, the return of the money you three have taken out of Injector One; or, you can go to federal prison. A special delivery package will arrive today at your office addressed to your attention. This package contains a copy of proof that I can make federal prison part of your future. Two other copies exist with instructions to send them to the Department of Justice and State Department if Injector One is not sold within the next 30 days. Is there any part of this conversation you need repeated?"

Ian submitted, "NO! How did you get this number; and, who are you?"

Jon commanded, "I will introduce myself Monday morning at 10:00 AM, on-the-dot. Be prepared to make a deal to sell Injector One, and return the \$5M each, that you, Charles, and Andy have siphoned out of the company. If I am not satisfied with your effort on Monday, I will have the copies released. Oh, by-the-way, you need to sell your new pickup and return that money also."

Jon hung up, called the special delivery driver in the Special Package ExprEss and Delivery (SPEED) truck, and authorized the delivery of Ian's package.

Ian was overwhelmed. He rubbed both hands over his head. He turned in his chair to look out the window and saw the SPEED messenger step out of the truck with a large envelope. Ian's heart began to pound harder and there seemed to be a shortage of air in his office.

Jon hung-up from the SPEED driver and placed the next call.

Jon began, "Hello Charles ..."

Two minutes later...

Jon began, "Hello, Andy ..."

Tulsa - cancer center

Jon parked in the cancer center lot.

As he entered, Julie, the Hostess, said, "Hello Mr. Hersey, nice to see you again. We are sorry to hear about Alissa."

After a few seconds, Julie continued, "We are all so excited - we just received another \$30,000 dollar anonymous donation. It is the third one in the past three months. We bought the Oncotech Analyzer with the first two donations. Now we can diagnose cancer faster. Who would you like to see?"

Jon replied, "Dr Howard, Alissa's doctor"

Julie responded, "Go down this hallway to the Doctors Center at corridor 1200."

Jon walked past rooms he remembered, and "his" chairs that he once turned into a bed. He paused and stared at the door of Dr Howard's old office. This was the office where Alissa and Jon heard the news that the chemo was ineffective.

Jon checked in with the new Administrative Assistant in charge of the Doctors Center.

She called Dr Howard, "There is a Jon Hersey here to see you. (Pause) Yes, I will send him right in."

She looked at Jon and said, "Dr Howard is in room 1262."

Jon paused before walking to 1262.

Dr Howard met Jon at the door. They shook hands.

Jon began, "Doctor. I wanted so much to thank you for the extra time Alissa and I shared. I can imagine you do not often get to see the caretakers after cancer has taken the patient. I brought some pictures of Alissa, and I, enjoying life."

Dr Howard looked through the 20+ pictures and noticed a common theme. Every picture was Alissa and Jon smiling, and holding hands.

Dr Howard's persona left the room while Thomas Howard talked with Jon Hersey for 10 minutes. Their conversation interrupted by the intercom.

The Doctor Center Administrative Assistant announced, "Your next appointment is here Dr Howard."

Thomas Howard said, "Thank you; it was very thoughtful of you to stop by and show me these pictures."

Doctor Howard returned. Jon and Dr Howard stood and shook hands.

As Jon returned down the hallway, he wiped a tear from his cheek.

-:-:-:-:-

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

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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.