

**Taking Your Job Home with You**  
**or**  
**How Not to be Consumed by Your Work**

*From The Memoirs of a Workaholic on Planet Jamurida*

## **Publisher's Forward**

New Frontier Harpers Publishing obtained the following memoir from the chronicles found on Jamurida (ja-m&r-E-da), the 103<sup>rd</sup> planet of Terrajin. Jamuridan scavengers traded excerpts of several journals, memoirs, and diaries — found amid the ruins of Etho Station — for food and water. Subsequently, a shrewd paper merchant sold copies to Mogul Lindborg, who gambled away the documents and publishing rights in a card game with Mogul Harper. When Mogul Harpers Publishing merged with New Frontiers Galaxy Publishing, the manuscript sat in storage for years until Kroy University interns discovered the tome. The fragments recounted the tragic deeds of an unidentified author — a self-professed workaholic, and, according to his book's dedication, an “aggressively entrepreneurial” businessperson.

On the 92<sup>nd</sup> day of 63<sup>rd</sup> Space Year of the 10<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (92.63.10), the author began writing a memoir to reflect on his life and summarize his years on Jamurida. Elsewhere in the galaxy during this time, the Kroy Republic Associated Pact Trade Agreement (KRAPTA) trade bloc went into effect; and in the news, the Premier Court found Leraina Gallobitt not guilty for dismembering her husband John. Across the galaxy in Terrajin space, Kavaliro Mandela put an end to segregation in Terrajin systems; while, not far away, the genocide of hundreds of thousands of ethnic Terrajins occurred in the Rwotera “Land of a Thousand Craters” region. The author wrote his last entry on the 78<sup>th</sup> day of the 87<sup>th</sup> Space Year (78.87.10) amid turbulent times on the troubled planet of Jamurida near the mineral rich center of the Milky Way Galaxy.

Taking place during what historians called the Jamuridan Outbreak, this firsthand account detailed the strange, cult-like phenomenon not fully understood by outsiders or the academic community. Along with his best friend and business collaborator Joe — one of the only personalities acknowledged in the journal by name, the author settled into a new home in a strange land. As the violence escalated on the planet, a civil war tore through the desolate, arid, asteroid of a planet — reducing the cities to rubble.

Recognizing the historic value of the documents, scholars from the Kroy University researched the events and details of several labyrinthine diaries and the fragmented memoir to ascertain the identity of the unknown author. In an epic quest, Professor Golbman and various graduate students traced the author's comments referencing all records created during the course of public business in all media including legal documents, school records, and police reports across four Territories from Kroy to Kal. With almost certainty and a general academic consensus, researchers narrowed the possibilities of the author's identity to three candidates: Gerad Lugner, Epebo Mahagonov, and Praat Klaassen. Professor Golbman theorized that the author was in all likelihood Gerad Lugner, and that Gerad operated under the other two names as aliases. Travel logs, Kalsan registries, network server data, and Customs Declaration forms supported the conjecture that Gerad Lungner was really all three persons.

In the translation presented here, Conniata Werkiso, the editor, added annotations in a sidebar for clarification regarding the verifiable facts and sources. Although the selected excerpts from the journal contained references to specific events, Professor Golbman was quick to point out various pretenses and exaggerations from the author.

*Translated from Bryttasish by Conniata Werkisto- a Kroy writer and New Martian Times bestseller.*

# The Memoirs of a Workaholic on Planet Jamurida

Dedicated to like-minded aggressively entrepreneurial businesspeople

## The Early Road to Success

Well, I never really got to know my father, but I do remember that he encouraged me to work at an early age.<sup>1</sup> Practically as soon as I could walk, I worked, and if I couldn't find a job, my father would find me some foul occupation I would later regret. The details of the job never mattered. We lived in hard times and had to survive in a harsh world. I suppose this was his way of providing for his son and preparing me for life's little struggles.<sup>2</sup>

As I write these words, I'm reminded that every day, before breakfast, my father would point his finger at me, look me square in the eyes, and repeat, "Work or work will find you."

My father, a doctor, worked very hard. He traveled constantly – always on some mission to heal the poor, while being compensated very well in the process.<sup>3</sup> Honestly, looking back now, I can't even recall what he looked like.

My father loved being at work, and even when he was home, he'd be on the phone with his nurses checking on the welfare of his patients. He spent any remaining time enjoying the trappings of his station – luxury vehicles, fine wines, and expensive gadgets.

Needless-to-say, he neglected some of his very fundamental responsibilities back at home...namely my mother. Whenever he was around my mother, they'd just argue about how much time my father spent working, but I didn't think she fully understood the allure of *owning your own business* and *being your own boss*. So, my mother, having had enough talk of my father's *business interests*, filed for divorce when I was nine.<sup>4</sup>

Well, my father took it pretty rough after the separation – after all, like any businessperson, he treasured having around the things he worked so hard to earn. Before retiring to his room, he told me that my mother snatched all his money from the bank and took off for a warmer planet somewhere in the direction of Sagittarius. He stayed in bed all day, wouldn't eat, and relieved himself in his sheets. I'd check on him from time to time, and he'd groan so at least I knew he was still alive.

This went on for a few days, until he finally emerged from his bedroom early in the morning. Suddenly - and quite miraculously, he was clean-shaven and dressed in his finest business suit.

Just like before, he sat down with me, looked me squarely in the eyes, and said, "Every businessperson undergoes a certain amount of risk so that he or she can put food on the table at the end of the day."

With his black tweed hat perched atop his head, he gave me a pat on the back and left for work.

I didn't go to school that day. Instead, I went downtown to sell papers on the street corner.<sup>5</sup> I feared my early business ventures were not profitable enough, and that I needed to make up some slack in this new partnership with my father. Whatever the obstacles in our way, I knew that we were going to need some money to "put food on the table," and I wanted to show him that I could uphold *my* responsibilities.

However, that evening, when I excitedly returned home, my pockets full of cash, no one was there to greet me. The house seemed empty - void of some indescribable presence. To make matters even worse, there was no food on the table.<sup>6</sup>

Well, I waited all night by the front door – peering through the little broken window – looking for my father's car to pull into the driveway. The night turned to morning, with no word from him. I called him and sent him messages, but he didn't respond. In

### Sidebar Annotations

1. According to Professor Goldman, Dr. and Mrs. Lugner are the author's parents. However, no birth record exists for Gerad Lugner. The Lugners adopt a Rhosian baby named Epebo and change the name to Gerad.

2. In Rhosia, it is a common practice to pay officials to erase the birth mother's files so that the child and mother would not be able to contact each other. However, Professor Goldman concludes that the author became aware of his adoption later in life, while living in Rhosia.

3. The Board of Health revokes Dr. Lugner's physician's certificate due to "unethical practices" arising from a harassment suit detailed in BoH V. Lugner. Yet, seemingly, Dr. Lunger continues to practice without hindrance.

4. In the divorce hearing, Mrs. Lugner sites "irreconcilable differences" for the justification. However, a local newspaper alleges that an affair with Mr. Lunger and his mistress is the reason for the split.

5. "Papers" is a slang term for the sheets used to roll illegal smoked substances. The author is most probably a small-time drug dealer.

6. Five days after the divorce settlement, Dr. Lugner's bank account closes, and he departs from the public record.

7. Mrs. Lugner remarries and, after another failed marriage, commits suicide in a decompressed airlock.

fact, I never heard from either of my parents again.<sup>7</sup>

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### A New Partnership

After some momentary disarray, I knew what I had to do: reorganize. Since organization is the key to success, if you aren't having good fortune it must mean that the organization is not working for you. And you know, after any major setback, a financial reevaluation is always a good idea – especially for an independent nine-year-old industrialist. However, without any assets to speak of and no employees working for me yet, the restructuring was more philosophical in nature.

I struggled to survive, and I lived in modest accommodations to make ends meet.<sup>8</sup> I took odd jobs and even supported small businesses to make connections and get my foot in the door. All the while, I knew opportunity was around the corner.<sup>9</sup>

Well, one thing led to another, and when I turned thirteen, I accepted a position ensuring shuttle preparedness for the Kalsan Alliance Transportation Department. The Kalsan managed the Faster-Than-Light-Speed launch pads used by pilgrims to travel across the galaxy, and they relied on workers like me to keep the shuttles running.<sup>10</sup>

Two long years later, I met Joe. Although we practically lived at the dock, our paths never crossed before that day.<sup>11</sup> That was all about to change.

Right at the end of the shift, one of my team, called me down to the dock to help Joe settle a labor dispute. A problem arose when Joe, who lacked an official management title, received some complaints from a few of the older, veteran contractors that were unhappy with his delegation of duties. Aware that this situation required an arbitrator, I humbly offered my services and negotiated mutually beneficial terms.<sup>12</sup> Our superiors were so impressed with the handling of the situation that they gave us a bonus and let Joe take off the rest of the day.

Joe and I instantly became friends. I impressed him with my take-charge attitude, and I saw in him an awesome potential for business prowess.

We decided to use our bonus to stock up on the necessities of life. Joe stockpiled items from the grocery and clothes store; while I obtained a remote access terminal that allowed me to continue my work by wiring into the computer network at the dock from anywhere in the system.

From that day onwards, Joe and I established an inseparable partnership based on our dedication to professional growth and a strong work ethic.<sup>13</sup>

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### Our First Corporation

Later that year, Joe and I relocated to the financial center of Kroy, the TSL Law Space Station. The TSL Law exchange controlled the vast economy of the powerful Kroy baronies, which made it an excellent place for Joe and I to apply our fiscal theories.

We pooled our resources and found a small habitation module “live/work space” that was just the right price.<sup>14</sup> Using my new remote terminal, I worked from home and kept my supervising position at the dock. I could remotely monitor the status of shipments back planetside, while freeing up some time to take a second job.

One night at dinner, Joe and I agreed that in order to thrive we needed to work for ourselves instead of making others rich. We had to take this phase in our work lives to the next level and branch out to find new possibilities. With overflowing excitement, we pushed away our plates and commenced planning. Hours later, we didn't even finish our meal but we did complete our strategy.

Well, starting a new business is always difficult. Yet, we managed to get off the

8.Mars Social Services registers Praat Klaassen, an orphan, at the Oliver Foster Home. This is the first recorded mention of Praat Klaassen.

9.The Province Court sentences Praat Klaassen to juvenile detection hall for selling contraband for the Moguls, or the wealthy warlords and crime bosses of C-8 LA Station. Praat escapes the hall after just four days.

10.Praat works for the Kalsan scrubbing rust off shuttle hulls and washing hangar bays.

11.Literally, many homeless workers live at the space dock because the Kalsan provide food and shelter.

12.Police logs document a brawl in which a load of metal crossbeams drop on three workers. The police never make an arrest in the case.

13.The Transportation Department fires Joe and Praat the next day – citing them for tardiness and inebriation on the job.

14.Professor Golbman speculates that Gerad and Joe stowaway on a Kalsan shuttle to reach TSL Law Station and doubts that they could afford their own habitation module.

15.TSL Secondary School holds no records of enrollment for any of Gerad Lunger's aliases. Researchers agree that Gerad and Joe drop out of school and never attend TSL Secondary School.

ground without any initial capital, and in just two days, we created a full business plan to execute. We made our mission to help our fellow students gain financial independence, just as we had done. We wanted to pass on our business acumen to our peers at school so that they would not have to work as hard as we had to get ahead in life.<sup>15</sup>

We formed our first corporation called Rabbesto Onlend Investments - a financial stock holding company for affluent youths. Progressive, I know, but we understood at an early age the power of money and the direct correlation to work.<sup>16</sup>

Since many “pre-adults” couldn’t open a bank account without a parent’s consent, they needed someone discreet and fiscally responsible to invest on their behalf. It was a difficult sell at first to expand into such an untapped market – for our lesser counterparts at the schoolyard hadn’t fully grasped the concepts of money. So, we had to convince them that it was in their best interest to let us secure and invest their funds for them.<sup>17</sup>

At Rabbesto, we eagerly utilized a loophole in current banking regulations to maximize our client’s return. We actively reinvested funds, and not surprisingly, we turned a profit within the first week.<sup>18</sup> We were well on our way to our first great success.

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### Working for a Living

At that point, I knew what Joe and I needed to do: work, work, work.

All the same, the people I’d encountered in my travels would always second-guess my decision. Everywhere I went, the naysayer’s and skeptics would ask me if I thought I was working too hard. They’d ask. “What if...” “What if....”

Everyone has fear. *Fear of not getting a job. Fear of losing your job. Fear of not being able to provide for yourself or your family.* Sure, fear is a part of my life everyday, but I don’t let it tear me up. To them, I’d say, “Get over it! You’re alive and that counts for something. Now, shut up and get to work.”

We live in a galaxy full of energy with “work” happening everywhere, so there’s plenty of work to be had wherever you go. I’m not even talking about the jobs that we do; think about all the growth of our expanding universe as work. Our galaxy is constantly changing and moving in a dance of matter and energy. On a cosmic scale, life is work and work is life—it’s a big cycle.

To think of it in a different way, a good business associate once explained that one’s actions determine one’s *consumption expenditure*—the amount of resources spent to survive one day of existence. The simple fact of life is that if you expend more resources than consumed, over time, you’ll die. Work ensures that one can continue to expend resources while consuming resources. It’s hard to believe, but the work we do everyday fits into this larger scheme of things. Work ensures we live and others live. We’re not just the cogs of the cosmos; we are a part of the power that makes the galaxy operate.

Consumption is good. *Consume more and live more.* We all understand the more one works, the more money made, and the greater your potential in life. But, the key to profitability, and really to life for that matter, is to minimize the amount of energy exerted in the process.

Long story short, for the next few years, business was good—so good, in fact, that the school administration became jealous of our power base and the market share we acquired. School officials threw a wrench in our well-oiled machine — bringing our operation to a grinding halt. The principal requested a court order prohibiting us from

16.The Division of Corporations shows no registration of a Rabbesto Onlend Investment company.

17.Police testimony sites a gang named The Rabbestos for eleven counts of robbery and forty-eight counts of aggravated assault. The gang terrorizes children by dangling the victims from a bridge.

Overall, the school receives 863 formal complaints of stolen lunch money, which prompts the school to get a restraining order against The Rabbestos.

18.TSL Law Station holds underground gambling rings for bankers and politicians. The police blotter section of the TSL Post lists a misdemeanor gambling charge against a “G. Lung,” believed to be an abbreviation for Gerad Lunger.

19.A police report divulges details that Praat and Joe failed to meet with their parole officer. A judge issues an arrest warrant.

providing our services at school.<sup>19</sup>

This shattered our customer's loyalty and created a domino effect where our clients turned against us. Although our business status as a corporation protected us against personal liability, dubious countersuits required we liquidate our property.<sup>20</sup> On my eighteenth birthday, we decided to cut our losses and get out while we were still ahead.<sup>21</sup>

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### The Sprint to Life

The next day, we obtained our partners' shares and cleared our debts to tidy up the balance sheet so that we could sell our business with a clean transfer of assets.<sup>22</sup> Although some of the community soured against us, we wanted to leave behind an enduring legacy of generosity and goodwill. We felt good about our work on the station, and we wanted the neighborhood to remember us for our philanthropy. So, we made arrangements for our final donation: a complete renovation of the TSL Secondary School.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, when the news of our astounding contribution and subsequently astonishing departure broke the following day, the story made the front page of the New Martian Times.

We weren't there to experience the delight of our triumph though. Part of me feared that, if we didn't leave when we did, we might've never left. I'm sure someone would have tried talking us into staying, but it was time for us to move on to new ventures.

We were on our way to Eurysan space — the old lands where Kroy pilgrims fled persecution from the Bryttasish Baronage during the 4<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

A new chapter had begun.

Joe and I worked and lived together for the next 99 Space Years.<sup>24</sup> We wanted to work on the road, so we traveled while visiting the galaxy. We made our home the spaceways and thoroughfare of the Kalsan shipping routes — never traveling beyond our means and ever mindful of our consumption expenditure.

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### A Bigger Outlook

Well, after some time, we ended up in Rhosian space.<sup>25</sup> Rhosia — an empire in on the outer arm of the Milky Way — was overthrown by revolution before the First Galactic War.

The long journey had taken its toll, and I could tell that Joe wanted to settle down for a while. Our middle-aged bodies just couldn't handle working sixteen hours a day anymore. We had to slow down a bit.

So, Joe took the first of what would become many "temporary retirements."<sup>26</sup> Meanwhile, I went on a voyage of self-discovery. I traveled the entire Rhosian Territory along the Cygnus arm of the Milky Way Galaxy.<sup>27</sup>

Everywhere I went, I found the citizens in utter despair. The populace had no money and little way to survive. Nothing made sense. Fathers and mothers stood in a food line for days to get a few measly rations for the week, but they scoffed at the idea of getting a real job and had a disdain for honest work.

Those that held some position of authority lacked an understanding of standard, civilized business protocols, and they demonstrated an *integrity deficit*. I couldn't believe businesses did not play by the same rules as Kroy or Eurysa.

Even the shopkeepers would say they were "sold out," but, if you held out a little extra cash, suddenly the entire stock materialized, and you could go straight to the front of the line.

20.The TSL Fire Marshal's log asserts that several irate children devastated the dwelling of Praat and Joe Klaassen in an act of reprisal.

21.Computer hackers steal electronic funds from the TSL First Galactic Bank on the same day.

22.The New Martian Times exposes the corruption of the TSL gambling ring, after receiving a dossier of the criminal activities perpetrated by various high-ranking politicians and executives. The scandal sends shockwaves through the space station and results in several arrests.

23.Hooligans vandalize and then detach the TSL Secondary School module from the space station. The principal and several staff members suffer decompression sickness.

24.Approximately twenty-seven solar Earth years.

25.During this time, the Confederated Rhosian Union dissolves. Crime bosses and Moguls spring up in place of a legitimate government.

26.The Rhosian Baronage imprisons and tortures Joe as punishment for bribing a baronial official.

While in Rhosia, Gerad switches his alias to Epebo Mahagonov. The first name of the alias, "Epebo," is the name given on the Lunger's adoption papers. The last name of Mahagonov has mystified researchers.

As to the motivation behind the name change, investigators are uncertain if Gerad found his birth mother or a copy of his birth certificate, but universally dismiss the possibility of coincidence.

27.Epebo constantly flees from Rus to the farthest-flung sectors of Rhosia to avoid law enforcement.

I became a little depressed — upset that an entire Territory languished in poverty... without hope... unable to change. I never imagined that one's lack of employment could so utterly crush an entire civilization with such a rich history.

Dishonorable men would pimp their wives to Kroy soldiers, enslave their children to work at the factory, or defile their deceased parents' body parts to sell on the black market. They'd violate the sanctity of their home and family for a little money and status.

I struggled to live among the Rhosian riffraff. Yet, I still thrived on the more profitable businesses in my portfolio.<sup>28</sup> Yet, despite all the pessimism, I had the opportunity to apply an idea I never tried before: the transmogrification of my beautiful home into a seven-story warehouse.<sup>29</sup> Each floor held a different selection of goods to provide one-stop shopping to the people of Rhosia.

At first, the community didn't believe such a store could exist — overwhelmed with so many choices. Many of the elderly shoppers never made it through the door. Frightened grannies just stood dumbfounded, mouths agape, and still wrapped up in their frumpy headscarves.

Then, quite swiftly, public opinion changed, and the youth led a mad craze to devour foreign concepts. The frenzied teenage shoppers took in everything, understood the products' value, and wanted it all. In one day, the shoppers cleaned out the entire store. I admit, the model was a little ahead of its time, but no one expected such a sensation.<sup>30</sup>

Most importantly, I learned from my experience and really grasped the delicate balance between a person's need and desire to consume.

When Joe returned from his vacation, he lambasted my new concept. Apparently, the time away had softened his cutting-edge outlook towards innovation in business. He gathered his belongings, moved out of my home, and leased an apartment module in the void of space near Rus.

My luck started to turn from bad to worse. The corrupt barony unjustly questioned my accounting methodology and financial records, so that the baron could procure my company through a hostile takeover. They deported two of my best associates and evicted me from my own home.<sup>31</sup> I went through some difficulties. Maybe it was time to retire. I had accomplished a lot in my life, and I had a good run of things. Feeling dejected and discouraged, I seriously planned to pack up and call it quits.

However, I took one last chance to contact Joe before I left. I swung by his new place and brought some food as a peace offering. We talked for hours and set things straight. I convinced him to return to work to turn around the business. We parleyed mutually beneficial terms, and he was keen on my new idea to triple our profits. After all these years together, we still found new ways to grow and transform adversity into achievement.<sup>32</sup> And just like the good old days, we didn't even finish our dinner.

When we emerged from our chrysalis, we had a new and bigger outlook on work. With our coffers full to brimming once again, we could take our pick of new locations. We wanted to take on the galaxy. We plotted a course to our next opportunity in the war-torn systems of the Kal Territory.<sup>33</sup>

Well, where there is war, there is work. The Kroy Territory came into being during the two Galactic Wars that shook the entire Milky Way. One thing is for certain — that with proper motivation anything is possible.

So, without delay, we moved closer to this budding prospect.

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### Same Old Song, Different Worlds

Mogul Shrub II, the Kavaliro of Planet Hope, launched an invasion force to settle

28.Epebo resells black market pharmaceuticals with help from the Rhosian Mob.

29.Epebo levels a full city block to build his superstore — driving out residents and local merchants.

30.An anti-Kroy gang loots the store and strips the shelves bare.

31.Rival mobsters slay two of Epebo's workers, his gardener and chauffeur, in a failed attempt on his life.

32.Using his logistical connections, Joe switches an entire shipment of a flu vaccine with an active virus. A health epidemic erupts in Rus. Joe then sells back the real vaccine at triple the price.

33.Joe and Epebo barely escape the planet by hiding in barrels of wastewater aboard a garbage shuttle.

The author continues the Kal diary in chapters not included in this selection.

an old blood feud against Mogul Hussein. His father, Mogul Shrub I — the former Kavaliro, and the Kroy Baronage called for preemptive action against Mogul Hussein by accusing him of creating weapons of galactic destruction. The Kroy baronies approved Mogul Shrub's illicit war. After a prolonged crusade and the execution of his rival, Mogul Shrub seized the system to restore the shipping lanes to Kroy and to profit from the reconstruction effort.<sup>34</sup>

To those loyal to the cause, Mogul Shrub sent blank checks to his allied business associates, whom all too eagerly maximized the situation. With our experiences from Rhosia, Joe and I felt qualified to bring reliability to an otherwise instable region, and we quickly joined the ranks. We secured Kroy interests and built upon the fragmented foundations of the planet. After we reestablished the infrastructure, we launched several medical facilities for the troops. Most of all, we took pride in rebuilding the TerraBases of the planet.

The people of Kal resented our assistance. In fact, they held an open contempt for any occupier regardless of intention. The locals did not tolerate the military, the businesses, or the relief from Kroy. No one could be trusted.

One day, while returning home, a roadside bomb nearly destroyed our convoy. Rebels attacked our vehicles, and Joe and I narrowly escaped.

The military lost control of the neighborhood, and insurgents sacked our headquarters and pulverized our belongings.

That evening, amid continual chaos, Joe's professional contacts arranged for our travel, and we left Kal with just the clothes on our backs.<sup>35</sup>

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### The Next Big Idea

At a refueling station on the route out of Kal, Joe heard about an epidemic on Jamurida where a healthcare shortage swept the entire planet and surrounding space stations. The sickly Jamuridan people desperately needed the most basic of medicines, but corruption at every political level prevented supplies from reaching the needy. The locals blamed a Kroy pharmaceutical company for funding an uprising, which gave power to brutal warlords. Clearly, the dissatisfied customers were looking for some alternative to the current healthcare system.

I had only heard of Jamurida before, and it certainly didn't make my "Top Fifty Planets to See Before I Die" list. They called the remote planet "The Horn of Terrajin" because the cluster of stars formed a horn shape on a star map. But, they could have just as easily dubbed it "The Toilet of Terrajin." The backwater planets of Terrajin space were the poorest, bleakest, and most poverty stricken in the entire galaxy.

All sorts of mad violence ruled the capital of Jamurida. Just a few years earlier, rebels shot down an advanced Kroy helicopter in the streets and brought Jamurida into the galactic spotlight.<sup>36</sup>

The Kroy Baronage only aggravated the hostile sentiments with trade embargoes and sanctions. Then, Kroy companies took advantage of antiquated laws and conniving warlords to do as they pleased. Multiterritorial corporations plundered resources from the planet, knowingly poisoned local inhabitants with wastewater, and left the planet stripped mined.

But, you know, wherever there are poor people there is injustice and a cry for help. Joe and I hoped we could provide the choices these people so desperately needed. Quickly surveying of the state of affairs, we determined that Jamurida held great growth potential with less risk. We knew it was going to be dangerous work but less likely to get us killed than our stay in Kal.<sup>37</sup> We had plenty of time to develop a new

34. Mogul Shrub knowingly deceives the Kroy baronies into thinking that Mogul Hussein had weapons of galactic destruction.

The Mogul's businesses overcharge the Kroy baronies for reconstruction services, openly commit fraud, and steal resources from the planet.

35. Joe gains high-ranking military contacts while working as a security contractor, or corporate mercenary. After the attack against the convoy, the militia brings Joe on to the base for questioning. Joe takes advantage of his clearance on the base to steal a Prometheus class shuttle for an escape.

36. On the 56<sup>th</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> day of the 61<sup>st</sup> Space Year, Kroy forces support an attack against the Jamuridan Mogul's administration. During the attack, the Mogul's militia shoots down two Kroy helicopters, and the Kroy army kills approximately one thousand rebels.

37. The Kroy Baronage sends baronial agents to track down and recover the missing shuttle. Joe evades the soldiers until he finally reaches Jamuridan space and then jettisons the shuttle.

business plan, but we wanted to put a new spin on the same angle we worked in Eurysa. We were ready to launch our next big idea — our most ambitious yet.

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### Jamurida Space Station XXI, 92.63.10

We reached the Jamurida Space Station XXI several months later.<sup>38</sup>

First, however, we scoped out the situation from various news reports. From what we could tell, private armies fought for control of the unwelcoming landscape of Jamurida. Not so far away, various forces pulled the strings of the conflict aboard two dozen orbiting space stations. Joe recommended we move to XXI, the most charming of all the stations, because the “Twenty-Ones” were a proud people that you could deal with on a practical level.<sup>39</sup>

As soon as we made our way aboard the station, we started constructing our network of contacts. In no time, we struck it lucky and met an enterprising young man. At first, he seemed a little intimidated and put-off by Joe, but later loosened up when we took him to the Mratli Tavern to discuss our projects.

I could tell Joe didn’t care for the man too much. From that very first meeting, they just rubbed each other the wrong way, although their temperaments and personalities were actually very similar.

At the core, they were radically different kinds of people. The man sported trendy clothes in the tasteless fashion of the day, while Joe dressed very plainly. The man wore a Palisumi symbol of the afterlife<sup>40</sup> on his spacesuit, while Joe held conservative philosophical views.

Neither really respected the other. The man called Joe “Grandpa,” and Joe nicknamed him “Radisto,” or Radioman, because he listened to his music, talked on the wire, typed on his remote, and conducted business all at the same time. Call it a generational gap or what you will, but they couldn’t relate on any level. All of life seemed at Radisto’s fingertips at any given moment. The *all-business, all-the-time* Joe, on the other hand, never mixed business with pleasure.

Radisto introduced us to a pharmaceutical rep that endorsed a substance called Dima.<sup>41</sup> Although the Kroy Baronage banned Dima, the Jamuridan barony tolerated the drug’s existence. The locals made Dima from a leafy plant and used it as a cure-all. They’d grind parts of the plant to make a pill, liquid, or powder form. As the rep informed us, doctors regarded Dima as an “amphetamine-like substance” with an “alkaloid” or “mutated amine foundation.” Which all sounded good enough to us.

The rep explained that the only problem with Dima was that it could be addictive. Very addictive, in fact. Oh, and patients could become overly aggressive too. If one abused Dima, they might start mindlessly destroying everything in their path.

It didn’t matter what Dima was or how it worked. Dima represented opportunity in its rawest form.

Deep down, I concede Dima exacerbated most of the issues on Jamurida, but one could not call the drug *the cause of those problems*. The people had no control over their lives. Dima either let them escape the troubles of the day or gave them the false courage to take down anyone in the way. Dima-drugged warriors would fearlessly attack anything and start fights just to intimidate other gangs. When the armies would run out of ammunition they would start brawling, biting, or clawing each other to death. In the rep’s mind, the barbaric militias deserved all the suffering they got. As he said, “Dima didn’t kill people. People killed people.”

He also explained that, after the Second Galactic War, agriculture increased on the planet, which allowed the peasants to farm Dima more actively.<sup>42</sup>

38. On 92.63.10, "Gerad Lugnerson" signs the XXI station registry. Thirty days later, the author begins writing a new journal to chronicle his experience on XXI.

39. Space Station XXI wards off approaching shuttles with a cluster of impaled astronauts around the landing hub. Tyrannical warlords dispose of rivals by tethering the skewered remains together in the space lock.

Golbman hypothesizes that Joe suggests XXI as a hiding place. Even if the Kroy army knows where Gerad and Joe are located, troops will not board the station because of XXI’s hostile reputation.

Jamuridans universally disparage the inhabitants of XXI as uncouth ruffians and destitute wanderers.

40. Two spears bent into a circle. The Palisumi reportedly use charms and spells to conjure good luck or misfortune. The Palisumi are one of the minor Great Philosophies of the galaxy.

41. Most likely the “representative” is a fence for illegal drugs, as the author’s own admissions seems to indicate.

42. Although the plant was always a part of the culture, it wasn’t until industrialized baronies colonized Jamurida the people had the means to fully reap the harvests.

Dima held more cultural significance than I'll ever understand as an outsider. It wouldn't be fair to call Dima the backbone of the culture, but it certainly provided a crutch. Dima, like a two-edged sword, cut through the misery of daily drudgery but hacked away any humanity in the process.

Dima split the Jamuridans into two camps. One side hid behind the weak baronial government. The other faction invoked the might of the Moguls and warlords to inflict pain and suffering. The ruthless Moguls used gangs to restore the pharmaceutical trade routes. The corporations were all too eager to resume business, so they let the Moguls eliminate any opposition as long as the Dima continued to flow.<sup>43</sup>

All-in-all, since governments typically have the largest budgets, we chose to work with the Barony and not the Moguls. With our experience in crisis resolution and in consulting management specialists, we thought we could help the government compete.

Meanwhile, mogul assassins on the planet killed everyone they could find — including the Jamuridan Baroness. Although waning, the Barony dumped loads of money to maintain fragile trade routes. It wasn't enough though. The surviving ruling class fled to the Bryttasish space stations in exile. Finally, the Moguls established a puppet dictatorship to rule over the TerraBases. In the battle for supremacy, one warlord rose to power: Mogul Farrah.<sup>44</sup>

It was quite clear that the future of Jamurida held nothing but conflict, but eventually something had to change. Our goal was to position ourselves for that eventuality. We supplied whatever the government needed.

Well, with Radisto and our pharmaceutical rep, we streamlined the management of XXI.<sup>45</sup> Through assertive networking, we worked our way straight to the top. In the meantime, Joe gathered as much information as he could find on Dima. He confirmed our suppliers and distributors on the planet. He researched the culture and local customs.

However, Joe made some bad investments and wasted much of our capital securing the information.<sup>46</sup> Once again, I had to make it right and settle up with all the interested parties.<sup>47</sup>

With all of that behind us, we had new obstacles and opportunities ahead. Radisto moved in with us to consolidate our holdings. He quickly started taking on more responsibility within our company, and I made him a partner. He encouraged us to continue to grow with the government, and he even convinced us to apply for positions of authority.

The station nominated Joe for the title Sanjoro of Security — a low ranking, administrative position. Radisto supervised Joe's campaign funding, and he scheduled meetings with influential members of the Barony at our domicile headquarters. The negotiations were hard but in the end, I made a strong business case for the government to fund Joe's campaign. What's more, the Baronial Officers of the legitimate government supported our operations and privately invested in our company on the side.<sup>48</sup>

All was going well. Joe's popularity on the space station led him to win the election unopposed.

Our moment of glory became clouded when our pharmaceutical rep crossed the "ethical" line in his insider information, and the Barony imprisoned him. Also, the Barony implicated Radisto in a number of scandals that rocked the entire station.<sup>49</sup> Upon rethinking our agreement, the Barony broke our contract and withdrew funding.

In the process, we liquidated our home and our assets to pay back the debt. We had to leave the rep to fend for himself. We could not support a costly legal debate or any personal liability. We quickly liquidated our incorporated assets out of our "baronial

43. The Moguls draw on rioters to cannibalize the resources of neighborhoods so that the weakened communities cannot resist the will of the Moguls.

44. Mogul Farrah, the chairman of United Jamuridan Congress, later directs the Jamuridan Galactic Alliance. His forces drive out the other Moguls including Mogul Barre from the capital TerraBase. Then, he turns his attention to the galactic alliance called the Elite and battles the Kroy Barony—the mightiest military in the galaxy. In the end, Mogul Farrah rises to the top and makes a gruesome spectacle out of those that cannot escape his grasp.

45. Golbman finds station manifests recording corruption and bribery charges.

46. Joe runs up an outrageously expensive bar tab and refuses to pay.

47. Gerad petitions to shut down the bar. Gerad produces false documents insinuating the bar serves alcohol without a proper license. Police flog the owner for the misdemeanor.

48. Joe blackmails several Baronial Officers. He threatens to vent those that do not comply out into space.

49. Radisto secretly sells supplies to the Moguls. Golbman debates whether Radisto's motivation is greed or self-preservation.

50. In court proceedings, Baronial Officers testify against Joe that he increases revenue by withholding profits.

holdings.”<sup>50</sup>

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### A New Jamuridan League

By now, Mogul Farrah had become the Kavalairo, or ruler of Jamurida. Although minor Moguls still challenged him on the periphery, none of the other competition really could stand up to his notoriety, infamy, and power.

It seemed like the opportunity we were waiting for to make our move to switch sides.<sup>51</sup> Our hope was to deal directly with the victorious Mogul. So, we moved our operations planetside to reduce overhead and eliminate shipping charges for construction materials. We had to control our expenses, so we found a warehouse that doubled as a economy flat for the three of us to live in.<sup>52</sup>

Jamurida wasn't what I expected. It was a sprawling network of dilapidated TerraBases, or domed, self-sustaining cities, that seemed to stretch out across the entire length of the asteroid. At any minute, I expected the protective dome to crack, depressurize, and suck us away into the vacuum of space. I could see patches where the city tried to prevent just such a thing from happening, and it didn't make me feel safe.

Built around the main port, the bases of Jamurida were a mixture of Eurysan and Kal influenced architecture—making for an eclectic and unique assemblage of buildings, walkways, and urban design.

Although the Eurysan traders were long gone, they left behind their triumphant arches and elaborate palisades. It made you feel like you were entering a new world at every turn.

On each dust-lain street, intricately detailed building facades told the story of a planet torn apart by factional violence. The one-time pristine white washed walls now collapsed into an avalanche of tumbled bricks. So much debris was strewn about the street, that at times we had to back our vehicle completely out of a neighborhood to take an alternate route.<sup>53</sup>

At that time, living on Jamurida seemed like a smart move. We invested wisely and took calculated risks. We were pioneers and prospectors in the world of human evolution at a moment of decisive history.

We did it alone, once again despite everyone. At every turn, crooks and swindlers surrounded us. Ravenous dogs stole the food off our table. They wanted you to work harder for them to fatten their stomachs. They did not want you to succeed.

So, with our do-it-yourself-mentality, we worked harder just to spite all the barons and baronesses ruling the galaxy.<sup>54</sup>

We had heard that Mogul Farrah used the drug companies to keep his workers sedated.<sup>55</sup> Radisto leaked the story to the news and galactic attention created a distraction just long enough for us to complete some large sales to keep our operations afloat.

Yet, there were always greater forces. The Mogul, just like the Baron, wanted more and more of our profits, and we could not get ahead. The more money we made, the more money the Mogul took. The gravitational pull of the Mogul's negativity threatened all of our work. The work kept piling up, but if we let go now, we would get ripped into a hundred different directions.

About this time, the war raged through our TerraBase neighborhood by neighborhood and block by block. In many areas, the city could not clear the bodies from the streets because of the sheer volume of the dead.

As I was coming home one day on the bus, I heard a mortar round whizzing through the air.

51. At this time, Dima trafficking becomes outlawed on XXI.

52. As was customary, in exchange for providing kickbacks to Moguls, the Moguls allow Joe and Gerad to live on Jamurida.

53. Kal mercenaries use roadblocks to take over parts of the base. These militant Kal are hostile to foreigners of any kind.

54. Written in the margins of the journal a note states, "Spite fuels greed."

55. Kroy companies secretly encourage sectarian violence to exploit fuel resources. The Mogul supplies wounded civilians with Dima-laced medicines to hook them on the drug.

The next thing I remember, I woke up in the hospital. I had all sorts of tubes hooked up to me and it hurt to move. In the dim light, I could see that my chest had been shaven clean and doctors had attached electrodes to my torso.

Well, sitting next to me was a tall, lanky man. His head peaked above the canopy of my bed, and I could not make out his face. However, I could hear him snoring through the wide-brimmed hat resting over his face.

When I rustled about a bit, the man suddenly awoke. At first, I thought it was Joe, but he didn't have Joe's unique smell. And, I guess I couldn't see Joe sitting in one place for any length of time.

I stared at him for a long moment. The flickering fluorescent light cast him in a ghostly silhouette.

"Who are you?" I rasped.

The man just tipped back his worn, black hat.

He turned his head to loose a scratchy cough and then glanced at my vital signs on the monitor. I asked him again what he was doing and he said was a "sitter." His main responsibility included sitting, watching, and ensuring nothing really terrible happened to me.

He told that he had been waiting a long time, but he couldn't give me any real specifics on my situation. He would glance at my chart on the nurse's clipboard at the end of my bed, but then he would just shake his head as if lost in thought.

He was a gruff old man, but we got to talking after I realized he wasn't going "sit" quietly. He asked me all about my travels and my work. He seemed particularly interested in my business enterprises, and he knew just the right questions to ask to keep me talking. He seemed genuinely interested in my work.

It had been a long time since I met anyone like this sitter before. I'd never really been in the hospital before though either—so maybe other sitters were like this guy. Who knows? I *did know* that he possessed a keen understanding of high business concepts for some lowly minimal wage earning sloth. In the past, whenever I'd try to strike up a conversation with a stranger about my work, no one seemed to understand, care, or fully comprehend the complexity of my vocational passions. Joe came the closest, but even Joe did not fully understand the business side of our partnership. He left certain things for me to take care of that he never cared to figure out himself.

In all my life, I never bothered to explain the specifics my work to anyone because I knew they would never fully grasp the complexity of my portfolio. However, here was a man who not only knew what I was talking about but also seemed to speak my language. And not only that, but I could tell the few decades he had over me bought him a wisdom that could only be gained through the rigors of life's experience.

We laughed. I cried — although I blame that on the painkillers. Then, from out of nowhere, he asked me if I had found love. I thought it was a little awkward and I laughed in his face.

I think he was a little hurt. I just hoped he wasn't hitting on me. I told him that I hadn't found that "special someone," and that I did not have time, and that I wasn't going to settle just to be tied down. In a moment of quick thinking, I retorted, "Work is my love."

I told him that I loved my work, which was a lot more than most people could say for their job. I loved waking up each morning and starting my job. Yes, I was infatuated with my occupation. Who in this galaxy could walk in my shoes? I grew smug, and satisfied with my response, sealed my oration with a firm nod.

With that, the sitter's voice grew stern. He said to me, "There's more to life than work, you know?"

Silence. Deafening stillness.

Then, the pump hanging on the canopy over my hospital bed started shrieking—startling both of us. After a moment, a green light flashed and then the pump ceased its noise.

The man leaned back and took a deep breath. “My time is up,” he said. Then, he exhaled deeply.

He wished me luck in my work, and I thanked him for his expert advice—even though it was a little inappropriate. I guess old men are like that.

Still, he couldn’t just leave without voicing one more thought. It wasn’t the words that he spoke that stuck with me all these years later. It was his look. He stared right into my eyes and said, “Live with purpose, but more so, *love* with purpose.”<sup>56</sup>

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### The Woes of a Man

Of all the best and worst things to happen to me on Jamurida, perhaps the most multifarious experience I had was when I met a lovely local woman. We bumped into each other a few times at the market. Turns out, we hung out in similar circles. She was a friend of a friend’s friend sort of thing. I found her accent very intriguing. I asked around about her.<sup>57</sup>

Well, we went on a couple of dates. We had fun, and it seemed too good to be true. She was like an angel — very calm and soft-spoken.

At first, I thought she just wanted my money—the kind of woman that sneaks in under the radar and then takes control once you tie the knot. But really, she wasn’t a materialistic type of person. She was unassuming and politely refused my gifts and offers to buy her jewelry. Since she had lived a life without wanting, she really could have cared less about my luxury vehicles, private mansion, and all of my work. She said she saw in me a potential for good and for balance — a force of positive change to better the lives of others. She spoke of making a difference in a child’s life or helping the elderly.

Pretty soon, she had me brining dinners to the elderly and volunteering on the weekends at the shelter.

She was a simple woman.<sup>58</sup> She had simple tastes. She read and practiced the writings of the Great Philosophies and examined the teaching of the mystical Kalsan Alliance. I grew frustrated because she didn’t want any of the things I could offer. I tried to get her to work for the company but she really saw no point in our business. What on this forsaken planet, did she want with me? I couldn’t figure it out.

She would swing by the warehouse and drop me off handwritten letters or sweets. A few months later, she moved in with Joe, Radisto, and me.

She seemed content.

Yet, she always questioned me — not in a challenging or confrontational way but the way in which a child has a genuine interest in something “new.” Because she probed my inner thoughts, I became stronger and smarter because I had to think of answers and responses to her silly inquiries. She exposed at flaws in our system. She poked holes in things we took for granted.

I completely became infatuated with her. I cherished everything about her.

However, I was not alone in this adoration. One night, I found the ever-fashionable Radisto in her bedroom. He said that they were just “sharing music,” and that he brought over some new tunes for her. Nevertheless, I found some Dima on the charming punk. They both swore nothing happened, and I made it clear that if she was using Dima, I wanted no part of her.

56.The hospital holds no record of a sitter assigned to Gerad’s room.

57.Gerad never mentions his girlfriend’s name in any of the journal entries or memoir.

58.“Being simple,” is a Jamuridan expression for the poorest class of merchants able to sell to outsiders and the sick. Golbman puts forward the idea that, based on Gerad’s personality profile, this woman is a “simple merchant” by day and prostitute by night.

I decided then that Radisto didn't respect boundaries, and I could not trust that type of man. I admit jealousy blinded my judgment, but envy is the affliction of man. And, the triumph of man is vengeance. And, Radisto had to pay the price for his transgression.

The next day, I asked Joe to talk with Radisto. During the conversation, Radisto went berserk and a fight broke out with Joe. Radisto jumped all over the warehouse and practically ran up the walls. With super-human strength, he knocked Joe flat on his back and stomped on his face. At the first sign of blood, Radisto nearly clawed through Joe's neck. Before we could pull him off, Radisto bit Joe on the arm.

As far as I know, Joe lost the first and only fistfight of his life that day.

Well, Radisto became frenzied like a ravenous dog. He went kicking and screaming through the warehouse. When we dragged him outside, I could see his eyes were bloodshot and swollen. This dumb addict abused our product... and that was stealing. Stealing!

Radisto was like a son to me, and he could have had nearly anything if he had asked for it. Instead, he chose the coward's way out. He opted to bludgeon his existence with mind numbing drugs.

I had to think about what to do with him. Joe was unconscious, so I had to make an unfortunate decision. I recommended immediate termination from the company.<sup>59</sup>

To cut a long story short, I can tell you that the rest of my associates fell right into line and straightened up immediately.

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### Separate Ways

Unfortunately, that was not the last person I would have to let go.

After several months, nearly all of my warehouse personnel abused Dima, and I couldn't find good, clean help anywhere. My workers talked about a gang, called the Dumizi, which was taking over the TerraBases. The Dumizi dressed in red and wore red headgear to identify their members. I forbade all red garments, but then no one showed up for work the next day. I fired an entire shift and terminated the most vocal opponents to my policies.

In reality, I was up against tough competition — perhaps out of my league. Mogul Farrah used charismatic leaders to indoctrinate the youth into using Dima and joining his gangs. More and more people were beginning to fall under the sway of the Moguls, and it appeared as if Mogul Farrah held control over the Dumizi.<sup>60</sup>

I told Joe that we needed to step up our policies against Dima. I suggested hiring a fulltime human resources director. I put plans on Joe's desk, but the proposal just sat there.

Apparently, the stress of the job really began to take its toll on Joe. He'd often stay up through the night and sleep during the day.

I think the wound on his arm grew infected. He kept it bandaged, and then he wore long sleeved shirts to conceal his sore. His skin started turning white. His bronze, tanned skin began to flake right off his flesh. I told him that the stress was getting to him and that maybe he should cut back on his hours. And, for a time, he went out on sales calls during the night — pushing harder to get more done.

Somewhere along the way, he lost touch and became completely absorbed in his nightly avocations. I suspected that Joe started working for our competition.

I had never felt the need for any sort of confidentiality or exclusivity clause in our contract, but more and more I began to doubt the loyalties of our workers. So, I paid some locals to trail Joe and report on his whereabouts.

59.Radisto takes two gunshot wounds to the head. Police find his body in a shallow grave next to a road.

60.Mogul Farrah now controls most of the street gangs and organized crime families of the base.

One day, I confronted Joe. I caught him chewing on a leaf of some sort like an animal. When I went to talk with him, he couldn't look me in the eyes. I think, in his old age, Joe developed cataracts because he stared past me as if I wasn't there.

As the day wore on, Joe became agitated and disputed my management decisions. When I asked him to help move a pallet of scrap, he neglected his duties and then abandoned his post all together.<sup>61</sup>

I sent him to his quarters. In defiance, he thrashed about wildly, trashed his bedroom, and disrespected our home. Like a caged animal, he clawed at the walls and gnawed on the doorknob in an attempt to escape.

My girl freaked out, and everyone started screaming.

I temporarily fired Joe. I suspended his work privileges and quarantined him until I had time to sort through the chaos.

I paced about and went for a walk around the neighborhood. Then, like a snap of the fingers, I put it together. Mogul Farrah must have been setting Joe up for a fall — feeding him drugs to implode our business. The Mogul planned to sabotage our operations by compromising my key staff.<sup>62</sup>

It had been months since I left the compound. I had everything I needed there, and my workers could bring me supplies as I needed them. Suddenly, I realized, that my neighborhood had underwent a metamorphosis.

Philosophical tensions, hatred, and intolerance practically wiped out the surrounding blocks. Violence swept through the streets and decimated nearly all of the houses and buildings. Orphaned children sat next to the decaying bodies of their parents. A school collapsed with all of the pupils inside. Blood soaked the sand in the streets into hardened clay.

Our work involved jobs that involved our understanding of influence and persuasive power aptitude.<sup>63</sup> I always understood we walked a fine line. Here, though, a line had definitely been crossed. The Moguls had no respect for their customers—for their people.

Was I guilty too? It would seem from the outside, I am sure, that we might bend the boundaries of ethics a little. However, in business, it is common to *create demand* or manufacture a desire into a “need.” This was all together something different. The Moguls decimated the people and cast them into utter despair.

Light exists because of darkness. By creating more darkness, we create the need for more light. However, Mogul Farrah subdued the light—thereby casting his city into utter gloom.

That was not all the Mogul destroyed. When I completed my walk around the block, I returned to find my warehouse collapsed into a pile of rubble. One of the supporting walls “mysteriously” gave way and the entire building fell down. Thankfully everyone escaped the structural failure, but the roof crushed and spoiled all of my inventory.<sup>64</sup>

And so another chapter came to pass.

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### Offerings and Sacrifice

To escape my ambition, I decided to get married.

I had learned so much: to give without taking, to listen without expectations, to live for something or someone else.

Every morning, I would sleep in. I didn't even bother to set an alarm. When I would awake, my new wife would be at my side, just staring into my eyes with a warm, glowing smile.

I let go of the company and cashed in on my business insurance.<sup>65</sup> As a peace

61.A message from one of the workers to a family member says that “Joe threw a pallet of scrap” [on his boss]. The boss is trapped for hours until the next warehouse foreman arrives.

62.Gerad asks local contacts to confirm his suspicions.

63.At this point, scholars agree that Gerad loses the power play against the Moguls. Gerad's operations in no way impact the work of the Moguls, and Gerad's battle is only one-sided.

64.Researchers speculate as to the origin of the building collapse. It is unlikely the Moguls caused the breakdown, and it is more likely that the heavy equipment used to process Dima weakened the integrity of the warehouse.

65.Gerad makes several insurance claims for reimbursement. Although he receives several large checks, Gerad does not directly collect insurance money for his losses. Instead, a mysterious, private third party, called “New Beginnings” funnels the money to Gerad so that there are few records of the transaction.

offering, I turned over any remaining assets that weren't turned into toast over to Mogul Farrah.

My wife and I traveled a bit and we visited other planets in the Core. For awhile, I took odd jobs and coasted off savings account.<sup>66</sup>

At every stop, my loving wife was there. She kept giving, sharing, and laughing. At night, she would caress my face and stare into my soul—as if looking for something that I didn't know I possessed but she made me believe was there.

I kept busy organizing our travel photographs into scrapbooks. I balanced our checkbook. I created a budget so that we could enjoy a modest lifestyle together. I even set down this journal, my constant companion, for a time.

I'll admit, at times, I would gaze up into the stars and wonder what great enterprises and new prospects the galaxy held, but then I would hear my wife's gentle voice bring me back to this world.

I'll say honestly, that I was content. Yes, comfortable and satisfied.

Well, early in the morning, I was resting on the beach.<sup>67</sup> As I took another sip of my morning cocktail, I set down my glass on the table to my right. There next to my lounge chair, would you believe, was a Dima plant. I blinked, just to make sure my eyes or the alcohol weren't playing tricks on me. As I got up, I found dozens of other Dima plants nestled by the rocks of a hill behind me. The plants didn't look like the Jamuridan variant, but if there was one thing that I knew it was this plant. As I followed the plants to the boardwalk, I saw that the people of the planet made all sorts of things with Dima. They made rope, and paper, and food, and even oil. Merchants lined the boardwalk selling wares.

I talked with each of the owners and took notes. I learned what I could. I got recipes, suggestions, and formulas for different products. I got contacts for distribution and wholesale suppliers. I networked and established trade partners from Kroy to Rhosia.

I wondered, "How could the same plant be so different?" Then I was told that Jamuridan Dima was modified to take in the soil of the planet. This slight genetic alteration threw off the balance of nature.

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## **R & D: Return and Divide**

In no time, we were back on Jamurida, and it wasn't long before I was back to work.

I began a new phase of research and development to test a unique business plan, marketing strategy, and industry model I dreamt up on my holiday.

Using the lesser Mogul leaders and disgruntled gang members, I leveraged a foothold in Mogul Farrah's territory. Mogul Farrah had all but established total control in his domain, but I found pockets of resistance.<sup>68</sup>

With an aggressive employee acquisition, I was able to coax associates back to my company by offering progressive worker's benefits, retirement savings plans, robust profit sharing, and other progressive employee retention tactics. I even created a complete housing project with my own security force to protect my associates.<sup>69</sup>

With shrewd acquisitions, I was able to reestablish my assets and collateral within the week. Soon, I had investment opportunities and private funding as my foundation.

The small fish in the big pond had returned... with a bite!

With my finances back in order, I decided to give back to the community. I created a social center for neighborhood children.<sup>70</sup> They could play games, get their haircut, eat a snack, or watch movies for free. I also created a retirement home for the elderly and helped them find part-time employment. In no time, I had become a *village leader*.

Although I always frowned upon poaching employees from the competition. There

66. Allegedly, Gerad returns to his previous profession – hacking bank accounts.

67. Gerad resumes writing in his journal on this day. He specifically records the date – the day he goes back to work.

68. Video surveillance shows a hooded man capturing workers walking home on the street.

69. Gerad uses the pharmaceutical company's own drugs on the employees he acquires. He enslaves them in cages in the warehouse. He documents his "experiment" using scientific methodologies. He includes his credit card statements in his documentation showing equipment purchases for electro-shock machinery.

70. Gerad kidnaps a Mogul officer's daughter for ransom and then takes other hostages from the Moguls. He brings them to the warehouse compound.

71. Gerad finds Joe among the gangs of his neighborhood. Joe holds the position of lieutenant in the gang.

72. It is unclear how Gerad

was one missing component. I found Joe getting to know the locals very intimately.<sup>71</sup> I could tell he was a changed man. He had let himself go a little bit, and he compromised our standards of cleanliness. His eyesight grew worse, his skin continued to turn pale and flaky, and his hunger for raw meat intensified.

Eventually, I enticed Joe to return to work for me. I thought it would be best if I kept Joe on the premises until he got on his own two feet. I took Joe home with me.<sup>72</sup> I cared for him and helped him recover. He was stunned by the level of attention.<sup>73</sup> I worked around the clock to restore the man I once knew.

Once he recovered, I eagerly put Joe's knowledge of the Dumizi to work to form a new company.

I used a radically conservative Kroy investment model. I used centralized entrepreneurs to finance poor Jamuridan laborers to make clothes out of Dima for less than a single coin. I created space stations as satellite regions of Kroy so that I could use Kroy outlets to distribute my products--even though the Territory was half way across the galaxy.<sup>74</sup>

However, to avoid Kroy's laws and regulations, I registered my business as a "galactic corporation" with my headquarters officially in Jamuridan space stations. In this way, I fully utilized my assets without having to pay the Kroy baronial tax.<sup>75</sup>

My next step was to sever the top off any opposition to my very strict business plan. I called for drastic measures at times, but I had to create a culture shift and attitude amendment so that my operations could become streamlined.<sup>76</sup>

My growth strategies promoted those that were loyal and demoted those that were not.<sup>77</sup> Quickly, I reestablished my reputation and earned respect.

I gave Joe easy tasks at first. I thought I could rehabilitate him to take over ground against the Moguls. Joe's new single-minded drive gave him a fervor I had not witnessed before.

Although there were threats made by the competition. I had to rebuild certain material asset others were lost unexpectedly. I had to maintain secrecy to my operations and kept the Moguls from guessing our strategies. Still, the Moguls kept trying.<sup>78</sup>

Finally, I had enough resources to begin my research. With the new technology that I had acquired along with my new workforce, I knew that I was well positioned for success.<sup>79</sup>

And through it all, my wife faithfully stood by my side.

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### **The End Game and Causality Collapse<sup>80</sup>**

Today I started a new business experiment that I call the End Game.

Joe and his ragtag bunch of Dumizi turncoats took over the first floor of my home.

During the day, I observed and took fastidious notes.

Some were very violent. I dragged some of the Dumizi into a metal holding area..

Dangerous. "Must continue experiment."

During the night, they wandered the streets in a zombie-like state. They would come and go as they pleased during all hours of the night, making a big ruckus.

"When regularly correlated events or phenomena breakdown, a Causality Collapse occurs. Imploding of effects. Too many causes overlap. Too many causes point to the same eventuality."<sup>81</sup>

Sometimes, I witnessed brutal fights. In a sacrificial manner, they tore their prey limb from limb. When they ran out of victims to attack the barbarians fought amongst themselves. I knew the possibility of success folded when my Dumizi workers intentionally knocked out two out of the three video cameras I set up to observe my

captures Joe, but witness interviews suggest that Joe did not go willingly.

73.Prehaps a reference to the electro-shock equipment purchased previously. Gerad makes a note in the appendix that Joe exhibits signs of trembling, fatigue, "slothfulness," and minor depression.

74.Gerad uses Dumizi aboard the orbiting space stations to distribute Dima. Gerad also starts selling Dima on the streets.

75.Gerad exploits loopholes in Kroy human labor laws by using an out-of-Territory workforce.

76.To this day, locals tell stories of how Gerad decapitated and displayed the heads of Dumizi that opposed him.

77.Rumors circulate that Gerad kills the gang leaders not affiliated with the Mogul.

78.The news reports that a minor Mogul burns down the guesthouse that contained the Mogul officer's daughter.

79.Gerad steals a disk from the hospital. The files contain treatments from the Dima drug-rehabilitation program.

80.Gerad spends most of his time writing extensively about the term Causality Collapse. He explores how "the sum of actions in a compilation can shatter or break the chain of events set in motion when reacting to a previous series, or strand, of events."

The last several chapters of his journal are fragmented and loosely written.

81.About this time, Joe induces the hostages into the Dumizi. He gives them a steady diet of Dima and begins to use psychological manipulations to make them more suggestible. To those that do not agree to take

little business experiment. I could no longer observe my test subjects, but the cameras still had working microphones.

I heard them tear up the carpeting. One day, they tore down a gate — I am guessing to make more room for their operations. I can only wonder what the neighbors thought.

To give my wife and I some privacy, peace, and quiet, I installed a door to separate the second floor. Work got a little too close for comfort. A narrow spiral staircase led to the door, and I reinforced the door with metal scraps I found in the warehouse. The door could withstand gunshots, battering rams, or you name it.

In the name of the experiment, I dared not disturb them. I did not want to influence or corrupt the experiment. So, I rationed our food and hid our canned goods under the bed.

At first, my wife didn't like that she couldn't leave the house. She felt trapped and isolated.

Many times she pleaded with me to stop the experiment and put an end to it. But for the sake of the experiment, it had to go on. Fed up with the situation, my wife gave me the silent treatment.

The day had finally come, when the quarterly results would come in. It was time to reap the harvest that was sown.<sup>82</sup>

I monitored our sales. Our income went through the roof.<sup>83</sup> It was quite unbelievable.

I realized at that moment, I could not contain Joe.<sup>84</sup> He had come into his own, and the business was truly his. Joe was foaming at the mouth with excitement.

Customers practically pounded our down door for our wares.

You know, a captain steers the good ship in the dark just to keep afloat. But, I suddenly awoke to find I was no longer on the ship. I had been thrown overboard in a mutiny of my own making.

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### 78.87.10<sup>85</sup>

I may not have much time to write these remaining words, and at any rate I resolve that this will be my last entry in this journal. I think I'll give up on writing all together for the time being.

At any rate, it is time for another reorganization. I've come to the logical conclusion of this current path, and now it is the moment to set a new course before I reach the dead end.

See, but a fortnight ago, I started an experiment to understand the very motivation of work, and I used my best friend Joe as my test subject. I employed Joe to infiltrate the Dumizi in order to harness their pathological impulses into productive labor. Joe became so embedded in the gang, that it was often hard to tell the difference between who was who. I decided that Joe had gone far enough, and I pulled the plug on the project. Now, with my research complete, I must retake control of the situation. Joe transition out of the test treat his symptoms.<sup>86</sup>

However, just minutes past, I awoke to a deafening sound like that of ice cracking in a hot beverage. I ran to the surveillance monitor and replayed the last several minutes from the last video camera. As soon as the sun passed over the horizon and the afterglow of the light faded into the dimness of space, one of the mindless Dumizi dropped a lit Dima cigarette into a pile of fabric. The material ignited instantly, and the fire spread through the compound — burning down walls and incinerating my security devices. I had no idea what was going on downstairs, but bloodcurdling screams and painful moans.

the Dima and join his Dumizi gang, Joe drowns them in the warehouse sink.

82.A reference to the Dima harvest.

83.A bad batch of Dima causes an explosion in the warehouse.

84.Photographs of the warehouse show several cages opened by some sort of blast. Golbman believes that the previous explosion ruined the electro-shock equipment that Gerad used to keep Joe in line. With the power lost and the Dumizi set free, Joe escapes from his cage. With Joe and the other Dumizi on the loose, Gerad and his wife retreat to the second floor of the compound.

85.This part of the journal is the last entry. It is unedited.

86.The author describes the following characteristics of the "End-Phase" of a Dumizi:

- De-pigmented skin
- Hallucinations
- Eye cataracts
- Various cravings
- Compulsive hunger
- Single mindedness
- Destructive tendencies
- Impervious to pain

At that moment, the possessed throng of automatons broke through the barricade separating the warehouse from my suite on the second floor.

I leapt from my chair, ran down the hall, and went to reinforce the security door, but it was too late. I just caught a glimpse of the door hinge bursting from the wall. Then, out of the corner of my eye, I saw the door swaying on the remaining hinge. A dozen Dumizi — in their signature red headbands — popped up into the gap between the doorframe.

Those thugs compromised my personal space and these barbarians desecrated the sanctity of our home. I called out to my wife to flee, but I barely escaped up the stairs to the ceiling attic myself. Once I made it into the crawl space, I pulled the collapsible stairs up behind me. In just enough time, I managed to latch the entryway shut and then dragged a large chest over the door.<sup>87</sup>

Well now, I sit alone in my attic, with no means to sustain myself. Trapped in this cage, I can only hope that Joe comes to his senses before something drastic happens. I definitely plan to have a talk with him as soon as I get out from here.

For the moment, I can hear all sorts of mayhem directly below me, and it does not seem to be subsiding any time soon.<sup>88</sup>

In retrospect, I'd have to say that I am pleased with my legacy, and I don't have any regrets. I commanded my fate and fortune. My destiny did not lie in the hands of my boss, an owner, the barons and baronesses, or some warlord. I rose above the drudgery that others cannot find creative ways to escape. Grocery shopping, cleaning the toilets... cooking dinner, sending birthday cards... aging relatives or snotty-nosed kids... I didn't have to worry about any of those things — I was too busy earning a living.

I held dominion over my vocation and I witnessed a faith rooted in raw, unbridled power. For the most fleeting of moments, I tapped into that inner capacity and drew from it the ability to create dynamic enterprises across a wide portfolio of industries.

If I've learned anything at all through my life, it's that work does not make the man but the man that makes the work. Also, I'd say not to take so much work home with you — maybe get a condo or retreat or something. Again, no regrets, just some a take away for future improvement.

Which reminds me to tell Joe that I had an idea for a new enterprise — to expand our product lines into home healthcare products. I think it is a natural fit based on our historical statistics. We would make home visits to those strung out on Dima and cater to their immediate, disposable needs. I got the concept from an insurance rep that we could use as a contact. All of my plans for this new endeavor are in my pocket now, and I'm ready for my big break. I'm sure Joe will be excited and will just eat it up.

And so I leave this journal behind and return to work.

87. In the attic, detectives locate a chest with documents proving that Gerard embezzled money from the Kroy baronies.

88. Homicide investigators find the unidentified, partially devoured remains of a female carcass below the attic stairwell.