

# THE SLAVE FORMERLY KNOWN AS JANE FOREMAN



# **The Slave Formerly Known as Jane Foreman**

Published by David Holladay

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This book, written in the year 2073, tells the story of Jane Foreman. Jane was born in 2034, was enslaved at 15, and came to dominate the business, social, and political life of her era. Since this book was written by one of her best friends, it reveals long hidden secrets of her path from slavery to business magnate.

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# Author's Introduction

This is my try at writing a book in the style of teenage dystopian fiction. Readers should know that this book has a smidgen of adult content, and virtually all of that is in Chapter One. There is an acknowledgment that sexual and personal relationships exist, without descriptions of sexual acts. One sentence has two bad words.

In some sense, this is a parody of dystopian teenage fiction, since the central battlefields are an ordinary, unmodified, American high school and a tech startup. The author applauds high academic achievement. He urges students to meet and exceed expectations of their time and place.

This book is meant as a reflection of our own times. Sometimes we focus so much on the day-to-day experience that we forget that a credit bubble always pops. No one seems to ask what will come next. This book is and always will be the work of a cranky sixty-year-old who ponders our future.

Readers who are impatient about learning the “backstory,” the boring part where the author fills in the gap between our present era and the time period of the narrative, can start reading in the middle of Chapter 9. More patient readers can start at the beginning.

-- David Holladay, writing in 2016

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# Book Introduction

I have written this book in 2072-2073, well after the events depicted took place. Where needed, I invented some dialogue to make the text more interesting. I used diaries, recollections, and historical events to write this. I regret any errors; these will be removed in a later edition.

Since I am a key character in this story, I had a decision to make. I could have written in the first person. Instead, I have written in the third person as if I were not one of the participants. I felt more comfortable writing this way. The voice in this book is mine alone.

— Deb Coulter-Jackson

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# Chapter 1: An Eventful Summer

## A Late Night Raid

At the beginning of the summer, Jane, age 15, was fearful of a night raid. She needed to talk to her friends, but she was afraid of doing anything that would look too suspicious. She passed out invitations for a birthday party for an imaginary friend. Her five best friends showed up. They listened to Jane's concerns and agreed to do what they could to help her. They visited her often over the next week. As much as they could, they took Jane's clothes and favorite possessions with them and brought these items to their own houses. Her scrapbooks, personal things, music player, and other items were taken from her room. She left her phone because they knew that the officials would be angry if they did not find it. Jane deleted as much contact information from it as she could.

A week after the phantom birthday party, her home was raided in the middle of the night. Jane, her parents, and her two younger brothers were taken to a processing center. Because she was over the age of 15, she could be separated from the rest of her family. Jane was much more valuable as a 15-year-old, who could be sold as an individual.

Deb was the first of Jane's friends to notice that the family was gone and that the house was being searched for valuables by the authorities. Deb knew that the house, the former residents, and all its contents were now the property of Jane's parents' creditors.

Deb knew that the authorities did not care what she did at that point since the raid was over. She called up the rest of Jane's close friends. Deb explained what she had in mind. They needed one person with a lot of money. The only person they could think of was Mr. Mitchell, the richest man in Warren Ohio. They all walked over to Mr. Mitchell's house. Deb explained what they wanted. "Our good friend Jane Foreman was captured last night. She will be offered for sale in about a week. We are afraid of what will happen to her as a 15-year-old girl. We think that if someone in town could purchase her, she could graduate from high school in three years. We think this would be a good way to get a good return on your money. A female sophomore is worth about \$200,000. But a high school graduate with top grades is worth at least \$320,000."

Jane's friends laid out their plan: Mr. Mitchell would buy Jane, and the girls would make sure that she finished high school with top honors. Mr. Mitchell just said, "Your plan is all very interesting. I was recently discussing the education of slaves with key members of my staff. Please come back after giving me three hours to hold some discussions with my staff."

The girls left the house very uncertain but hopeful. When they returned, Mr. Mitchell looked happy. They quickly negotiated a deal. Jane would live with Deb during the school week and with Mr. Mitchell during the weekend. The girls would all study together and work hard on their grades. Mr. Mitchell would pay a stipend for food, clothes, and school supplies for Jane. Besides the reimbursement for expenses, the families would split 10% of the increase in Jane's value. Mr.

Mitchell said he needed to get his money back. He would sell Jane at the end of high school no matter what.

Then Mr. Mitchell mentioned the bad news, “You girls will have quite a job to do. Jane will be released with a permanent steel collar. It will take your creativity to allow her to be treated as any other student at her school. Once I purchase Jane, she must be insured. The insurance comes with its own strict requirements. Jane must wear leg shackles and a leash locked in place whenever she is outside or in a public place. There are laws that apply to all slaves, insured or not. Jane would never be able to sleep without being chained to a fixed location. In any vehicle, she needs standard slave restraints. When Jane is in a crowd, she needs handcuffs. Your job is to make sure that at no time does Jane run afoul of any laws or requirements. All of you need to carry extra supplies in your bags to be ready for unexpected situations. One of you needs to attend each and every class with Jane. Otherwise, this does not work.”

All the parties wrote up a contract. This contract, which is now displayed in the Smithsonian Museum, was signed by Charles Mitchell, Jane Foreman, Deb Coulter, Sarah Cohen, Rose Chang, Becky Roberts, and Cathy Jackson.

Mr. Mitchell called up his bank and requested a debit card be brought to Deb's house for initial supplies. He also started negotiating for the purchase of Jane. The purchase process took a long time. The creditors took their time looking for other buyers. There were medical examinations and insurance examinations.

When the debit card arrived, Deb, her parents, and her friends went to a slave supply store. They bought the necessary restraints. They also bought some clothing that was functional while wearing leg shackles. The last detail was to arrange for the placement of fixed chain anchors to be installed in several houses, but especially in Deb's house. The girls also bought several easily removable steel neck collars for different sizes. These allowed a free person to look like a slave.

The girls spent a lot of time practicing with all the new equipment. They took turns installing the neck collars and pretending to be a slave. They attached leg irons and took them off. They practiced securing the keys. They found that walking with a leash, as either the slave or the keeper, was tricky. But after some practice, they got used to what was needed to make it work. The person holding the leash needed to give clear verbal commands, and they both needed to pay close attention to each other.

## **Jane Gets Back to Her Friends**

About nine days after the raid, Jane was delivered to Mr. Mitchell's house. She had been chained to a large wheelchair, and she was blindfolded. With the signing of some papers, she was unchained from the wheelchair. Jane was tired, dirty, hungry, thirsty and traumatized. Her only clothing was a filthy pair of underwear. Her black hair was very dirty.

Deb took her to a bathroom to clean her up. Deb decided to get Jane dressed in some of her favorite clothes that she had stashed in Deb's house. Then Deb put a leash on Jane. Jane was wobbly on her feet and disoriented by having her best friend put her in restraints. Deb noticed

that Jane would only respond when she raised her voice. She did not appear to know where she was or that she was with her friends. It was as if Jane could not grasp the idea that she was no longer in the slave processing center. Deb brought Jane into the main room where Jane's friends were waiting.

Mr. Mitchell stood up and said, "I am Charles Mitchell. I have purchased you, but you belong to a loving community of friends who cherish you. Before I say more, they all want to greet you." One by one, her friends said that they loved her and supported her. Rose explained, "Jane, you are being insured against theft and loss. The insurance company requires you to be chained up when you are not in a house. We will do our best to make it all seem more normal. We have been using leg chains, handcuffs, and leashes for the last few days. We have learned by experience how bitter it is to be in chains. We are trying to learn how to do this in a way that is kind and gentle. When we are going out as a group, one of us will put on a temporary steel collar and will be treated like a slave as well."

Mr. Mitchell said, "While I hope that Jane gets the rest, food, and encouragement that she needs, doing well in school is job #1. I have hired a tutor for all of you for the rest of the summer. Each morning from 9-12, you will be reviewing the material from last year and starting to learn new things for the coming year. Jane, you may have lost track of the days. Today is Thursday. The classes are starting on Monday morning. Jane, you can stay with Deb till then, except for Saturday night. Just so that everyone knows that I am serious, let me say that if Jane does not do well in school, I will sell her to a brothel. From now on there can be no late nights, no alcohol, no sex without my permission, and no risky behavior."

Jane's friends tried to get her to describe the treatment she received at the slave processing center. Jane would only say, "They were not nice at all when they put on my permanent steel collar or did any of the countless medical examinations. Half the time, I could not figure out why or what they were doing. I dealt with a lot of unpleasant people who kept reminding me of the consequences of not doing what I was ordered to do. I was whipped twice, but I know they were careful not to whip me so hard that it would reduce my resale value."

There was a lot that Jane did not say. Jane meant that the punishment did not leave a permanent mark or necessitate expensive medical treatment. Jane would never speak again about the things she had experienced or seen at the slave processing center. Jane had been afraid that she was going to be sold to a brothel or to a farm where she would be worked to death.

Mr. Mitchell then arranged for a large lunch for everyone. The girls noticed that the lunch was served by Mr. Mitchell's slave. There were also additional papers to sign. Jane, even though she was Mr. Mitchell's property, had to promise to behave, and to comply with all of the laws and the insurance requirements about the use of restraints. All the girls had to sign up for tutoring. They also promised to assist each other to do their work in summer school and during the regular school year. With their signatures, they promised to adhere to all laws, insurance requirements, and school rules.

Soon after the last document was signed, they set out to go to Deb's house. Sarah helped Jane to put on outdoor leg shackles. Sarah also put on a steel collar, a leash, and leg shackles herself. She

now looked like Jane's twin, except that Sarah had a lighter skin complexion. Deb held two leashes, taking what looked like two slaves to her house. Once there, Deb set up a portable potty under her bed and placed a cot close to it. Deb chained Jane to an anchor in the floor and let her sleep on the cot. The girls chatted for a time, and then Sarah took off all her restraints. They decided to go home and meet up again on Friday morning.

## Friday's Close Call

The next morning, Deb woke up and helped Jane to use the bathroom and to empty the potty. Deb got shirts and skirts for herself and Jane and put on some leg shackles. Her parents were totally shocked when they both came into the kitchen dressed as slaves. Deb said they needed to get used to typical slave clothing. It was a parent's nightmare to see their daughter looking like a slave. Yet their daughter was talking about her clothing as if it were an unfamiliar work uniform. Deb's dad did say that the stipend from Mr. Mitchell was more than he was expecting. He said he was transferring \$120 into a debit card that could be used for appropriate clothing for Jane.

After breakfast, the usual gang got together: Jane, Deb, Sarah, Rose, Becky, and Cathy. They decided to go to the park. This time, Deb played slave and Sarah held the leashes. Both Deb and Jane wore a T-shirt and no bra with a standard slave skirt. The other girls wore pants and were dressed more like a slave owner. They went to a neighborhood park and took turns jogging Jane and Deb and having them climb up and down the play structures to build up their muscle tone. To anyone watching, it appeared that the slaves were being punished, except that the girls were laughing too loud.

After plenty of exercise for all, they went into a nearby sandwich shop. The three staff persons there were all wearing steel collars, shiny gold shorts, and a low purple waistcoat over a thin, white shirt that focused attention on their breasts. It was clear they were slaves. Sarah asked where the clothes were purchased. The waitress lowered her voice, as she was not allowed to chat, but she did mention the store named *Sam's Slave*.

After lunch, they headed to *Sam's Slave*. They found that they were not welcome as a group. There was a seating area just inside the store to lock up one's slaves. Deb and Jane were chained to sturdy chairs, while Sarah, Cathy, Rose, and Becky went into the store to look around.

While there, Deb whispered to Jane that she needed to pee, that she had drunk too much water at the sandwich shop. Deb said, "I am in deep trouble unless our owners come back soon." She was careful about what she said since there were other slaves who could hear them. While they were stuck in the slave chairs, the wait for their "owners" to come back seemed to take forever. It took so long that Deb almost wet her pants.

When the gang got back, they were boisterous and giggly and quickly unlocked their slaves. They demanded that they stand up and hold up their hands. The four of them pulled down the skirts and pulled off the T-shirts quickly. All Deb could think of was getting to a bathroom. She found these antics were just plain annoying. Finally, Jane and Deb got the joke. They were being dressed in the same outfits as the staff at the sandwich shop, a pair of shiny gold shorts and the purple and white top.



In a loud voice, Deb said, "I don't want to wear those!" Just then, every slave turned and looked totally shocked. Jane slapped Deb very hard in the face and screamed, "Don't you ever say anything like that again, you fucking piece of shit!" At that, all the other slaves seemed to relax, as if all was well in the world. The girls sensed they had made a major faux pas.

Deb whispered, "I am about to burst. I need a bathroom right now!" The girls took Deb and Jane to the slave bathrooms. These were very small closets with just a toilet and nothing else. There was only half a door so that people could watch the top half of them, and an owner could stand over them while still holding the leash. The toilets were semi-flush; stuff went into an inner chamber, which flushed once an hour. Deb was unnerved that she had to sit down and do her business while everyone could see her face. She could not duck down because, by mistake, Sarah was holding the leash without any slack. There was no toilet paper. The only place for Deb to clean her hands was a bucket of water next to the toilet. Deb did not want to touch that water. All she could think of was getting home and cleaning up properly.

They left the store as soon as they could and made their way back to Deb's house. After a few blocks, they went into an alley and put on T-shirts and skirts over their racy clothes. Deb had never worn clothing that was so revealing, yet no one on the crowded sidewalks had even glanced at her.

Once at Deb's home, they went quickly into Deb's room. Deb was very anxious to take off her restraints. She ran to the bathroom. Deb realized that going in public dressed as a slave was not easy and not a joke. It was a complex gesture of solidarity that required planning, pluck, and quick thinking. She said out loud how glad she was that she was reprimanded the way a slave would be reprimanded. She thought it was funny that no one there seemed to notice that she was being reprimanded by the other slave. Jane told the group that they needed to be more careful. She said, "Going to high school will be easier, but no one will tolerate anyone pretending to be a slave at school."

Back in Deb's room, Jane was chained to the bed again. Deb's mom poked her head into the room and asked about dinner. It was clear that she was not happy about feeding the whole gang. They decided to split up. Deb, Jane, and Sarah would eat at Deb's; Becky, Rose, and Cathy would eat at Cathy's house. They decided to go back to Deb's house and set up a schedule for the next few days.

## **Saturday's Pleasant Surprise**

Saturday was spent with Deb. Waking up, getting breakfast, getting ready for the day were beginning to be a routine. This time, Deb was the owner, and Jane was the slave. They went to the park and did more jogging and climbing. They went back home to Deb's house for sandwiches and just hung around in the living room talking.

Deb walked Jane to Mr. Mitchell's house around 3 pm. Deb rang the bell. A young male voice demanded that Deb back away a few steps. He then asked Jane to gather all her things, open the door, come in quickly, and then close the door. Jane was inside with the door closed before she realized that she had not even said goodbye to Deb.

A young slave walked closer to the door to welcome her inside. He took her leash and bag and walked her into the house. He asked her if she needed to use the facilities. Jane said no. He introduced himself as a slave named Danny Hughes. He told Jane that he was going to attach a small device to her collar. While doing so, he briefly, but very clearly, touched Jane's chest.

Danny said that she could walk freely around the house. Jane told Danny where there was a side pocket of her bag that contained a leather case for all of her keys. Danny used the correct keys to take off the leash and leg shackles. Danny said that if she got too close to a door, an alarm would go off, and the door would lock until a master key could be found. Jane said that rather than risk setting off an alarm in an unfamiliar house, she would prefer to stay in a comfortable chair. Danny said that the house servants, who were slaves, were himself and his parents. He said it was lonely most days.

Jane wondered, "Perhaps being a friend for Danny is one of my duties at this house. I wonder what other things Mr. Mitchell wants me to do?" She felt bad for Danny but decided to see what would happen that night. She found that Danny had only a middle school education. They talked about reading issues. Jane encouraged him to stick to reading in his spare time.

Danny was pleasant. Jane was introduced to Danny's parents, Sally and Roger. Jane asked about their neck collars, which were colored gold. They said that meant that they could go outside without a leash. Jane asked Danny's mom why she was not wearing a shirt. She just said, "I prefer to dress this way." And where was Mr. Mitchell? He was on a business trip. Jane's friends had said that Mr. Mitchell would use his rights as her owner to force sex on her on the first occasion. Well, that was not happening at all.

The evening flowed. When it was time for sleep, Danny's parents walked Danny and Jane to Danny's room. The room was surprisingly large and had a double bed. Danny's mother chained them both to the double bed. Jane was confused and said so. Sally just said sweetly, "we just figure there are things you want to say to each other in private." The bed had a flashlight, and there was a small chamber pot with a lid tucked under the bed.

Danny asked if Jane wanted to feel better. Jane said, "yes," but was not sure what Danny had in mind. Danny used his hand to climax Jane, and Jane returned the favor. They both slept soundly.

## Sunday

Danny and Jane woke up when Danny's parents knocked on the door. Jane first wanted to say, "Just a minute," so that she could get dressed. She realized that she was naked in bed, but she was chained to the bed. Sally and Roger quickly unlocked them and made suggestions about clothing for the day.

Jane figured that she was usually barefoot, especially inside. She had been noticing that most slaves did not wear shoes. She knew that the only female slave in the house did not wear any shirt. She decided that she would wear a shirt unless she was specifically asked to remove it. She put on a skirt and a shirt. After breakfast, Danny's family invited her into the study where there was a computer. They said there was a video call for her. She was surprised to see Mr. Mitchell

on the screen. He had a smile on his face. Jane blushed when she guessed that he knew where and how she spent the night. She sighed to herself and thought, "A slave has no secrets."

She smiled and said she found his house and the residents very friendly. He said he wanted to talk to her at least once a week, to make sure everything was working well. She described her supportive friends, who were making sure that she ran and climbed for about an hour a day. She was glad she was not just sitting around in chains. Jane said she was trying to learn her place in the world and was looking forward to the tutoring sessions and a good school year. Then Jane asked for a favor. She knew that with his permission, she could send very short emails to members of her family. Could he help her with this? Mr. Mitchell said that he would delegate this to Deb. He got Deb's email address and said he would send a special email to Deb. This email would give the passwords to allow Deb to function as Jane's owner for the purpose of managing slave-to-slave email messages. For Jane, being owned by Mr. Mitchell, probably the town's richest man, seemed natural. It shocked her to think of her best friend Deb as "her owner," even for this modest aspect of her life.

About 10 am, Deb knocked on the door. Roger came out holding Jane's bag and Jane's leash. Deb came over and took it and asked everyone if they had a good night. Danny was not allowed outside or near an open door. But he called out in a sweet way to Jane. Deb was bursting with curiosity. Jane said her lips were sealed until the whole gang was together.

They went first back to Deb's house. Deb put on better clothes for exercising. Then they went to the park for an hour of running and climbing. Deb started to realize that she was as much a slave as Jane was. No matter what Jane did outside, Deb was attached to a leash as well.

Back home, and after a good lunch, the doorbell rang. It was Karen Fields, another friend and her boyfriend Zach Perez. Karen had heard rumors that Deb's family had bought a slave. When she came in and saw Jane with a neck chain attached to a chain on the couch, she looked totally shocked. She demanded to know what had happened.

It took a few moments, and they told the story. Jane explained that she wanted to finish high school and go to college. She did not want to be worked to death as so many other slaves were. Zach was just staring at Jane in a most unhealthy way. Deb asked if she would be more comfortable covered with a blanket. Jane spoke slowly. "If Zach wants to look foolish, so be it. He is not hurting me. I am trying to get used to being and looking like a slave. I need to learn from moments like this. If he cannot pull himself together, I can, with Deb's permission, go back to the bedroom and take a nap."

Zach did pull himself together. He noticed how annoyed Karen was by his staring behavior. Zach seemed to have decided to keep his eyes on Karen. After a few more minutes, the whole gang showed up. They decided to hang out in the backyard. They anchored Jane's chain to a large tree.

They talked about the insurance requirements for chains, the school rules, and dealing with other kids. They knew that having Jane go to high school would be difficult. There were other slaves at school, but they were not in the academic program. Mr. Mitchell was expecting Jane to be valedictorian, or very close. They would have to be careful about class schedules so that her

friends would be able to keep up with her academically to accompany her to her classes. They mentioned the tutoring sessions. Karen and Zach said they would be there as well.

Jane did tell about her romantic adventure the night before. Everyone agreed it was a very sweet story, and it would make a good scene in a TV drama. Jane just said, “Don’t too excited. I am not getting married yet,” in a sarcastic tone.

As a group, they decided that owning a slave was a lot of work. Jane announced that she was seconds away from peeing. Jane admitted that she had needed to go for a while, but did not want to bother people to get her unlocked. When she bent down to pick up a heavy box, the need became urgent. The girls sharply criticized Jane for not mentioning that she had needed to pee. “You need to tell us how you are feeling and when you need help,” Sarah said in a reprimanding tone. Becky quickly got the keys and helped Jane to the bathroom.

## **Revealing Computer Files**

Deb remembered that she had promised to log onto her computer to function as Jane's owner. She used the credentials that Mr. Mitchell had emailed her. As she explored the menus, she found she had access to more information than she could have ever imagined. Deb first opened the window about family communications. The page listed the names and slave numbers for the people with whom Jane was permitted to communicate. These were Jane's parents, Robert and Ruth Foreman, and Jane's younger brothers, Bill and James. There was a simple interface allowing communications between the family members.

Deb also had access to an extensive set of files detailing the financial dealings of Jane's parents as they tried to keep a failing business afloat. The last straw was using the same collateral for two different loans. It was clear that by pushing for the enslavement of the family and collecting all available assets, the “insider” creditors made a huge profit. The \$190,000 they got from selling Jane, plus the value of Jane's brothers, was pure profit; the children were sold for an amount that was over and above any money still due to the creditors. Deb guessed that Jane's parents would have done anything to avoid having their children become enslaved, but they did not know how to avoid it.

There was also an appalling set of files giving Jane's mental and physical state and appraising her value. Deb could see a set of photos showing her being processed. They showed crowded, difficult conditions that were sickening. Some of the people in the background did not look alive. If Deb had any thoughts that “Project Jane” would not be a matter of life or death, then those thoughts evaporated. She wondered what she would say to Jane and her friends.

There was a document that carefully went through the transplant status of Jane's major organs. Her value as a transplant “donor” was only \$650, not enough for Jane to be listed in any registry of potential donors. The thought that people were being bought and sold just to be sacrificed for their heart, liver, and kidneys for the wealthy and those with excellent insurance policies was truly horrifying. Deb was beginning to form very negative opinions about insurance companies.

There was a series of graphs that showed the expected rise in costs of the health care Jane would need over the years, based on her genetic profile. The same set of graphs also showed her anticipated value, which dropped to her “salvage value” at age 56. There was a list of places where she could be sent to obtain her “salvage value.” It was all so cold-blooded. Every penny was accounted for throughout her lifespan. Deb knew that a college education might push her curves forward 20-25 years.

Deb found that she could also activate a bank account set aside for Jane and Jane only. There was no way an owner could touch the funds at all. Deb realized that if she found people who wanted to support Jane, she could give a valid account number that Jane could use for her own purposes, including purchasing her own freedom. Deb realized that Jane could use money in the account to avoid some punishments.

Deb did send an initial message to the rest of Jane's immediate family. She explained that Jane was in good hands and that many people were working to see to it that Jane made it through high school. This would put her on track to go to college and become a professional. She would still be a slave. She might be able to run her own household without any restraints, except wearing a steel collar with a simple monitoring device.

Deb went to the group outdoors and told them the outlines of what she had learned and done on the computer. This started a vigorous debate about slavery and the unfairness of borrowing money. It was hard to get ahead without a loan, but it was a bummer to be sold into slavery. No one kept track of the fate of slaves.

The price of a slave was designed to give the buyer a profit if the buyer avoided bad deals and was very good at “human management.” “Project Jane” appeared to be an anomaly, a way to make a significant profit on a slave owned for only three years. Deb wondered if this was the basis of a business, locating enslaved teenagers who were good prospects and making sure they got good educations. Then she switched gears and said that no one other than Mr. Mitchell would make much money on this. He was risking a lot, for uncertain gains. In the end, they all agreed that the total focus of their project was to protect Jane from an evil fate. Any discussion of money was in bad taste since they were talking about profiting off of Jane's sale price. They could and would discuss the fact that they might all end up in college and have brighter futures since they could all look forward to that.

## **Summer School Starts**

On Monday morning, the whole group, now including Karen and Zach, reported to Warren G Harding High School. The high school had a summer school to offer remedial courses to those who were desperate to avoid repeating a class. Mr. Mitchell had made a generous donation to the school system and had hired a teacher to allow them to add a special “enrichment class” for interested incoming sophomores. Nobody was interested except the gang. They approached the sign-up desk. The teacher there seemed to have anticipated them. They were being watched closely. An administrator said, “Slaves are *not* allowed in summer school!” Sarah, who was holding the leash, said, “Let's call Mr. Mitchell.” The administrator quickly turned around and went down the hall. It appeared that Sarah had the magic phrase.

They all filed into the large classroom. Jane asked if they could all sit in the front. The teacher was Emily Johnson, a young woman from the local university. She seemed to have expected three or four students. But just in case, she had ten sets of handouts, which was perfect for the eight students. She had a list of books to buy, but she said there was a debit card from Mr. Mitchell that would cover them. Since they did not have their books yet, they spent the morning drilling math problems. Fortunately, they had all taken Algebra 1 in their freshman year. They were able to work through the math problems. Deb and Jane did the best, Karen and Zach did the worst. But the important thing was that they were all straining to do their best.

The teacher was very good and was full of hints about how to function as a slave but still able to get one's way. She seemed to be very sympathetic and also very knowledgeable about “free people's” and “slave people's” expectations.

Emily told them, “There is an expense account for all of you at a local restaurant. As long as you have a perfect attendance record and do not order too much, you can all hang out together and have lunch. This will help you stay together for the afternoon. On a few days, I will be joining you for lunch.” The restaurant was *Skipper's*, known for its large menu.

They were all in a six-week program with built-in free lunch five days a week. This was something special! They all decided to keep this a secret the best they could, including from their parents. After lunch, they bought the books, again on Mr. Mitchell's dime. Karen and Zach knew that there was no other way they could ever, ever get the help they needed to do well enough in school to go to college. This was life-changing for them as well.

To help keep their secret, they walked in pairs along complicated routes from the school to *Skipper's*. At two places during the walk, they would pause to make sure they were not being followed. One teacher did see them share a table at *Skipper's*. She parked her car near the restaurant a few days later and watched them all arrive. By making quiet inquiries at the restaurant, she learned that someone was funding an expense account for them. She did not connect the expense account with Mr. Mitchell or the summer school. She was insanely jealous that a group of students, one of them a slave, had an account at what she regarded as an expensive restaurant. Ms. Blair, the senior English teacher, wrote down the names of the gang of eight, and she was determined to learn more about what these kids were plotting when school started.

## **The Summer Flies Quickly Away**

As the program continued, the “gang of eight” kept their perfect attendance record. They decided to avoid acting like they had a magic money backer. They were very careful about how they dressed. They tried to look like average students. They were especially careful about Jane. They wanted people at the summer school to look at her as an average student. They showed up every day and greeted all their friends the best they could. They encouraged their friends to be cheerful and to be grateful for any opportunity at education.

Most of the students in summer school were resentful about “having their summer messed up.” Their families were resentful about the fees they had to pay because their kids had goofed off

during the preceding year. By contrast, eight people, showing up on time, every day, with a big smile was always a surprise. That one of them was a slave who seemed to be directing the rest of the group was a puzzle. They knew that the coming year would be full of challenges. The teachers of the remedial classes seemed to be resentful of anyone who was enjoying summer school. Jane pointed out that summer school appeared to have enslaved everyone but the gang of eight and their skillful teacher.

After each lesson, they went to the park to run and climb for about 45 minutes. After a bit of exercise, they had lunch at *Skipper's*. They often shared a serving, since no one (except Zach) wanted to put on any weight. Then they went to someone's house to work on homework and the required reading. Then a long walk, they scattered for dinner so that everyone would have a chance to see their families.

If one's family went on a summer trip, they would stay at someone else's house. Even Deb's family went on a week's trip. Deb stayed with Cathy, and Jane stayed with Becky. Becky's family was surprised at just how complicated it was to have a slave living in their house for a week. The idea that by being part of this project, Becky would have a 99% chance of getting to college, without any cost to the parents, was thrilling. Plus, they understood that whatever hospitality they offered Jane would be reimbursed from the jackpot Mr. Mitchell got when he sold Jane was very enticing. They were somewhat dismayed by the habit of the girls of switching between slave clothes and free clothes whenever it suited them. This seemed like "taking things too far." But Becky's parents did not interfere.

Each weekend, Jane looked forward to her afternoon, evening, and night with Mr. Mitchell. Mr. Mitchell was very happy that Jane was doing so well in her "class." The class was like five classes at once: math, science, literature, history, and social studies. The teacher just said that social studies was the story of people who come from different backgrounds who can and do work together to form a community. Our project is a living example of social studies. She said authors of books should be studying them to see social studies in action. But then they learned hundreds of vocabulary words and concepts that were the basis of social studies courses in school. And so on. They were very well prepared for the coming school year.

And yes, Jane slept with Danny each night she stayed at the Mitchell house. She sometimes slept there on Wednesday night as well. Often it was because there was someone Mr. Mitchell wanted Jane to meet. Later, Jane realized that some of these people were on the school board. Mr. Mitchell knew that there was always some discretion about allowing a slave to attend a high school. He wanted to make sure that no one would stand in Jane's way. Jane displayed her love of learning and her love for the community. Jane also gave some details about why she was enslaved, which helped make her case.

At one of these dinners, one incident with a member of the school board really stood out. This gentleman actually asked Mr. Mitchell to allow a sexual encounter with Jane. Jane kept her mouth shut as Mr. Mitchell explained, "If someone found out that you were doing this, it would reflect badly on all of us. I can arrange for multiple encounters with a 25-year-old, in circumstances that would not lead to scandal." But it was eye-opening for Jane to find her sexual

life being decided, and her not able to react at all. Jane knew that speaking up would result in a whipping, at least in most circumstances.

And yes, her love affair with Danny was continuing. Somehow, there were always condoms in Danny's room. While some people wanted Danny and Jane to be happy, no one wanted a pregnancy. You might think that having sex would be difficult with a chain attached to your ankle. It turned out that it was easy, as long as you did not rotate so much that the chain wrapped around your legs. Sometimes the chains would clank loudly at each sexual motion. They figured if people did not want to hear it, they would not have put them in chains for the evening.

While she knew her friends were saving her life, they were not slaves. She was deeply in love with a young man who was also enslaved. Her bond to free people diminished in importance as her love for Danny grew.

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# Chapter 2: The Sophomore Year

## A Message to the Family

Three days before school opened, Deb got an e-mail from Jane's father. He had a “job” at a bicycle repair shop. This was quite a drop in status for him, from the owner of a bicycle factory to a repairman, from a free man to an enslaved worker. He had to work fifteen hours a day. His sleeping area included his wife and two boys. The kids went to a slave school. They were picked up by a “bus” that had no seats. Armed guards yelled at the kids to run into the school so that the school doors could be locked as soon as possible. One day, two girls that were judged to be too slow were shot and killed. Jane's mom did the best she could with very limited time and supplies. For a few weeks, she worked in a brothel and was whipped several times. The message ended with a heart-breaking line about how proud they were that Jane was doing so well and was able to continue the memory of the family.

It tore Deb apart even to think about what to do. She decided to take off *all* of Jane's restraints and bring her over to the computer. Together they talked quietly about how to respond. Deb suggested that she encourage her brothers to seek out all opportunities to learn, to read, and to grow. She also suggested that Jane leave out her sexual experiences as a slave.

Deb turned around so that Jane could write in privacy. When Deb turned back to the computer, the screen was blank except for a prompt for the passwords that let Deb send out the message without violating Jane's privacy. They were both crying quietly.

## Getting Jane's Schedule

For the first day of school, the gang of eight knew they would be closely watched. Jane wore the best clothes that she salvaged from her life before her capture. The gang of eight spread out a bit but stayed in eye contact as they walked in the front door half an hour before the start of school.

Sarah held Jane's leash, just as she had done in summer school. Jane was wearing her highest quality indoor/outdoor ankle chain. It was well padded and did not scuff the floor or make much noise. Sarah and Jane made quite an entrance. The better students, who had not gone to summer school, all looked shocked. Jane and Sarah further confused the situation by saying things like, “Wow, we had a wonderful summer! It was a blast! How are you doing?” By being so upbeat, cheerful and confident, they were puzzling everyone. They were careful to say, “Nice to see you again!” to anyone they recognized from summer school.

Deb went to school by herself. Part of the plan was to misdirect. They wanted to make it appear that Sarah's family had purchased Jane. Sarah's family owned a car. Who knows, they might also own a slave. This hid Deb's role as de-facto owner, which hid Mr. Mitchell's role as the actual owner. There was no registry of slaves that any citizen could search. Access to those lists was allowed only for the police and the wealthy.

One could get some basic information by running a search based on a slave's full serial number. At an owner's discretion, a slave could wear their serial number or could have an electronic collar tag that broadcast the serial number locally. The electronic tag that Jane wore broadcast just four letters: *jane*. For those with the tools to read electronic tags, this just deepened the mystery.

Some of the students who *could* afford a slave were upset that a slave was attending the academic program of the school. Everybody knew that the tech school had slaves who were both students and workers. They were usually chained in one place for most of the day. The idea that a slave could take academic classes and keep a regular class schedule in the school was foreign to students and staff.

Most of the students had their daily/weekly schedule mailed to them during the summer. Some students, Jane included, did not have their schedules yet. Sarah and Jane went to the Guidance Office to pick up Jane's. The guidance worker took one look and said, "Please see Mr. Christopher in the office over there."

Mr. Christopher came right out and said, "I am sorry, I cannot allow this. There is no way the school board will allow this." Sarah just asked, "Is it was OK to appeal this to the school board?" Mr. Christopher just laughed and said, "Sure!"

Sarah and Jane quickly left the office. They hurried to the teachers' lounge. They knew that a student turning on a phone anywhere in school was against the rules. There was electronic gear to detect if someone was using their phone anywhere on school grounds. But not so in the teachers' lounge. They guessed that on the morning of the first day of classes, it would be empty. They were right.

Sarah pulled out her phone, turned it on, and called Mr. Mitchell on speed-dial. She just said, "Mr. Christopher in Guidance Office will not allow Jane into any classes." She waited for the words "got it," and then hung up the phone. They made sure the phone was fully powered down before sneaking out the door and heading back towards the Guidance Office.

After 15 minutes, they went back into Mr. Christopher's office. He was ashen-faced. He had heard from every member of the school board. He looked almost frightened. He used the intercom to make sure that Jane got into all of her classes, even if it meant bumping someone else.

## **The First Day of Classes**

There was still a last-minute task. The gang of eight needed to compare everyone's schedule to match against Jane's. Each and every class that Jane attended needed two "minders." They needed one person to hold the leash and a backup in case the leash holder was absent.

Fortunately, Jane, Sarah, and Deb had the same schedule for the first two classes: English and Geometry. They could wait until recess for a more thorough schedule comparison. They got into the English class just barely on time. They easily found space in the front row of the class

because students always tend to bunch up in the back of the classroom and leave the first two rows empty.

Mrs. Scheckner asked each student to say something about what they did during the summer. Many students described visits to water parks or alcohol-fueled fender-benders. The talk about car accidents allowed the student to show off that not only did their families have enough money to own a car, but they could also wreck one without a care. When it was Jane's turn, she said, "I am the slave formerly known as Jane Foreman. I am looking forward to this school year. I have read over twenty books this summer to get ready. I know there are some people here who are not happy to see me here. I am determined to do my best for the benefit of my current owners."

Jane's use of the plural was deliberate, to offer more misdirection. Her classmates were instead astonished about "twenty books." The school required incoming students to read two books over the summer. Most students started their summer assignments at 4 pm the day before school started. The truth was even stranger. As Jane later explained to the rest of the gang, "It is amazing how many books you can read when you are chained up for the whole summer." Jane had actually read about 35 books. Her favorite topics were general interest math, the history of science, the history of recent technology development, and slave narratives. The slave narratives were very restricted. Mr. Mitchell was able to obtain them through confidential intermediaries. He always made sure that Jane had the books that she wanted to read. Mr. Mitchell could not get more books on older computer technology, but he had about a dozen books in his library. Over the next two years, Jane read them all. She loved all the stories of down and dirty competition: Microsoft vs. Apple, Sony Betamax vs. VHS, and Google vs. the rest of the world. The descriptions of GPS technology seemed very exotic. She eventually learned that the GPS satellites wore out in ten years or so. No one had launched a major rocket in decades.

Mrs. Scheckner did hand out a list of the books that the students would be reading during the school year. Jane was pleased that she had read all of the books on the list except three. She guessed that she would have the time to read each of the books one more time and still keep up with her other classes.

Geometry class was more of a worry. Jane had not studied any geometry during the summer. Instead, she had focused more on algebraic problems and manipulations. She had even done some early calculus. She quickly reviewed the textbook and decided that it was very manageable. She needed to read the text before each lesson and do each homework problem all the way through, and she would be fine. Mr. Franks did not give Jane a second glance. She knew that he would be a fair teacher.

At recess, the gang of eight met on a grassy lawn to review the rest of the schedule. Thinking through the walking path of the gang through the campus, they decided that it was best for Becky and Cathy to be Jane's minders for American History and Biology. All other classes and activities were best handled by Deb and Sarah. They noticed that by now, they were attracting quite a crowd of onlookers. They decided to make a bit of a scene. Since American History was just after recess, it was logical to turn over the leash to Becky. Jane reacted sharply, "No way am I letting Becky hold my leash. I find this totally unacceptable." Rose yelled, "Jane, pipe down!

You are creating a scene!” They ended up turning the leash over to Cathy for the next two classes.

Lunch was memorable. While carrying a cafeteria tray, Alex Cherrystone, a jock, came over and crudely knocked Jane's tray to the ground. His movement was so poorly timed that he also hit Jane in the chest. In a lightning-fast move, Deb put her tray down, took the leash and wrapped it around his neck. She kicked him in the groin while still holding the leash around his neck. He fell over backward, hitting a table and then the floor, bringing Deb and Jane down too. Deb waited until his face was turning purple before lessening the pressure on his neck. Jane and Deb stood up, leaving him lying on the floor gasping for breath. Deb said loudly, “If you touch my slave again, I will have the insurance company sue your ass for any damages!” The fact that Deb and Jane were largely “undamaged” and he was barely conscious was noted by everyone present. Deb added that they would not report the incident if he cleaned up Jane's tray.

Jane did not want to walk away from this. She yelled, “If your family attempts to sue, they will find that they will face the most expensive lawyers in the state. Your family will be hauled right from the courtroom to the slave processing center. They will slice you open and sell your heart for fifty dollars. And by the way, if you want to touch my titties, they charge fifty dollars for that at Fred's Adult Entertainment, where I work the evening shift.”

Deb said, “Fifty dollars?” Jane answered, “I am all about returning value to my owners!” Deb said, “No, the part about the heart. Don't those places get more than fifty dollars for a heart?” Jane just said, “When they put you on a table, slice you from your crotch to your neck, and start digging through you looking for something to sell, they got lawyers on one side of your body and doctors on the other side, well then, your heart is worth whatever they agree to when they stop arguing!” Of course, the value of internal organs was set by computer programs, which were probably written by other slaves, but Jane did make her point.

Since no one in the cafeteria had any knowledge about slaves being harvested for their internal organs, they got quite an education there. Deb said, “I love you so much, I am going to miss you so much when I have to sell your ass! Can I come over to your new place and visit?” Jane just snorted, “Well, you have to behave yourself. I hate discovering that the leash attached to my neck is being used in every bar fight in town!”

Jane added, “I have lost my appetite and so have you. Come outside with me.” Now everyone was listening to every word. Was Jane ordering around the person holding her leash? What was going on? Deb just hurried to keep up with Jane and said, “Coming dear. Slow up; I got banged up there when we all fell over.”

Alex's family did consider suing for damages. There was a video that a student made that clearly showed Alex coming over and hitting Jane and her tray. There was no court that would allow any lawsuit. The law clearly fell against anyone who started a fight. Deb and Jane never learned how close Alex's family came to being sliced open for their organs, which would have been worth top dollar in the medical marketplace.

## **The First Two Months of School**

After *The Battle of the Cafeteria*, the French and Art classes were uneventful. The last period was being split between Art and Physical Education depending on the day of the week. They were wondering how they were going to manage Physical Education. But that would be worked out in the coming weeks. They ended up setting up a set of six cameras with electronic tag readers pointed at any location where Jane would be taking PE classes. As long as Jane stayed in a specified zone, she could be free of all restraints except for her permanent steel collar.

Many parents were very alarmed by the presence of a slave in their child's school or classes. They started to write letters to the newspaper about the possibility of disease and “unclean things” being introduced to the school. Their basic argument was that since slaves are dirty, no slaves should be allowed in a school.

The truth was that Jane was very hygienic. She did take frequent baths. The problem with slaves is that they were rarely allowed to use bathrooms. Smelly lawns, sidewalks, and streets were the results. The folly of this silly circular argument should have been obvious to a five-year-old.

Becky and Jane presented a report to their biology class on *The Disease-Carrying Difference between Slaves and Free Students in Our Biology Class*. The assignment asked for a report that incorporated proper data gathering and analysis. The very provocative title and the findings caused a local stir. Surprisingly, the Slaves (i.e., the sample of one) in the class were much cleaner than all of the Free Students whose germ-carrying capacity was measured. The paper demonstrated this while also showing how many decimal points should be used considering the very limited data points available.

Of course, these antics caused complaints to the local school board. They knew they had to dial it back when Mr. Mitchell heard complaints from the members of the school board. Mr. Mitchell liked to chuckle at the antics and tiny battles conducted by the gang of eight. They all knew that by constantly switching roles, no one could figure out what was actually going on. By and large, observers of the gang of eight took what they saw or heard as the real story. The whole idea that they were just goofing around was somehow never seriously considered. The result was a large number of opinions about who was really in charge.

As much as possible, they acted as if Jane lived at Sarah's house. Of course, people came over to Sarah's house to visit with Jane. But Jane was never there. The family said, “Oh, she has a night job that pays all the bills!” They said it in a way that hinted that she spent the night in a brothel. Another remark was, “No wonder she is very tired during the school day!” But in reality, Jane came to school each day very well rested and well prepared for the day.

For anyone who wanted to meet Jane in the afternoon or at night, they had to ask around in school. Jane would never directly answer any inquiry herself, just saying, “My schedule is at the whim of my owners.” No one seemed to notice that the word “whim” was insulting to her owners. There were always some negotiations with one of Jane's leash-holders. The result was that Jane and a handler would show up at the person's house or some negotiated neutral territory. At no time was Deb ever associated with the housing for Jane.

## **The November Crisis**

Mrs. Blair, the senior English teacher, was the fly in the ointment. She had her list of the gang of eight that she made during the summer. She still remembered her anger at seeing this group of happy kids devouring food each day at one of the town's best restaurants. She knew they were up to no good. She tracked their grades. They were all very high. It would be a flip of a coin to guess whether it would be Jane or Deb that would end up being valedictorian of their class. She knew in her heart that there was some cheating scandal that she could expose. Perhaps the steel collar was a fake and that it contained some new type of miniaturized cheating apparatus.

Mrs. Blair figured that Karen and Zach were the weak links in the gang. She called them in and offered protection from the inevitable punishment if they spilled the beans. The questioning of Karen and Zach was inexperienced enough for them to work out what Mrs. Blair knew. There was a secret account at a somewhat expensive restaurant. Zach and Karen said, yes, they did eat at the restaurant on the days that Mrs. Blair stated. But they denied any knowledge of who paid the bill. They just said, "Eating at a restaurant when someone else is paying for it is not a crime. We have never cheated. We worked hard during the summer to teach each other how to do better at school. Trying to be excellent is not cheating!" But Mrs. Blair had this fixation that the expense account was somehow a crime and that the obvious conclusion was that the gang of eight was cheating.

The gang discussed this endlessly. They told Zach and Karen, or anyone else, to say nothing more to Mrs. Blair. Instead, they would answer any questions at a formal school inquiry. They hoped that it would not come to that, but they started to work on their defense.

The first step was to tell each of the families about the free lunch deal. They asked their family members not to answer any questions about it, but to turn over any inquiries to those who were part of the summer lunch club. And the eight members of the summer lunch club all said that they would answer any questions in a formal school inquiry.

In mid-November, the gang was asked to appear before a formal panel. The principal, the Dean of Students, and Mrs. Scheckner were members of the panel. At the panel, Rose read a formal statement. She said that their parents and the committee of owners all shared in the expenses of helping "The Slave Formerly Known as Jane Foreman" do well in high school and hopefully graduate with honors. To do this, they all paid for the summer school class, their study materials, and yes, the free lunches on each day of the summer school. While it may have appeared like reckless spending, it was crucial for allowing them to spend the whole day on academics, from their intensive morning class to their hours of homework and study each afternoon and sometimes the night. This kind of intensive tutoring was not available to other students. It was all paid for by the desire to increase the financial value of "the Slave formerly known as Jane Foreman."

Rose then asked to have one of her friends bring a large cart into the room. It contained all of the books they had read and studied during the summer. It also showed all the homework they had done. Each homework paper was dated and marked with the student's name. Since each of the papers was photographed on their phones, they had the date stamp that could forensically prove that they had done all of this work. And yes, they had all the signed receipts for the so-called criminal lunches.

Rose asked the school panel to study their evidence. She asked the panel to ask the summer school and see if they all had a perfect attendance record. Rose knew that the summer school staff was too lazy and too uncurious ever to learn what was taught in their classroom. This was one of the reasons why no one had connected the dots before.

Naturally, they had taken away anything that was incriminating, like the forbidden books of slave narratives that Jane had been reading. Anyone who went through the books and papers would be struck by how much work had been done by these students, hour by hour, day by day.

The one part where they did misdirect was stating that each of their families had an ownership share of Jane. Since they all stood to profit in the increase in value, financially, this was true. Since all of Mr. Mitchell's expenses would be deducted off the top, it was fair to say that their families had paid for the summer program and its free lunch. It was true; there was no such thing as a free lunch. Once you went through the math, each of the families was directly paying for their son or daughter to have a whole lot of free lunches. They were just going to pay for it in three years when the expense bill was deducted from their share.

This formal statement had quite an impact. The text was given to the newspapers. The whole town started discussing this attempt by a bunch of rich kids to game the system. There was some discussion that any increase in value to Jane belonged to the school system, not the owners of Jane. But others said that was “socialist.” One newspaper letter writer demanded that the school system bill each graduating student each and every year for the value of their salary beyond what a high school dropout would earn.

The mood of the gang of eight was soured by this turn of events. In effect, they were branded as cheaters by reading and studying much more than an average student would do. They decided to organize a debate featuring Deb and Jane against any other student or teacher on whether what they had done was inappropriate. It was telling that no one wanted to debate the issue. Bit by bit, public sympathy started to turn towards the gang of eight.

## **The Aftermath of the November Affair**

The gang of eight said that if an organization, such as a school, library, or church, offered a suitable location, they would offer five-hour study sessions on the weekends. They got only two inquiries. And this is how the gang of eight became the gang of ten.

Peter Anderson and William Farjani were clever kids who were always falling through the cracks. They were avid readers and were always looking for ways to improve their grade averages. They were not afraid of hard work. While adding two people to the group seemed like a small change, it was huge in terms of changing from an almost all female group to one that had three young men. These two boys changed the flavor of their clique. No longer could it be argued that it excluded boys. No longer could it be argued that it was exclusive. Two young men just said, “I am not afraid of hard work,” and they were fully accepted.

The gang still had its secrets. The exact ownership of Jane was kept hidden. The role of the gang as “Friends of Jane” and nothing more was still hidden. The use of ever-changing role-playing

was not discussed at all. Peter and William were brilliant additions. They sometimes played as dumb bodyguards for the girls and Zach. They sometimes played the role of great independent thinkers. They had struggled to function well without good resources for so long that they had insights and knowledge that no one else had. All the summer school gang took turns bringing them up to speed on what they learned and how they approached each problem. Peter was an especially good actor and helped pull off some memorable stunts.

At one point, when Peter knew many people were listening to him, he tried to talk Jane into escaping with him to “the forest on the other side of the mountain.” Part of the fun was no one had any idea where that was. Another time he “accidentally” dropped Jane's leash, and then affected a very dramatic re-capture. What made an ordinary episode memorable was Peter's skill at keeping a straight face. He had the ability to come up with wild excuses that were somehow plausible.

One other consequence of the *November Affair* was the fate of Mrs. Blair. This was the doing of Mr. Mitchell. He put some information through various business data centers that made it appear that Mrs. Blair could not handle her debts. This information pushed Mrs. Blair down one notch in the six-level social structure. For those who do not know this, here are the levels:

- The people who own slices of the world.
- The people who own major assets, but are not “slice owners.”
- The people with no debts, but with limited assets.
- The people with debts but their income kept the debts in check.
- The people with debts but their income was not keeping the debts in check.
- Slaves.

Mrs. Blair went from level four to level five. While this was done artificially, it had real consequences. Someone at level five was just a tiny mistake away from slavery. They had to wear ankle bracelets. They were not allowed to travel without police permission. Losing a job or even a drop in pay made one subject to arrest. Mrs. Blair was brought into the police department to be carefully measured, photographed, and warned about the things that she was forbidden to do. She knew that if she complained about the evil summer school kids again, she might be a slave within minutes. For her, it was very cruel and very real. It was also very public. The ankle bracelet was obvious to everyone. It was clear to anyone who reviewed the situation that there were real consequences to standing in the way of this one particular group of students.

One day, Deb, Becky, Jane, and Mrs. Blair met on the sidewalk downtown totally by accident. Mrs. Blair just said, “Is it OK for us to talk for a few minutes?” The girls said yes. They walked to a small park and sat on a bench. She just asked, “Are you angry with me?”



Jane answered for the group. "When my friends and owners were faced with unfounded accusations, they got deeply upset. At no time did you come to us and politely ask what we were doing. We are not criminals; we are diligent students. You know this now. In our senior year, we will be your best students. I think I could pass at least half of your tests right now. But we are the tip of the iceberg. Powerful business and financial interests are paying most of our expenses now, including my purchase price. They saw you and anyone who would try to launch false accusations as a threat. These people, who could sell me into a brothel at any time they choose, have done something to you that is quite distasteful."

Jane continued, "I am glad you sought us out. If you are truly remorseful, we will plead your case to have your status restored. We are not blackmailing you. We want nothing from you except to be treated fairly." Mrs. Blair quietly said that she understood and deeply regretted her behavior. Everyone agreed that it would have been much better if she had just sat down at our restaurant table and asked what we were all doing. It would have been quite awkward, but it would have been much better than launching false accusations months later.

Jane added one request. She wanted Deb and her to take Mrs. Blair's famous Senior Grammar Quiz, a test that was feared by all the students. Mrs. Blair asked if they wanted to take it in January with the seniors. Deb replied that taking it after school in Mrs. Blair's classroom was best. Jane said, "You can search us for notes, set all your cameras on us, do what you want. We just want to show you that we are not cheaters and that we respect you as a teacher."

There were a few tears in Mrs. Blair's eyes. She had expected to be talking to some haughty rich kids who were trying to force her to do things to give them an unfair advantage. Somehow, she never expected to be treated with such respect and decency.

Deb and Jane took the test a few days later. Mrs. Blair was attentive for any signs of cheating. In her career, she had seen it all. She graded the papers a few minutes after the test was over. The girls did much better than Mrs. Blair had expected but worse than the girls expected. Deb just looked at the graded papers and said to Jane, "Come on, we have some studying to do!" Mrs. Blair whispered, "Thank you," as Deb and Jane left the room. As usual, Deb held the loop of the leash on her wrist. As they walked out the classroom and down the hall, they were holding hands.

## **The Affair Continues**

At every opportunity, Jane slept with Danny. They both found the relationship gratifying on many levels. They were very fond of each other. They could complete each other's sentences. Having a relationship with someone she cared for so deeply caused her to think deeply about how she could structure her life to keep this relationship going. That train of thought kept hitting a dead end. As a slave between the ages of 15 and 23, it was impossible for her to have any say about her personal life. Once she was 24, she could request marriage to another slave. Her request would be granted if certain conditions were met. Again, as someone who was not 24 yet, she was not fully aware of what her rights were. But they seemed very limited.

In March, Mr. Mitchell let his slaves Sally and Roger go on a vacation by themselves. This seemed to have been a logistical feat for Mr. Mitchell. He claimed that he needed someone he trusted to review a resort hotel for a few days. Everyone said this is highly irregular, but Mr. Mitchell obtained all the travel permits, the permission of the police, and various banking entities. Sally and Roger had to carry special documents and a cell phone that would only ring Mr. Mitchell. Mr. Mitchell himself went for a business trip. Danny got to stay with Deb and Jane.

When Deb came to pick up Jane and Danny, she got to see him for the first time. Deb was surprised that Danny was black. Danny just said, "My mom is black, my dad is white, do you have a problem with that?" Deb quietly said, "No, of course not." Jane and Danny knew what the issue was. Deb had only seen Roger up until now. Sally and Danny always stayed inside during times when Deb dropped Jane off or picked her up. Jane just thought it was fun to have Deb learn about this as a visual surprise. Jane added, "Sometimes people have the same reaction to my mom. She has a complicated set of DNA."

Deb, Jane and Danny shared the same bedroom for a week. Jane and Danny took the bed, and Deb slept on the cot. They certainly got to know each other very well by the time the week was over. Deb wished she had a boyfriend who was so devoted to her. She had been spending so much time on her school work that she rarely thought about her social life. She decided that she would try to change this in the coming school year. Deb noticed how happy Jane was that week.

Since it was a school week, they brought Danny to school with them for the week. Danny was much better at English literature than anyone ever thought. He finally confessed that Mr. Mitchell had set up a bookcase with two sections. One section contained books for him, and the other section was for books that he was forbidden to read. By the time he was fourteen, he had read all of the books in both sections. It took years for him to realize that he had done exactly what Mr. Mitchell had expected. But since he had violated a direct order from his owner, he did not want to tell anyone. Jane and Deb thought that was hysterical. This was more proof that Mr. Mitchell had a wicked sense of humor and deep antipathy to the highly structured social system.

## **Sophomore Field Trips**

The Sophomore Field Trips in April were very stressful for Jane and her friends. There was a week of spending each morning at a seat of power in the community. They were scheduled to visit the police station, the courthouse, the local governing council, the town business association, and the local TV station. The field trips were supervised by the police, who initially would not allow a slave to visit these sensitive locations.

There were some negotiations with the school. The administration was frightened about excluding Jane from any school activity. The experiences of Mr. Christopher and Mrs. Blair were mirrored by the various inquiries that members of the school board made on behalf of Jane. Eventually, a compromise was reached. The gang of ten was not happy about it, but Jane just said brightly, "Think of this as a Social Studies lesson for the sophomore class!"

The first visit was to the police station. Three police with long rifles pointed their guns as Becky took off all of Jane's restraints. The police put on their own very short leg shackles. They locked two leashes to Jane's collar, given to Peter and William, who were sternly warned about the consequences of any funny business. Jane was also put in handcuffs behind her back. She was not allowed to speak out loud but was allowed to whisper a question to a fellow student.

Jane tried to be as cheerful as possible and thanked the police for their professionalism. She was being sarcastic. She was upset that the police officers putting restraints on her were wearing rubber gloves and masks required for toxic and smelly environments. All of Jane's fellow students were shocked at this treatment. Jane just wished someone would take a picture for the yearbook.

The tour of the police station was uneventful. There were many officers that dealt directly with the public. People were coming in to pay fines, obtain travel permission or permission to make a payment that was rejected by the computer network as "suspicious." Most of the revenue for the police station was fees for services, including a daily charge for holding slaves who were awaiting transport or pickup. Jane knew they also punished slaves for a fee and supervised slave self-transport for a fee.

If three or more slaves were going from the same sleeping area to the same workplace, they could self-transport. Or if three slaves needed to walk from their workplace back to their sleeping area, they could self-transport. They were chained together securely and wore wide-broadcasting electronic tags. A travel document would be filed, for a modest fee. An officer could monitor all the self-transporting slaves if desired. If the slaves left their assigned path or took too long, alarms would sound, and officers would be sent to intervene. There were large fines paid for slaves who caused alarms to go off. As a single slave, Jane was not allowed to self-transport. This was what made her so unusual. It was typical to buy at least three slaves unless an owner was fond of constantly traveling around holding a leash.

Jane already thought the police were lazy, nasty, and best avoided. A police/slave encounter often went bad. Jane kept her mouth shut and was very happy when she could switch to her regular restraints. She rubbed her wrists when they left the station. This was going to be a rough week.

Tuesday was the courthouse. The courthouse was not as strict as the police station. They just added handcuffs to Jane's normal restraints. Jane asked the court official to be gentle with the handcuffs. There was no problem there. Many kids asked the court officials about how someone could be sent from level four straight into slavery without a court hearing where they could offer evidence. They were told that the court just follows the law. That did not reassure anyone.

The next two days were uneventful. It was obvious that the "slice-owners," the level one people, set all the rules. In Warren, the level two people made sure the rules were followed. Jane realized that Mr. Mitchell was clearly level two. That made her proud; she was the personal property of the nicest level two person she could have ever imagined.

Friday was the TV station. That was eventful. As usual, they made a live mini-feature about the visit of the sophomores. Two students had been given cards to come forward and ask questions. The first person was William. He asked if the station tried to help deal with social problems in the town. The newscasters all said, "Of course."

He then held the microphone for Jane, who popped out from right behind William a few seconds earlier. Jane asked, "How about encouraging Warren to build public toilets to keep our town clean, healthy, and pleasant-smelling?" They all said, "There are plenty of public toilets in this town. That is not the problem." You could see the producers and staff all getting nervous. They did not like the idea of having a slave on their TV segment. Jane just asked, "Can I use your restroom, please?" The newscasters all yelled at the same time, "No!"

There was an uproar in the room, as the students started to yell: "What!?" "Are you kidding me?" "What is your problem?"

Needless to say, there were technical problems, and they cut off the show. No student had ever had any problem using the same restroom as Jane. There was a certain amount of freedom at the high school. Students could use any restroom they wanted if the ones for their gender were fully occupied.

Jane and William were in trouble. William just said that he did not know Jane was not supposed to speak. Jane said, "I have been ordered to ask that question by my owners. If there is a problem, fine my owners." Mr. Mitchell did get a fine for \$1000. He later said, "I paid it gladly. It was the best show I have ever seen on the local TV station. Warren would be better off if Jane had a regular TV show. The catch is that I would not be able to keep up paying all of the fines I would be getting."

## **The Sophomore Year Comes to a Close**

Unless the reader enjoys the minutia of the daily grind of high school life, there was not much to say. Jane was still being insulted by students who came from level two or high level three families. She mostly answered, "Have a wonderful day! I love having interesting things to write down in my diary!" The next day, Jane would loudly say in the cafeteria, "I hate being a slave. My owners keep reading my diary and making lists of people to punish. Why cannot I just have a private life like everyone else?" The implied threats were real. Everyone knew that Mrs. Blair was placed into level five just because of her witch hunt on the gang of eight.

By the end of the school year, Mrs. Blair was restored to level four. She looked much happier when that happened. She would be allowed to take a summer trip and would not be legally obligated to work during the entire summer.

At the end of the school year, the final grades were posted. Everybody in the gang of ten did much better than they had during the previous year. The obvious implication: people who had always made the top 10 or 20 of class ranking were bumped way down by this band of what were now revealed to be not-so-rich kids. Once again, there was anger and frustration as some

privileged kids did not get the cars or vacations that were linked to school rankings. A new set of enemies was growing as summer vacation was just starting.

Right after school ended, the gang took a stroll to Hawthorne Park, right next to the river. Everyone stripped down and jumped in, except Jane. She said she would guard the clothes against falling into unfriendly hands. It was too risky trying to swim in a river wearing restraints. At the minimum, it would be considered “risky behavior,” that Jane promised to avoid. Jane remembered that Mr. Mitchell had an outdoor pool. The next time she visited, she asked about using it. Mr. Mitchell agreed that they needed to get rid of the shackles. They ended up borrowing the monitoring equipment from the PE department at school and setting it up around the pool. Jane could swim for the first time in over a year. Mr. Mitchell made another donation to the school for the “summer rental.”

The swimming pool became a way for the gang to mix socially with Danny, his parents, and Mr. Mitchell. Somehow, the stripping off of all clothes in a swimming pool made it much easier to ignore all the artificial social layers. Down deep, everyone is just the same. They spent some time reviewing the past school year and talking about the next year. The general agreement was that there needed to be fewer antics and more serious work. But they all pledged to push back at any attacks on the group.

Jane and her friends also learned a detail that astonished them. Their mystery young teacher, Emily Johnson, was none other than Emily Mitchell, the niece of Mr. Mitchell. She was the youngest daughter of Mr. Mitchell's youngest brother. They took lessons from a level two person! When in the history of the earth had that ever happened before? It was vital that they keep this secret from everyone, to avoid a massive scandal. That Emily could work under a false name seemed like impossible skullduggery. How on earth could that happen? It appeared that the intense Personal Identity laws of the nation did not apply to level one and level two persons.

## **Summer School**

Summer School was very funny. The room for the class called “Junior Year Enrichment” being taught by Emily Johnson was packed. When Emily explained that the class would consist of six Monday sessions, and there was no free lunch, 80% of the students left. The remaining students were the gang of ten plus seven others. Emily handed out an examination to determine who was entitled to subsidized books and study materials. Five of the newcomers failed the test, and they left the room, leaving twelve students.

Emily passed out books and learning materials which students were encouraged to share. There were long handouts with questions and problems. The students spent the remaining two hours reviewing the books, and speed reading the questions. They wanted to find out if they could do all of their assignments before the next class in a week's time.

The two newcomers were Carol Nguyen and Kathy Hoang. Kathy spelled with a K, not to be confused with Cathy with a C, who was part of the original core group supporting Jane's efforts from the beginning. The best way to describe Carol and Kathy would be to say they were

somewhat spoiled kids who were used to doing well in school. The end-of-year rankings shocked them to their core. They both decided to join the gang rather than fight them.

The gang of ten was a bit uncomfortable with these two newcomers. They decided to conduct themselves on two levels. For summer school activities, they were a group of 12. For anything else, they were a gang of ten. Carol and Kathy did say that there were six kids who were determined to take down the gang any way they could. The gang was appalled. They retold the story of Mrs. Blair, who got herself in a very difficult position. Without being too specific, they relayed the danger these six students would face. As the summer wore on, it was clear that these warnings were being dismissed as silly fear-mongering. They did not think that the gang had the power to turn their sunny lives upside down.

Carol and Kathy did not work as intensively as the gang on their summer studies. But they definitely got a big boost. If they stayed focused on their school work during the coming year, they would clearly make their way back to top-twenty students. They knew that their families wanted them to make the “top twenty list.”

One step the gang did take was to report to Mr. Mitchell that there was potential trouble in the coming year. When Mr. Mitchell asked for names, they turned over the list. And that was when Mr. Mitchell made a surprising discovery.

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# **Chapter 3: The Junior Year**

## **The Money Trail**

Mr. Mitchell put a police tracer on the six households given to him by Jane and her friends. All person-to-person money transfers were carefully monitored by computer. The law required a clear and accurate description of all person-to-person money transfers. There was a single rejection, a sum of money being transferred from one family to another family with inadequate description. The money transfer was resubmitted with an explanation that the money was going to reimburse someone for the cost of materials used to rebuild the front porch of his house. The resend seemed to be acceptable. Without a resend, the money would stay in the hands of the police. With the resent transfer, the money went to the intended party as long as a \$20 fee was paid to the police.

Mr. Mitchell was suspicious about the convenient \$400 round number for a reimbursement. He used his banking connections to get a more detailed report on the financial transactions of both parties. The sender also had four other odd payments to four individuals. The recipient had odd transfers from a total of six different individuals. There was astonishment when he realized that the recipient was a teacher at the high school, and the six individuals were parents of the six kids listed by Jane as working against the gang of ten.

The net grew larger when it became clear that each of the six families was sending money all about the same time to all or almost all of their junior year high school teachers. The money transfers were disguised as payments for work the teachers had done during the summer. All of this work occurred in the households of the six families. Further, there was some sloppiness. The family that originally caused the money transfer hold was having three different porches built. One family was paying for a lot of expensive childcare. Their only child was about to enter his junior year of high school. All the amounts were on even hundreds.

The only problem for Mr. Mitchell was how to bring this to the attention of the authorities. He knew that going to the police was bound to backfire. Mr. Mitchell's investigation made the police inquiry or lack of inquiry look very bad. He was sure they would put it on the back burner.

Mr. Mitchell sent a report to the school board. The school board quickly requested banking details of all the teachers at the high school. Only the teachers of the six students got mystery payments. No teacher got a payment unless they had a student who was from a "bribing family."

## **The Bribery Scandal Investigation**

The school board was relieved that the scandal was limited to one group of teachers. They called in the teachers for a special meeting concerning the junior class. They were kept in separate rooms once they arrived at the "meeting." One by one, they were called into a room with the entire school board and a camera. They were asked in grim tones if they had accepted any money

from the family of any incoming students. It was clear that the school board knew everything. Each of the eight teachers confessed to accepting a gift but denied that this would give any favoritism to that student. They were asked if they had ever received a “gift” any other time in their career. They all said no. They were asked if they knew that their employment contract prohibited receiving gifts. They all said, “It appears that it slipped my mind.” They were asked about the stated reason for the money transfers were all to pay for labor or to reimburse them for supplies they had purchased. Did you provide labor or buy things needing reimbursement? No, they all said that the stated reason was incorrect. Did they not know that it was a crime to get a payment for which the stated reason was wrong? Yes, they knew it was a crime, but they just did not look at that part of the computer message.

The school board got signed confessions from all eight teachers and turned the matter over to the police. The police confiscated the bribe and fined the teachers an additional 25% of the payments. Each family was fined an additional 200% of the bribe, with half going to the police, and half going to the school system. Thus, if a family had bribed one teacher \$400, the result was that the teacher would lose the bribe and have to pay another \$100. The family had to pay an additional \$800. The school ended up with \$400, and the police with \$900. That was the math for one family and one teacher. The amount of money involved with all of the bribes and all of the fines was staggering.

The police loved cases like this. Bring the people in, look over the signed confessions, do some simple arithmetic and the only delay is typing in the bank account numbers to decrement. People were very motivated to pay fine quickly. The inability to pay within 14 days meant slavery. The house goes away. The contents go away. The people go away. It was up to the individual to borrow, sell, or work out whatever financial arrangement was necessary. In reality, many lenders would be glad to offer loans at a high-interest rate. If the borrower defaulted, the result was slavery. Once you were processed into slavery, the lender would get full payment plus any bonus due to the total value of the liquidation sale. Considering the value of “good” families as slaves, the bonus would be substantial.

Since the punishment for the families was financial, it largely fell on the parents. To be clear, sending a bribe and lying on the financial transfers were crimes. But at the heart of this affair, there was a child who wanted to succeed and had one or two parents who were willing to ignore the law. Flouting the law was reserved for level one and level two people. These families, who were all level three or level four, should never try a stunt like this. But there was one way that the scandal affected the students. Each of the six juniors was required to take a series of examinations under video scrutiny. Two of the students needed to repeat the sophomore year. That left two really angry students who were now humiliated before the entire student body. There were four students who knew they would not get any favoritism during the school year. Anything they did would be subjected to great scrutiny and skepticism.

At the last minute, the school board issued a surprise ruling. All eight teachers would swap places with teachers from throughout the region. Sixteen teachers were uprooted. They all had to sell their houses and move their families, right before the start of the school year. In truth, most of the teachers involved just swapped houses and furniture with their respective “partner.”



This affair was shocking for the entire school. Virtually all the teachers for the junior class were brand new to Warren G Harding High School. The new teachers were very upset about their situation. They did not trust anybody. They were angry at the whole town for dragging them from their homes, schools, and communities. They were angry at the school board and at the high school administration for allowing a bribery scandal of such size that it required such a dramatic response. They were angry at the teachers who they replaced for being willing to do anything for money. They were suspicious of all their fellow teachers. They treated all students with suspicion and were not interested in any funny business.

For the new junior teachers, finding out that the best student in the incoming class was a slave with an attitude was the last straw. They were more than willing to prohibit her from the classes they were teaching. They would have, except that the school administration and the school board were very firm. And, to the extent possible, “the slave formerly known as Jane Foreman” was to be treated as if she were an ordinary student. The new teachers were astonished that the Physical Education department had purchased the equipment to allow Jane to participate in class activities without leg shackles. The new teachers thought they had entered a crazy school. Who could imagine such a thing would ever be allowed?

## **The False Start of School**

The junior year for Jane and all her classmates was chaos. None of these new teachers had ever worked together before. The new teachers were trying to get new bank accounts, new phone arrangements, new furniture, and new schools for their children. They tried to help their spouse to get a new job, tried to deal with friends, relatives, and creditors who were upset that they had just left town so abruptly. Several times a day, someone put a major alert on one of the new teachers to put them into level five. It took a lot of time and energy to try to launch their lives in a new town. The business of getting the school year launched for the juniors was not happening.

During lunch of the second day of school, Jane, Deb, and Rose decided to do something to help the new teachers. They went off campus and made a call to Mr. Mitchell. He agreed to their plan. Jane, Deb, and Rose went to each of the new teachers and told them there was a meeting that evening at Mr. Mitchell's house to help them get settled in the town. They made sure that the teachers knew that Mr. Mitchell was probably the richest person in town.

All the new junior teachers arrived for the meeting. A nice buffet dinner was served for everyone. Mr. Mitchell said, “Time is short; please state your biggest concerns.” Jane and Rose kept careful notes. For issues that just required phone calls were assigned to the members of the gang of ten that were present. For issues that required contacts with banks, phone companies, creditors, and other formal institutions, Mr. Mitchell said, “My staff will take care of that.” Jane knew that meant he and his niece would deal with the issues. The teachers needed help with transporting furniture. He said he would direct his senior slaves to rent trucks to assist the teachers. Each teacher got a list of the phone numbers of the entire gang of ten. They pledged to assist the teachers with questions about school choices for their children and recommendations for local stores and contractors. Mr. Mitchell also said that each teacher with a life partner should e-mail their credentials and work history, and he would see to it that they all got appropriate jobs in the community.

The teachers were overwhelmed by the support that they were getting. Slowly, they came to realize that it was Jane's insight into their plight that caused all of this activity. Jane and her fellow students said that they were not doing this to get a reward, but strictly because they wanted to get the junior year started in the school. Since every student wanted the teachers to become members of the community of Warren as soon as possible, everyone was invested in solving their overwhelming problems.

The new teachers started to ignore the fact that Jane was a slave and decided that all the stories they had heard about how rude and difficult Jane had been must be wrong. Jane also won points by saying that they would have pitched in earlier if they had known about their problems previously.

## **The Real Start of School**

With the start of school, the competition for getting on the top-twenty list in the school rankings was underway. Only about 30 kids were invested in the battle for the top 20. No one had any doubt that Deb and Jane would get the two top slots. Their ability to do well on tests, papers, homework assignments, quizzes, and lab projects was the stuff of legend.

In P.E. class, students had a rope-climbing test. A long rope was hung from the ceiling all the way down to the ground. Each student took turns putting on a safety harness and climbing up as far as they could. Jane and Deb were the only girls to make it to the ceiling. Jane stayed up a long time before coming down on her own power. She told people when she got down that she enjoyed the birds-eye view. Jane and Deb had been lifting weights during the summer. Anyone who thought that they could tackle them in the cafeteria started to rethink their plans.

Jane and Deb had decided to spend more time together at school. They stopped hiding where Jane lived. Sometimes a few students not in the gang of ten walked with Jane and Deb to Deb's house. It made things easier not to be pretending so much about their life situations.

There were some confrontations in the cafeteria. These were usually verbal. Fred Crocker loved to tease Deb for bringing in her “pet girl” to school. He sometimes made crude sexual references as to why they were always together. Fred was handsome and very charming. As the days wore on, Deb would smile and slyly address Fred as if they were close friends. Somehow, they found a way to become close friends.

## **Fred and the Gang of Ten**

Things got interesting when Deb invited Fred to some of the gang's study sessions. While the gang of ten often stated that they held no grudges and wanted to keep good relations with everyone, this was going too far. Fred was one of the kids involved in the bribery scandal. When the issue came up, he said that Kathy and Carol had joined the gang for summer school. Fred said that he and Deb were now friends, and he wanted to be accepted by “her gang.” Fred claimed that it was his father's idea to join others who were bribing the junior teachers. Fred also claimed that he always thought this was a bad idea.

Even though Deb's friends were deeply suspicious of Fred, they accepted Fred socially. They did extract a promise from Deb that she would never reveal the true ownership of Jane or any other part of the financial dealings that allowed her to have a support network at school. They told her that if this information went to wider circles, it made Jane vulnerable to attack. They also made jokes about “Romeo and Juliet” and teased Deb about how that play ended.

Fred did join the gang socially on many occasions and was welcomed to many study sessions. He came to appreciate the sheer amount of work that the gang put into their school work and how they taught each other difficult concepts. Fred's grades did go up, mostly because it was hard to shirk his homework and his studies when he was hanging out with this group of relentless students.

## **Another Cheating Episode**

It all started innocently enough. Stephen Ratte got his math test handed back from his teacher. Stephen was another boy involved with the bribery scandal. He had drawn his teacher's attention by asking that his homework be rechecked now and then. The daily algebra homework hardly mattered to his grade point average. Mrs. Johnson was not comfortable with the way he always seemed to have one or two problems that seemed to be “more complete” the second time around. Before handing back the test, she photographed each page.

As soon as Mrs. Johnson got home and went into her study, she compared the image of the test she has passed out with the test Stephen had given her. There was no doubt; Stephen had finished a problem after he got his graded paper and was now trying to increase his grade based on these “improvements.” She sent her file to the school's printing device. The next day, she brought both versions of the test, the photographed version, and the returned version, to the school's administration.

The whole affair was ugly. He was brought before a “school honesty committee.” He claimed that he was not trying to increase his grade, but “just wanted to demonstrate his ability to do the problem to the teacher.” This did not make sense. Rose testified that she heard Stephen ask the teacher for a higher grade, contradicting his flimsy defense. After a week of deliberations, the committee decided that Stephen would get a zero for his test. Since this would be about 9% of his final grade, this was a serious blow to his efforts to lift his grade point average.

The worst part was that Stephen blamed Rose for “lying to the committee.” He refused to take responsibility for what he had done. He refused to see that altering his test paper after it was graded was proof positive that he had been cheating. Rose's testimony only shredded a lame excuse that was going to be rejected anyway.

## **The Social Circle**

More and more students in Jane's circle of friends were starting to hang out with their “best friend.” Jane was still very fond of Danny. Karen and Zach had joined the gang as a pair and

stayed that way. Two more pairs formed during the summer: Rose and William, and Cathy and Peter.

With Deb now having Fred as a “best friend,” this left Sarah and Becky as the only members of the gang of ten that did not have a “best friend.” Sometimes Sarah and Becky held hands to show they each had a best friend as well. It was a good joke, but there was some truth to it. They both wished they had someone who shared their burning desire for education whom they could call a best friend.

The fall dance for the juniors was a grand affair. Jane was able to attend with Danny. Danny was very handsome; many of Jane's friends wanted to dance with him. This was Jane's special night of the season. It was wonderful she was able to attend with all of her friends. Sarah and Becky managed to find dates. No one cared that these were temporary relationships.

## **Betrayal**

Kathy and Carol told Deb that they needed to deliver news in total privacy. They went to a corner of the athletic field where there were no monitoring devices. They told Deb that Fred was preparing to frame Deb for cheating. They warned her that he would plant the answers to tomorrow's chemistry test on her just before the test started. Deb laughed at them, but Carol was insistent that she be on her guard.

Sure enough, at recess, right before the chemistry test, Fred came over to give a large and inappropriate hug. Deb was quite alarmed. She hurried to the restroom and took off all her clothes in the stall. She found two copies of the test answers tucked into her clothes. She ripped the answers up into tiny pieces and flushed them down the toilet. She searched her clothes once again, put them on, and came over to the sink. She asked a boy combing his hair if there was anything hidden in her hair. He looked carefully. Deb looked at herself carefully in the mirror. She was ready for the test.

Sure enough, two teachers pulled her out of the test. They took her to the bathroom and searched her from top to bottom. She stood there thinking this is what a slave being sold must feel like. The teachers looked very confused. They looked like they were certain that they would find evidence hidden in her clothing. Deb was angry and very confused about Fred and his intentions all along.

Fred looked alarmed when Deb was returned to the test. He waved the teachers over. You could tell that he was certain that she had hidden slips of paper in her clothes. The teachers shook their heads and looked like they should be tearing his clothes apart, not Deb's clothes. Of course, Fred had memorized the answers. This was not his lucky day. Some of the test answers were written down incorrectly, and his memory was faulty. Further, seeing Deb back at the test so disoriented him that he did poorly on the part of the test he was not cheating on. While Fred did not fail the test, this was not his shining hour.

When the school day was over, Deb did not want to speak to Fred at all. She just said, “This is over.” And it was.

That night, Deb made sure all of Jane's clothes were off and chained her to the bed. Deb then took off her clothes and snuggled close to Jane. Jane said, "This is not right. I know you are very angry with Fred, but I cannot be a substitute. If your parents come in here, everything you have worked for will be over. I do not know what your issues are. Please find another way of expressing them tonight."

Deb was still crying. She stayed in bed for a few more minutes before she got out. Deb put on her PJ's, slept on a small pad on the floor, alternating between light sleep and crying.

Over the next few days, Deb was very difficult. She kept talking about how Fred was determined to bring them all down from the beginning. She just had not seen this coming. Her friends tried to warn her that Fred was trouble, but Deb did not listen. While the breakup healed the rift between Deb and the rest of the gang, it was almost too painful to discuss.

## Tragedy

What happened that Saturday pushed thoughts of betrayal into the background. Stephen Ratte deliberately drove his car to run down Rose, Deb, and Jane. Deb and Jane survived; Rose was killed. Rose pushed Deb away and used the leash to swing Jane away from the impact. Rose lived for three more days, long enough for her to learn that she was the only one who was seriously hurt, that she had saved other lives, and that everyone loved her deeply.

The funeral was very hard for everyone. At the viewing, Deb and Jane approached the open coffin with a small chair. Jane was wearing an especially long leather leash. At the coffin, Deb took the leash and put it into Rose's hands. She placed the chair next to and behind the coffin. Jane sat there for the duration of the funeral. She was silent while others gave eulogies. When the coffin was closed, the leash stayed in Rose's hand.

Rose's family left the funeral building first, and then eight members of the gang of ten carried the full weight of the coffin. Jane followed the coffin, as she was still attached. When the coffin was placed in the hearse, she crawled in next to the coffin and held the coffin on the way to the cemetery. At the graveside, Sarah used a large knife to cut the leather leash. Half the leash was buried inside the coffin. Jane stood in place with half a leash dangling from her neck.

Stephen was declared an adult. He was fined \$300,000. Not having that amount, he was sold and never seen in Warren again. Half of Stephen's sale price was distributed to Rose's family. The entire legal process, from start to finish, was just accounting entries. After Jane's and Deb's medical expenses were taken care of, the police kept the rest of the sale price.

The emotional toll was devastating. Everyone at the school was affected. There were a series of meetings at the high school to try to make sense of the sweep of events in the junior year. Jane often spoke about the need to change from an attitude of greed and entitlement to an attitude of hard work and service to the world. She said that we can all make a better world if we consciously think about how to help others.

## **The Social Circle Turns Some More**

The death of Rose was very hard on William. Rose was his girlfriend. He reached out to Sarah in the aftermath. Sarah returned his affection. Often Sarah and William spoke of “our Rose,” as if Sarah included herself in William's prior relationship with Rose.

The next shift was complicated. Deb started to approach Cathy. Cathy had been the partner to Peter. To everyone's surprise, Cathy and Deb became partners. If truth be told, Jane was the least surprised. Since she lived with Deb for such a long time in such intimate circumstances, she could tell that the affection Deb had for Jane was more than Jane ever felt like returning.

Sometimes Cathy slept with Deb, which made Jane think of how she and Danny had made Deb uncomfortable the previous year. Jane was very happy that Deb and Cathy were in love; this made Jane's daily life a little less stressful.

For those keeping track, this left Peter and Becky as unattached. They too paired up. Now, for the first time, the nine surviving members of the gang of ten each had a close partner. Only Jane had a partner outside of the gang. At no time did anyone speak of the gang of nine. It was always “the gang of ten,” a permanent memory of Rose.

## **The *Rose Chang* Christmas Party**

Jane organized a major charity event in Rose's name. With the financial assistance of countless donations and the backing of Mr. Mitchell, a Christmas party for about 100 slaves was organized at the high school.

This was a major event. Countless volunteers came to help. A key part of the event was the distribution of much better clothing. All the pants needed to be altered to insert inside-the-leg zippers to be useful for persons with leg shackles. Everyone needed to be measured weeks ahead of time.

The event took place at the high school. The P.E. department was used to receive everyone. Volunteers helped to make sure all the slaves got showers, got groomed, dressed, and prepared appropriately. Many of the slaves had not been able to look presentable in decades.

A feast was prepared in the school kitchen. Students served the slaves with the greatest of dignity. Skits, songs, and comedy helped fill the evening once the stomachs were filled. It was a great evening for all. This sort of public charity was almost unknown, even more so since it was charity devoted to slaves. Many people in town predicted disaster for a Christmas party for slaves. The evening went very well. Every volunteer left feeling much better and unsure why that was so. The slaves were all given small gift bags with items such as grooming supplies and simple music players. They were grateful for the evening, the food, the gifts, the clothes, and the dignity they received that night.

And yes, people remembered the name *Rose Chang*, in whose name there was an annual event from then on. Each year, Mr. Mitchell noticed he needed to do less and less of the organizing until the event could go on without his personal support.

## **Junior Prom**

The Junior Prom was an event to celebrate the junior class and have some fun. Unlike previous dances and events, this was much more formal. It was a practice run for the Senior Prom, which was, of course, the big event for a high school student. More and more, Jane's fellow students referred to themselves not as "juniors," but as members of "Jane's class." They were fiercely proud of Jane and turned to her for ideas and leadership.

Jane took a leading role in planning the junior prom. One of the themes of the prom was making sure all of the class could participate. She set up a cost structure that pushed more of the financial weight onto the wealthier families, and less onto the poorer families. Arrangements were made so no one would be excluded due to the cost of the ticket or the cost of the preparation.

Jane was gorgeous at the event itself. She wore a beautiful long black and gold skirt. She wore a simple chain around her waist to symbolize her captivity. Her chest and back were painted with double-headed gold eagles with a black background. Her lack of any shirt or top was striking but not that unusual for formal dances. The chain and the design made her a symbol of dignity and school spirit. The school colors were gold and black. The beautiful double-headed eagle design painted on her body was acclaimed as perfect for the yearbook.

Everyone wanted to dance with Jane. Danny restricted the honor to anyone from the gang of ten. Deb and Cathy came over to dance with Jane. They wore matching long skirts; both of them had a very large rose painted on their chest and midsection.

## **The End of the School Year**

The anxiety about grades ended when the school year rankings were finally posted. Of the 11 students in the summer school program (not counting Rose), they all did very well. All 11 ranked in the top 15. It was hard to imagine that the class rankings would change much by the end of the senior year.

There was no summer school after the junior year. There was a single, private meeting where books and study materials were distributed. The students were all on their own. There was no formal class and no teacher. To succeed, they needed to support each other and teach each other.

One thing that was frustrating for Jane was her inability to travel anywhere without being on a leash. This was the law. The only exception was if she had a gold collar. She asked Mr. Mitchell, and he said that there was a minimum age of 24 before an application could be permitted.

## **Contacting her Family**

Having some contact with her parents and her brothers was a comfort to Jane. When she tried to send messages to her family in her sophomore year, Jane got a gruff message from someone named “Jim” saying she was sending too many messages. It said, “One message per month, or no messages at all.” Jane decided to send a message on the 20th of each month. It was easy to remember since her birthday was May 20th.

After a while, things got better for her family. Her parents, Robert and Ruth, got better “jobs.” Robert was now managing a small business establishment. Ruth had a job at a slave “orphanage” that cared for children who were considered of value but did not have parents that were permitted to care for them. It was an unpleasant establishment, and Ruth did her best to help as many children as she could. All of them needed much more care and attention than the team of helpers could provide.

In the spring of her junior year, all contact from her family stopped. Jane was heartbroken. She asked Mr. Mitchell for help. He did a search using their slave numbers and determined that they were all alive and still in the same place. Every few weeks, he repeated the search and got the same results. She ached for some way to reach out and help them, to pull them from their awful situation.

## Applying to College

During the junior year of high school, most college-bound students start learning about the different post-high school education opportunities available to them. The range of opportunities is always based on financial reality, student interest, geographic considerations, and many, many other factors. Some preliminary forms are filled out. The family goes through a rigorous financial examination.

Jane could not apply directly to college. Jane discovered that she needed to start communicating with families that would want to purchase an educated slave as a companion for their son or daughter at the college of *their choice*. This was much more like applying for a job than applying for college. A family wanted personality, academics, compatibility with their kid, and excellent teaching experience. Jane's main job would be to attend classes with her new owner, and later help her new owner make sense of the classroom material. A slave could also help a college student cope with complex social interactions, attend meetings or events that freed up the owner for other activities. Depending on the situation, the slave might also be an intimate companion.

Jane made a short video of her friends attending math and science classes and then going over the material with them afterward. She tried to show herself to be a good tutor without giving out any answers. She tried to be professional, but not boring. It was tricky to get the right approach.

Jane worked hard on a major essay selling herself as a “college companion.” With Mr. Mitchell's help, this material was placed on an open data file that was available to anyone searching for someone with her profile.

During the summer, Jane used a camera to document her way of leading some of the study sessions. She decided that a tape of a long study session was more interesting than the highly



edited tape she had previously made. It was so hard to figure out how to advertise yourself for sale. She kept hoping that Mr. Mitchell would not lose any money on her.

Jane knew that each day brought her closer to being a High School Graduate. She knew that she would be purchased by somebody far away who would plunge her into a new world totally different than her own. She found herself reading books, essays, and poems by those who had to venture into very new experiences all by themselves. Many people in history had left their communities and taken a ship across an ocean to travel to a new land all by themselves. These stories brought her sadness and strength.

She had lost her immediate family in a horrifying night raid on her house. Now she was losing everything else, but especially the community that she had helped construct, and which was constructed around her. To lose Rose was unbearable. To lose everyone else was unthinkable. Yet, she knew that a new family, a new education, and a new life was waiting. There was little she could do to control it. In fact, the only thing she could do to control it was to try and learn about different potential purchasers and attempt to market herself better to anyone she preferred. Jane knew that this was discouraged. She tried to craft her “promotional material” in a way that might attract the kind of people she wanted. It was all a gamble. Her destiny was outside of her control.

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# Chapter 4: The Senior Year and Eventual Sale

## A Quiet Start to the Year

Jane's class held their breath at the start of the senior year. There had been so many shocking events over the past two years; no one could believe that there could be a straightforward school year for Jane's senior year.

But there were no more deaths, court cases, cheating scandals, crazy antics, or life-changing gossip. There was not much to report. Most of the students focused on college applications. There was always idle talk about the senior prom. But life went on for the seniors.

There were no problems in English class. Mrs. Blair was very professional. She admired the hard work of her seniors and was amazed by their intelligence and their creativity. In essays and poems, they reflected on the loss of Rose and other important themes that touched their lives.

Jane just sailed through the year. She was able to take two math courses in her senior year and edge past Deb to be the valedictorian. But there were a few other things that happened that year. In the fall, most of the seniors took the SAT. Jane got a score high enough to apply to the best colleges.

Christmas brought the now annual *Rose Chang Memorial Christmas Party*. This year it almost organized itself. Jane was surprised to find that many women in town had figured out the most popular pant sizes and had already altered dozens of pants to fit slaves who had to wear restraints. Volunteers who helped put on the affair were impressed at how the slaves were cleaner, better groomed, better dressed, and in better health than last year.

It seemed that everyone recognized that slaves that were treated better had a better attitude and did more work. This was true both in theory and in practice. All of the slaves appreciated looking and smelling their best. Jane started to realize that many changes in attitude were self-sustaining. Knowing this brought her some much-needed strength and insight about how to improve people's lives.

## Re-engineering the World

In February, there was an amazing presentation in the high school. The juniors and the seniors all went to the auditorium. A visitor, who did not give his name, gave a presentation. He said he was a re-engineer.

He described the great financial collapse as happening at the end of a period of great technological innovation. This collapse was very severe and caused great suffering. When it

appeared that a nation of small workshops was going to help bring technology back, waves of suffering occurred as larger corporations destroyed the small workshops that were building back the economy.

He said, “The problems were so severe that right now, historians have been arguing as to whether there were two or three great collapses of the economy.” He went on to describe how hard it was to bring back the old technology. Software required a key from specific websites. He had to give a vague description so that the students could understand the word “website.” Phones were made with glass covers with very clever mixes of ingredients that were secret then and secret now. Chips could be salvaged, but not enough had been constructed in factories.

The thrust of the presentation was that the true nature of the loss of technology had been kept well hidden. There was a crying need for people to dedicate themselves to learn from the past and bring a new facet of the past into our present. He said, “This task is called ‘re-engineering.’ If you are interested, you will find financial sponsors if you tell people you want to be part of *re-engineering the world*.”

Jane asked, “What is the current status of Microsoft software?” The presenter seemed confused and did not recognize the word “Microsoft.” Jane decided to keep her mouth shut. She correctly guessed that the books about the last 50 years of technology were totally prohibited, and not even available to specialists.

Jane asked Mr. Mitchell about these books in his library. While being very cagey, he did say there is no way he could have them ever leave his house. Jane asked if she could re-read them, taking careful notes. Mr. Mitchell said, “No problem, be my guest.” And he meant that literally. Jane spent the night many extra times so that she could construct timelines, product categories, and technology descriptions. She knew that this information was valuable. But she had no idea of how soon it would prove useful.

## **Senior Prom in May**

The Senior Prom was supposed to be the big event of the year. For Jane, she was finding herself not interested in it at all. Emily said, “We need you to go. We can use the Prom photos for your sales material.” Jane rented a new dress, got all made up and had her hair done. She went with another high school student, a junior. She found someone who was very bright and needed some encouragement. For the evening, they were a dashing pair. Once again, Jane was perfect and beautiful for the dance. All she could think was, “I am doing this so that I can be sold as if I was a piece of fancy furniture.”

## **Valedictorian Speech**

Jane's valedictorian speech was printed in the newspaper and became famous years later. Here we just offer a summary:

Of course, I want to thank the school board, the school administration, and all the assembled for the honor and privilege of giving this speech.

I want to thank my owners, and especially Charles Mitchell for his undertaking the initial investment in me. I want to thank all my friends who have assisted me in my education and fulfilling all the complex rules under which I must live.

I would like to offer you an analogy of my odd position here before you. Let us imagine that there was a device like a stock ticker that offered my value weekly or daily. Let us imagine that speculators were allowed to gamble on my progress through these high school years. Speculators would be willing to invest money now to reap a future increase in value. As I understand it, over \$15,000 has been spent on my behalf over the last three school years. Because of this investment in meals, shelter, clothing, books, extra tutoring, and restraining gear, I have become the person you see before you. You, my fellow students, by fortune's lucky chance, are free of slavery. Therefore, you lack the power of the marketplace to invest in you. I have flourished, and you have not had these advantages. How can we offer the advantages of the slave to the free?

But if we are all judged by dollars and cents, what have we become? The flip side of this story is that my life is now in the hands of others. I find this offensive. My life here has been good due to my friends and ownership partnership. My future life could be miserable or wonderful all based on who buys me and why.

I face a wild new world; mine is clearly more uncertain than yours. But all of us face a transition to a new life. Once we enter that new life, we will rarely look back, except in moments of quiet reflection when we ask ourselves how we became the people we are today.

Our class dealt with many hardships last year. We lost Rose Chang and Stephen Ratte. We became separated from all of the teachers who had years of experience teaching the juniors of Warren Ohio. But we have faced these hardships and issues together. We are stronger for it. I predict that our class will have a large impact on this world. We know how to help each other at times when things look very bad.

The most meaningful parts of my life in high school have been when I have helped others. I call for a life of service for all of the people we live with, regardless of their status or level.

In ancient times, a very wise man asked two questions: If we are not doing things for ourselves, who will? If we are only for ourselves, what are we?

Here is the end of the summary of Jane's speech. The speech was met with loud applause.

## **Planning Jane's Sale**

Jane met weekly with Mr. Mitchell. During the last part of the senior year, more and more meetings also included Emily Mitchell, Mr. Mitchell's niece. Eventually, Jane learned that Emily would be partnering with Mr. Mitchell to handle Jane's sale. Mr. Mitchell finally said, "You can

call me Charles. You do not have to call me Mr. Mitchell anymore.” It was one sign that Charles was getting fond of Jane and was concerned for her future.

Emily argued that the ideal situation would be to get a small number of bidders who were very connected to Jane, to get them invested in the idea of purchasing her. Jane very much wanted to meet each potential purchaser. She wanted some idea of what was happening to her.

Jane suggested that they try to identify the top five bidders. Perhaps asking who would be willing to offer a minimum of \$280,000 and transfer \$30,000 for a refundable deposit. If you get more than five bidders, raise the numbers until you have five bidders. At that point, ask for the deposits, and schedule a week for the actual sale. Offer each bidder a full day to talk to us, and then the two of you can facilitate the final bidding and sale. Jane added, “I, for one, would not want to be in the room when the actual sale happens. Of course, if it were required, I would be there; but do not ask me to do this unless you need me to be present.”

Charles and Emily agreed that a lengthy personal visit and a large deposit to limit the bidding pool would be the ingredients to inspire a bidding war. They both thanked Jane for her insight into the issue of her sale. Jane explained that she was hoping to be able to interact with the bidders, and thus have some indirect say in what happened to her. That this might increase her value was just an interesting coincidence. Emily said that five bidders seemed like a perfect number for her. We could schedule Monday through Friday for “personal inspections,” and then hold the final sale on that Saturday.

Emily and Charles initially asked who could put a deposit of \$35,000 for an opening bid of \$290,000. They got twelve positive replies. They eventually raised the deposit to \$40,000 and the opening bid to \$360,000. The sale week was to be in two weeks. Two weeks gave the bidders time to travel to Warren Ohio. The events would all take place at the best hotel in town. By paying a slightly higher fee, a bidder could be scheduled for Thursday or Friday. The lowest fee bidder would have their “inspection” on Monday. Charles did say that each of the bidders had indicated that they wanted Jane to be a companion to a son or daughter for college. This was implied by the high prices being discussed, but it was a great relief for Jane to hear this now confirmed.

## **A Two-Week Interlude**

Jane spent the next two weeks with her friends. There were many tears and much laughter. The end was in sight. All of Jane's friends had Jane's full serial number. Charles said that there would be a clause in the sale contract requiring free electronic mail interaction between Jane and her summer school partners.

During one dinner, Sarah said, “Jane, you are very clever. Someday you will win or buy your freedom. We will rejoice by holding the biggest feast ever held in this town. I only wish I could schedule the date right now. I now raise a glass of wine for Jane's moment of freedom. Everyone, fill your cup and drink with me right now!” Cries of “here, here!” filled the room as every glass was drained.

Jane decided that the last night that she would sleep with Danny would be a week before she went on sale. She held him tight as much as she could during that last week, and they said their sweet goodbyes. This had to be the bitterest moment for a slave, to have to say goodbye to the love of their life.

No matter what anyone could do or say, time did not stay still. On a Sunday night, Jane, Emily, and Charles occupied one of the biggest Business Suites in *The Big Hotel*. While this may seem like an odd name to the reader, that was the actual name of the fanciest hotel in Warren.

The room was called a Business Suite because there were four separate beds. The beds all folded up for the day, either tipped up into the wall or folded into couches. The room looked like a medium-sized business office during the day.

## Monday and the Lin Family

Monday was interesting. The Lin family came into the hotel suite at about 9:30 am. They quickly looked Jane over. The mother wanted to know why she was not chained up in the corner of the room. Emily tried to avoid this, but mom was insistent. Emily walked with Jane to the corner of the room and chained Jane's leg to a fixed anchor in the floor.

The daughter, Ann, was fairly quiet. She wanted a “college slave,” since most of her friends also had a “college slave.” It was not clear what Jane was wanted for, or what would happen when Ann lost interest in having a “college slave.” Jane thought that if Ann wanted to buy a new condo or a very fancy car, she would sell Jane to raise the money.

The whole family was very high-handed. They did not seem to be thinking or treating Jane as if she were a human being. The mom asked Emily, “How long could we chain Jane up in the corner like that before we have a problem.” It was not clear if she was referring to death, injury, sleep, or the need to use the bathroom. Emily looked confused and said, “I think it is not recommended that you chain a slave in any one spot for more than two hours. For nighttime, you need to negotiate the arrangements and the facilities. We have a booklet about these issues that we will provide with the sale. I am certain that we can also get it translated into Mandarin.”

They did not seem too interested in Jane's academic achievements. They just wanted Jane's SAT score, and they wanted that verified and notarized.

There were exhaustive questions about Jane's health records. While Charles and Emily provided copies of everything, it appeared that nothing was enough for them. It was not clear what they were looking for in the health records.

There were very embarrassing questions about Jane's sexual history. She tried to answer each question correctly; she cried as she answered many of the questions. There were too many raw emotions about leaving Danny behind. And then to try to address this relationship as if it were an exercise in biology or a medical exam was too much to bear.

At one point, the grandmother said something in Mandarin, and the mom said, "Please have her take off all of her clothes, please." Jane took off her shirt, skirt, and underwear. The grandmother came over to Jane and looked her all over. Jane remembered that there was a discussion about her in a language that she did not understand. Jane was glad when she could get her clothes on again. She noticed that Ann had not paid much attention to the body examination. "I suppose that is a good sign," thought Jane.

After lunch, Jane and Ann took a walk around the neighborhood. Of course, Ann held her leash. Jane tried to relax as much as possible. Jane did her best to be pleasant and find what caught Ann's interest. She did not open up on anything. This was all too much of a mystery.

Jane had thought that she could figure out whether a bidder was "good" or "bad" fairly easily. Then she could behave in subtle ways to either encourage or discourage high bidding. She thought that she could "choose" the winner that way.

But the Lin family made this approach difficult. If Ann truly wanted a college slave through graduation, Jane would also graduate. But Jane could not figure out what they desired in a slave. Without that information, Jane was confused as to how to modify her behavior. Perhaps her confusion might be the subtle turn-off that would discourage them. But what if the Lin family was the best there was? Shouldn't Jane try her best then to be bought by the Lin family?

Jane cried for an hour that night, and then gently fell to sleep.

## **Tuesday and the McNamara Family**

The McNamara family seemed to be in the oil business. It was clear that they wanted a sexual partner for their son Daryl in college. They did not seem interested in seeing Jane get further educated. It was unclear what would happen to Jane after college.

The dad made it clear that the family was interested in making sure that their son had no "women problems" in college and thus could focus on his studies. At one point, the dad said, "If Daryl calls home crying about anything in college, I'll whip you within an inch of your life." Then he laughed, and added, "But you are such a sweet thing, I am certain that would never happen."

Jane explained her personal history. She told the story of herself and Danny. By the time she was halfway through it, she was crying uncontrollably. Jane noticed tiny smiles on Emily's and Charles' faces as she started to cry.

Jane was certain that her crying spell would put an end to their interest. After lunch, Daryl and Jane did a neighborhood walk. It was clear to Jane that he was a bit careless as he walked. He often seemed to be bumping Jane into objects or pulling too hard on the leash.

After the walk, the family did ask for Jane to take off her clothes. By now, she was getting used to this. The whole family smiled when she was naked. Jane cupped her hand over the parts that she did not want to be exposed. By the time Jane got her clothes back on, Jane had noticed that the Dad was not smiling anymore. Jane slept well that night.

## Wednesday and the Hassan Family

The Hassan family seemed to have come from the Middle-East at some point, probably many generations ago. The son was named Amir. It was hard to figure him out. Before he could say or do anything, his mother was yelling at him. She called him stupid and said he would never amount to anything.

Jane listened as carefully as she could for clues. There was a large family business. Many branches of the family helped run the business. She learned that there was no one else but Amir in his branch of the family. Jane figured out that Amir's father had been cast out by his own father. Amir's parents were being supported by his uncles, who did inherit a large share of the company. If Amir could major in business and then get a Master's Degree in business, there would be a very large role for him in the family business.

This news broke Jane's heart. She loved math and science. The idea that she would have to attend every business class that Amir did was painful to hear. But then she wondered if she wanted to be Ann's pet girl or Daryl's four-year prostitute. How bad could Business School be? Besides, she might be able to borrow books from the school library, talk to students and professors, and find other ways to continue her interests besides attending classes.

It became clear that the job for Jane was to be an almost full-time teacher. After a quick brunch, she was told that they had prepared a complicated multi-hour challenge for Jane. She was to teach Amir a lesson on statistics. Jane said, "I know virtually nothing about statistics. How can I do that?" They said, "This is not a problem. We have prepared a challenge for you to mimic a day in college. We have a professor of Statistics with us, and he will take over from here."

Professor Johnson introduced himself. He said, "I have a video of a one-hour statistics lesson that I am going to show to Amir. Afterward, he will take a 30-minute test. While this is going on, Jane may study this textbook, paying close attention to chapter 2 and the beginning of chapter 3. I will explain what to do after that."

Jane was asked to lock herself in the bathroom with the textbook, a pad of paper, and some pens. A piece of tape was placed on the outside of the door. If Jane tried to open the door by even the tiniest crack, they would know about it. Jane decided to skim both sections, spending about 10 minutes for each scan. Then she carefully timed herself and rationed her time to try desperately to learn the key concepts in as short amount of time as possible. The actual math was not too difficult, but the strain of trying to do the impossible in such a short time was making her sick. She learned about calculating least squares on data and other basic ideas of gathering statistics.

After 90 minutes, she was allowed out of the bathroom. After a short bathroom break for everyone, Amir and his mom went out for an hour walk, while Jane watched the video. She was allowed to have access to the textbook and her notes during the video. Jane kept wondering, "What are they trying to measure? This was interesting. But why waste time showing us the same video separately?"



When the video was over, Amir and his mom came back. Jane had less than one hour to help Amir learn the essential ideas of what was in the video. Then they were going to give him a slightly tougher test. Jane looked at her watch and did the best she could to focus on getting the essential lessons across. She was glad that Amir was very good at communicating what was difficult for him and why he was having problems. The hour flew by. Jane barely noticed that Emily, Charles, and Amir's family were intently watching Jane give a lesson under exceptionally trying conditions.

When the buzzer rang out, Jane was asked to take a walk with Emily for 30 minutes. They did not want Jane to give any signals, even with her facial expression that would help Amir. When the 30 minutes was over, everyone had a grand late lunch at the hotel restaurant. Mr. Johnson arrived a few minutes later and said that Jane's lesson had raised Amir's grade from a D to a B+. He was very clear about saying that the second test was much tougher than the first test. He said, "I am very impressed with Jane."

After the Hassan family had excused themselves, Jane realized they were the first bidder that did not ask to see her naked. She decided that this was a good sign.

Jane slept very well that night. Under the circumstances, she barely knew how she could have discouraged the Hassan family. While she was still concerned about Amir, his mom, and everyone's intentions, it was clear that her role would be that of a personal tutor. She would have to attend all of Amir's classes as well and would become a college graduate. She wondered who had the most money and who was the most interested in buying her. Only time will tell.

## **Thursday and the Carter Family**

Mike Carter was the nephew of Roger Carter, the famous software guru. His company was known for many of the most commonly-used computer applications. Roger did not have any children of his own. He was trying to further his legacy through his nephew.

The problem was that Roger's brother (Mike's dad) was not happy about this attention and money lavished on his son. There were a lot of arguments about all sorts of issues that had nothing to do with Mike or Jane.

The family asked questions that were all over the map. Perhaps they knew what Jane's game was. They seemed to be deliberately switching subjects all over the place. An employee filmed all of the interactions and was taking careful notes.

The scrambled questions disoriented Jane. She had no idea what her role would be, and what she would be doing with Mike. Perhaps there was so much money in this family that they did not need a reason to buy Jane. They would just do it. They seemed to have enough money to outbid anyone. Jane finally realized that she was getting to talk to a level one person. She was one of only a few slaves that answered questions and got to talk to someone from level one.

At the lunch break, they went to the hotel restaurant. Jane ended up sitting between Roger and Emily. Roger was very friendly and asked Jane lots of questions about how she went about

learning things. Jane quickly explained how they set up the summer school program. She explained that a group of students had committed themselves to making sure that she was able to take an academic program.

Somehow the topic of older technology came up. Roger seemed amazed that Jane knew about websites, web programming, and common issues of two generations ago. Roger just said, “Do not try to tell me you learned all this in your high school classes.” Jane said, “No, I picked it up from some books that somehow escaped destruction.” Roger just said, “I would love for you to be working for my company. If you are ever put on the labor market, send me a message. I would prefer to be the one that hires you.” Jane thought that was very tactful language considering her status in society.

Jane was sure that the Carter family would end up buying her. She thought that they had paid a premium to see her on Thursday. They would have a full day to review the film and their notes and memories. She was certain that the Carter family would buy her. Once the bidding started, how could anyone compete with a billionaire? She had many dreams of being the slave of a level one person.

## **Friday and the Harrison Family**

The Harrison family was the final bidder. The daughter was named Jane Harrison. Jane thought, “Jane and Jane; I like that.” But then the dad said, “Of course, we would need to change her name. Of course, we will ask for her preference.” Jane Harrison was the daughter of a powerful banker. They were interested in having her do well in college.

Jane started bracing herself for another four-hour statistics lesson. But they just asked her informally about how she learns, and how she teaches others. They did not want a live test. Emily did describe what Jane did on Wednesday. This impressed everyone.

It was clear that Jane was looking for a “roommate situation” with some help on difficult topics. The focus of the family was on her personality and whether she could mix well with rich and cultured people. Jane got the impression that well-dressed slaves with excellent educations often mixed socially with the upper classes. What a change from the poor slaves she helped in the two charity events that she had helped organize!

Half of the day was spent with the two Janes. They easily talked about all sorts of topics. It was clear that they would do very well together. The slave Jane wondered if somehow they were long lost twins, but that did not make sense. They did not look alike at all.

At every meal, the parents seemed to be watching Jane Foreman carefully. Jane guessed that they were making sure that she had good table manners and knew which fork to use. Jane was glad for all the different meals that she had over the years at the Mitchell house. He had subtly taught excellent table manners. The Harrison family looked pleased with Jane, and they appeared to be willing to open up their wallet to buy her.

## Jane is Sold

Jane did not want to be in the room when the bidding took place. The bidding took place in a medium-sized room in the hotel. Jane was brought in by Emily. All the families were there. Emily took Jane to the front of the room. Emily asked if anyone had any last questions for Jane. No one said anything. Emily asked if Jane had any questions. Jane shook her head no. Emily took Jane back to the suite and locked her up.

Charles and Emily ran the auction. The bidding lasted only twelve minutes. Emily came upstairs to tell her that the Hassan family had purchased her for the incredible price of \$440,000. Mr. Mitchell was so pleased with how things turned out that he was increasing the amounts the families of her friends would get. Deb's family would get \$8,000, the rest of the families would get \$3,000, and Rose's family would get an additional donation of \$5,000.

Mr. Mitchell had to use the hours left in the day to process the Hassan family payment. He had to initiate the return of the other families' deposits. There were contracts to sign and a lot of formal steps to turn her over to her new owners and prepare her for travel to their home. Quietly, Emily asked Jane where she wanted to stay until Tuesday morning, the earliest when all the paperwork and payments would be finished.

Jane thought for a while and said that she would like to stay at Sarah's house. She wanted Emily to tell people that she mostly wanted to spend her time alone, to listen to music, to read and write some poetry. Jane said, "I have said my goodbyes. I just want some time to think about all of this."

Emily then asked what Jane wanted to have written in the final contract. Jane said, "I want to be able to communicate freely with my friends from high school and with Danny. I want to be able to travel to the Hassan house with all of my books, papers, and possessions. Once there, I can sort and get rid of what I do not need. I would like the right to store some of my things at the Hassan house if the apartment or room at the college is too small. If at all possible, I want to be free of insurance and restraints in college. I do not mind the occasional leash, but I do mind leg shackles."

Emily said, "The only way to avoid leg shackles is not to be insured. The only way to avoid insurance is for Charles to offer his personal guarantee. Do you know what this means?" Jane shook her head to say, "No." Emily said, "You must swear to Charles and to me in the most sacred and sincere way that you will never escape. You will also need to wear a permanent location device on your collar." Jane said, "I will never escape, but if I did, I would go straight to Mr. Mitchell's house to be with Danny."

Emily got livid. She yelled, "If you ever say that again, you will go to a place where you will never see daylight again. You can say you miss Danny terribly. You can write poems that break the hearts of millions, but you can never, ever make a joke about escape. That cannot ever happen."

Jane started to cry. She realized that this might be the last time she talked to Emily, and it all came to such a low moment. Jane fell to the floor and rocked back and forth saying “I’m sorry, I’m sorry. Please forgive me.”

Emily added, “All of your things are at Charles’ house. I will get you to the bathroom, and we have many things to do in the next two hours. I know what to add to the contract. We will all do the best that we can for you.”

Emily was right. There were many things to do. The Hassan family accepted Mr. Mitchell’s personal guarantee for Jane. There was little for Jane to do for the next few days. She wrote some poems. She talked quietly to Sarah about how little she knew about the future. Sarah kept telling Jane how brave she was. Jane just said, “If I am so brave, why is it so hard to get myself to my feet every day? I just feel scared.”

At one point of quiet reflection, Jane wrote about how she would be free of all of the restraint devices not required by law. She would get this additional freedom because of Mr. Mitchell’s personal guarantee. She realized that the decision to insure her body was a decision that Mr. Mitchell had made. Jane began to wonder if he had deliberately insured her to prod her friends to come to her aid. While this thought did not anger her, she decided to pay much more attention to the decisions that people make and the reasons they are made. She also noticed that the laws on slavery were structured to make it easy to run an entire factory with slaves, but difficult to own just one or two. She began to suspect that the laws of the nation were written to favor the very wealthy.

On Tuesday morning at 11 AM, a small bus pulled up to Mr. Mitchell’s house. Danny’s father brought out four cardboard boxes of Jane’s possessions and three suitcases of her clothes. Sarah walked Jane down the driveway and put her into the bus. Jane could not bear to be inside of Mr. Mitchell’s house, even for a second. Everyone respected this and made sure she got this simple wish. She was put into slave restraints. She knew this was the law for all slaves who were passengers in vehicles and had nothing to do with the personal preference of the Hassan family.

All of Jane’s friends and some of her teachers were on the sidewalk, waving at the bus, as it slowly went down the driveway to the city that was the headquarters for the Hassan family business.

Jane’s new life was starting right now.

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# Chapter 5: A New Life in College

## The Summer before Going to College

The Hassan bus arrived at a cluster of large houses, each with plenty of land, all arranged around a small lake. Jane was miserable from traveling for two days from the community where she had been born and raised. Like most people, she had rarely traveled, and when she did, it was to a place that was not far from home.

Now she was far from home in the Atlanta area. She was not sure what she would do with herself for an entire summer. She was given a small room for her things, a small desk, a dresser, and not much else. There was a small window in the room. Jane smiled when she realized that there were no bars on the window. She quickly learned that while this room was for her things, she was only to use the room when she needed to pick out clothes, store dirty clothes until laundry time, or do some private studying.

She was expected to be in the common rooms of the house most of the time. She was expected to assist with cooking, but not as the primary cook. She was expected to spend most of her time in Amir's suite. This was a large room, with a double bed and a few tables and desks. Amir moved a couch into his room for Jane to sleep on. He sensed that asking Jane to share his bed was not a good idea. There was also a bathroom she could share with Amir, giving Jane privacy from the rest of the family.

The family dynamics were complicated. Amir's mother Pamela was very difficult. Her constant refrain was that Amir was worthless and would never amount to anything. Yet she encouraged Amir in so many ways. She helped arrange the loan from the extended family to pay for Amir's education and his slave. It appeared to Jane that Pamela was proud of what Amir had accomplished. It was hard to figure out why she thought that the best way to launch Amir into being an accomplished businessman was to berate him constantly and tell him that he was totally worthless.

Jane decided that job one for her that summer was to invent ways for her to have private time with Amir away from Pamela. But even this bored Jane a lot. There were stacks of business magazines in the corner of one of the main common rooms. This was the room that Amir's wealthy uncles used when they came over to talk business.

Jane started to read through the business magazines. One of the biggest topics was the constant flow of new technology companies. About 85% failed within five years or so. A few became very wealthy companies. Jane started to match the technologies against what she learned from Mr. Mitchell's books. Some of the magazines were old; some were recent. She was surprised that she saw many patterns between success and failure with the state of similar technologies from "before the first collapse."

Jane started to talk to Amir about what she had learned. She had a unique set of keys to understanding the status of technologies. Amir was very skeptical. Jane showed all her notes and details she had obtained from Mr. Mitchell's books. She described how even an expert on re-engineering was unfamiliar with the word "Microsoft."

Jane arranged for a way to test her knowledge. Amir found some business magazines that had been in a locked storeroom. Jane asked for Amir to film their "test." He read capsule descriptions of the formations of new technology businesses. Jane looked through her notebooks and then announced whether the company was a winner or a loser. She usually was able to rate the chances on a scale of 0-10.

After going through 20 different companies, they looked up their five-year chart on the computer. Jane had pretty much aced the test. Amir looked like someone had punched him in the stomach. He played the video over again and after each prediction, he asked Jane how exactly she came to her conclusion. It took her a while to teach how her notebooks worked. She was able to use the information about how that technology worked against its competition in the past to how that technology would work in the present era. Sometimes the names of the financial groups that backed a company in the present era were a clue. Sometimes the announcement of certain types of stock offerings was a clue that "insiders" were expecting a big increase in stock prices soon. Amir asked about the names of the books that Jane had seen. Amir thought if he asked about all of the books all at once, it might get him in trouble. By making indirect inquiries, he found that these books were not in any list of "known books."

Over and over again, Amir asked the sequence of events by which she, a simple slave, held the keys to financial mastery. She explained how Mr. Mitchell had a collection of very rare books that were clearly forbidden. Somehow, it amused him that his slave was drawn to these books and was able to sense their power. For all Jane knew, Mr. Mitchell arranged for that mystery visitor who knew about re-engineering but never knew about Microsoft Corporation. Jane showed that many schools and programs were named for Bill Gates, but the history was blank as to who he was and what he had done.

The problem was that Amir had no money to invest. But he did manage to talk his uncles into letting him borrow \$250,000 of the fund for his college and graduate school education for the summer. The one condition was, "Do not put this money in the stock market."

Amir and Jane were constantly studying every business magazine they could find. They explained that Jane had worked out a special challenge to learn major business concepts by carefully reading business magazines from beginning to end. The family thought these kids should just relax and have a good summer. There would be plenty of time for business school once fall arrived.

Amir and Jane worked out a list of 15 companies in which to invest. Amir set up a stock account with all of the money. Most of the time, they invested all of "their" funds. It was hard since they needed to return the money at the end of the summer. Of the 15 companies, they lost it all on five companies, did so-so on 4, and did well on the other 6. But one company went up very, very much. By the time the summer was over, Amir had returned \$260,000. His uncles asked about

the extra \$10,000. He just said that he made a little bit of money over the summer and wanted to split it with his uncles who made it possible. They said, “We are just glad that you did not lose it all. Keep the \$10,000. And we will not tell your parents that you made \$20,000. They would just worry about risk-taking. We are just happy it was never in the stock market.”

Amir and Jane were by now full business partners. In reality, they made \$210,000 above the college fund they returned to Amir's uncles. This was possible with Jane's insights, but Amir refined many aspects of their procedures. He had a sense of risk control and helped Jane understand some of the trends in recent technologies since he had been reading current business publications in his home since he was a small boy.

## **Calls from Home**

For a slave, using a phone was rare. Technically, it was not allowed, but in practice, it was just prohibited if the owner did not allow it. Jane got many phone calls from her friends from high school. They all wanted to know how she was doing and if she was happy. Jane was busy beyond belief and just said, “I am perfectly fine. I am busier than I will ever be in my life. Please wait until college so that I can talk more.” None of her friends would believe her. They all thought that she was in deep trouble.

Jane wrote a computer message to all of her friends. She told them, “I am happy and involved in a very big project that I cannot describe. I am sharing the work with my new owner, Amir Hassan, of whom I am quite fond. I am very well treated. I hope everyone who reads this is having as good a summer as I am having. Please trust me if I just say that I am very busy.” Jane's close friends tried to decode Jane's words. Jane was not using any of the code words they had all agreed on which would have allowed Jane to say that she needed help. Summer was the playtime between high school and college. What kind of project could be so involving and so secret? It did not sound legal.

## **The Transition to College**

Just before leaving for college, Amir purchased a used car for \$3,000. Amir's parents thought the money came from Amir's uncles. The uncles thought the money came from the \$20,000 that Amir said he made that summer. Amir's uncles gave Amir a good sum of money before he left, even though they knew that Amir had a fair amount of money. They just said, “We are proud of you and want to make sure you do not need to dip into your savings for basic living expenses.” It was hard for Amir to assert his independence at this point in his life.

Jane left quite a few things in her “room” at the Hassan house. They packed their things into the car, barely allowing room for two people to squeeze into it. They drove away to Georgia Tech, their new school.

They also took care of their money. Now Jane needed to make sure that she had better access to the money. Jane arranged to ship their entire savings account to Charles Mitchell as a short-term “loan.” They converted all of their stock holdings into actual stock certificates. Once at school,

they opened new accounts that were joint accounts. The loan was repaid to the new joint account. It would have been difficult to add a slave to Amir's accounts. But creating a new account and sliding assets into it went under the radar. Theoretically, Jane could sign a bank draft all by herself that would make someone rich. But of course, every aspect of their business was a joint affair. But if Amir were tied up, Jane had the right and the credentials to move large sums of money all by herself.

Amir and Jane had told their family that they were renting a small two bedroom apartment. They considered renting a larger apartment but decided to stick to what they discussed. They ordered some inexpensive furniture for the apartment: a double bed, a small table, two small dressers, and two desks. Amir's desk was larger than Jane's since it had the computer.

Amir and Jane had planned to sleep together in college. It was too stressful to sleep together at Amir's parents' house. They were both looking forward to sleeping together. Their frantic summer of making the best of the \$250,000 of seed capital was a 24-hour exhausting activity. Now that their money was on track, and they were not living with family, their new life together was beginning.

Classes were the rhythms of the day. They got up, made a quick breakfast, got dressed, and headed off to class. Sometimes they used the car, especially if the first class was on the far side of the campus. Mostly, they walked. By now, Amir and Jane were experts at walking quickly together using a leash. Most of the time, Amir slipped the leash around his wrist, and they held hands as they rushed across campus.

It was a point of pride for Amir that he did not need Jane's help to handle his coursework. Jane was diligent to learn everything. Jane and Amir constantly talked about their coursework. Amir learned a lot of material through informal discussions with Jane. Sometimes Jane learned something from Amir. Sometimes they were competitive; sometimes they were silly. Unlike high school, Jane did not get a grade. College was expensive. Jane, as a slave of a college student, was auditing courses for 15% of full tuition. There were some restrictions. In crowded classes, the owner had to be in the front row, with the slave sitting on the floor. But the slave auditing courses could not take tests or get a grade. Jane did not mind. She felt her job was to help Amir obtain good grades. In her mind, his grade became her grade. If Amir made a mistake on a test, Jane would say, "I cannot believe I made that mistake." Then they would laugh at how silly that sounded.

Besides the purchase price, having a slave in college was relatively inexpensive. Tuition was cheap, and housing could be shared. It was legal to economize on food and clothing for a slave. Other expenses were minimal.

It was a bit of a status symbol to have a "college slave." Many people made jokes about trying to date students who had same-gender slaves. The punch line was always "two for the price of one." There were also jokes about people who had opposite-gender slaves. They did not seem to need an outside social life. And that was true for Amir and Jane. They had a satisfying personal relationship. Amir and Jane attended many college social events, but they did that for enjoyment, not to find a partner. It should be pointed out that these comments about Slave/Owner Teams in



College are based on the assumption that none is gay. Once one or both members of the team are gay, the possible combinations and possible social partnerships require a more complex analysis than can be offered in this narrative.

Jane started a campus organization for the owner/slave teams on campus called *The Team of Teams*. Once a month, they had a party with food, drink, and dancing. There was always some discussion or presentation before the party. Of course, close partners and friends were always welcome. There were modest dues. Jane and Amir made sure the organization never ran short of funds.

## **A Gold Collar**

Jane wanted a gold collar. A slave with a gold collar was much more useful than one without a gold collar. She was too young; the rules said you needed to be 24 before you could apply for one. Jane suspected that there had to be some exception that was well hidden except for the well-connected. She called Emily Mitchell and asked what the exceptions were. Emily said, "There is one exception. If you get a letter of endorsement from a level one person, you and Amir can make an early application."

During her sale, Jane had met a level one person. Jane wrote a letter of application to Roger Carter. She got his address from one of the business magazines she had. She wrote a cover letter that explained that she fondly remembered his consideration of her when she was placed on sale. She wrote how much she could help her owner by being able to go to the library or do errands without requiring him to follow her footsteps. Amir also wrote and requested his signature. Jane and Amir were amazed when they got a signed document from the world-famous Roger Carter. He attached a note wishing them well. The application contained an encrypted code that allowed authorities to authenticate the document via computer.

Amir and Jane went with their documents to a slave processing center. The workers were very careful to run about eight different checks that Jane and Amir were the people named in the documents. They were photographed numerous times. They did many computer checks to see if there was any negative information on file for either of them. They did ask about Jane asking a question at the TV station. Jane just said, "I did as my master ordered me to do."

There were several models of gold collars. They chose one made of steel, thickly plated with nickel, with the nickel thinly plated with gold. The gold was micro-covered with a transparent plastic that was guaranteed to last for decades. It had the standard loops for electronic modules and leash/chain connections. The removal of the old collar was long and brutal. Special tools were needed to cut off the old steel collar, which was made of ultra-hardened steel. Jane had to wear a large apparatus that circulated chilled water. Jane was frozen and semi-burnt at the same time. It took two hours to remove the old collar. The new collar was attached using an automatic welding machine. Jane wore a shield to protect her from melting metal. The welding was quick. Burnishing down the joint and fixing the plating and plastic casing took over an hour.

Altogether, it took most of the day to switch collars. Jane remarked, "It felt like I was in surgery to replace an important body part." But now she had a gleaming gold collar. Jane had walked

into the slave processing center in shackles and a leash. She left with a gold collar and a bag containing the now unneeded restraints. Many slaves clapped and cheered as they saw her leave with a gold collar. She could now travel independently around campus and could enhance her work on projects for herself and others.

## **Jane's Agenda**

Jane's most important “job” was to attend classes, understand all of the material, and make sure that Amir got properly grounded on all of his classes and projects. She helped keep a schedule so that long-term papers did not get lost and Amir did not procrastinate.

Jane felt that her second task was to be a good companion to Amir in all ways. She wanted to be his loving partner who took joy in all the things in their lives, especially the things they did together.

Jane also took the lead in their business ventures. Her charts were showing that their capital was growing about a factor of 5 a year. Not increasing by 5% a year, but multiplying by 5 or more. It was like holding a tiger by the tail. If a company's stock started to fall, waiting a day to sell was a disaster. Jane used a series of electronic devices which alerted her when a stock made an unusual move. Jane was able to prevent disastrous losses when some of the stock prices fell without any warning. She wondered what triggered these plummeting valuations for the companies involved. But it was impossible to find anything about these episodes in any business publications. It was all a mystery. They knew which companies were good investments. But sometimes the companies would just die suddenly.

Jane also kept thinking of her immediate family. She wanted to free them, but she was scared that “Jim” would sense that she was willing to pay any price to get her family. That would lead to a very, very high price and a possible disaster.

The only thing she could think of was to accelerate her personal plans so that she would be in a better position to rescue her family from slavery.

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# Chapter 6: A Wedding Brings a New Future

## Money Solves Many Problems

By the winter break of their junior year, Amir and Jane had amassed a fortune in their stock market investments and their savings account. It was time to reset their personal situations.

They asked their uncles for a meeting at Amir's parents' house about a business proposition. Amir asked, "Could you please bring the title papers and the contract for Jane? I want to examine them for illegal clauses." Amir's uncles joked about how much money that they would be asked to lend to Amir. They also tried to guess about whether they would ever see their money again.

Amir asked his parents to leave the room. He and Jane wanted to speak just with Amir's uncles. Amir asked how much they had contributed/loaned his branch of the family on his behalf. They said \$440,000 for Jane, \$190,000 so far for college, and \$65,000 for other items.

Amir said, "That is a lot of money to repay. You have done so much for me, and you have yet to get your money back on your investments. I would like to purchase Jane. I want to reimburse you for all of the expenses you have absorbed on my behalf. I have here a bank draft for \$900,000. This draft is made out to both of you. You can split the money as you desire. In exchange, please sign over the slave title papers to me, and sign this simple statement that you have been paid back for all of your generous loans. I know you have also supported my parents over the years as well. At this time, I do not think I can repay all of that, but I am giving you some extra to help satisfy some of the obligations of my parents."

Amir's uncles were astonished. Mo looked at the bank draft and said, "Is this real?" The check required two signatures, Jane and Amir's. Jane's signature was a rubber stamp with her first name in handwriting, and her slave serial number in tiny characters. Mo could not understand a bank draft that appeared to require a slave's signature (his slave!) before it was valid. Amir said, "You can call the bank, and ask about this check; go ahead. I would do that if our roles were reversed." Mo called the bank and read out the identification number. Mo hung up the phone and told his brother that the check was good. Everyone looked like they had won the lottery when Mo and Fred signed the title papers. As of that instant, Jane now belonged to Amir. Her fate was safe. The nagging worry was that financial problems would cause Mo and Fred to sell Jane and foul up all that they had worked so hard to accomplish. Jane did know that if she were put up for sale, Amir would be the winning bidder. Nonetheless, it was better that it was handled this way.

Before his uncles could ask any questions, Amir called his parents into the room. Amir said, "You have done so much for me, in so many different ways. I am about to launch into a fully adult life. I will be spending much more time away from you, and I may do things that do not please you. My biggest fear is that you, my beloved parents, will think I am ungrateful. I also know how hard it has been since your father did not let you inherit your fair share of the family business. Thus, I wish to give you this bank draft for \$500,000 as my way of saying and showing how grateful I have been for your support."

Pamela immediately yelled, "Where did you get this? What sort of deal have you made with my husband's brothers?" Amir held up his hand and said, "No, this is from me. At this point, I do not owe anything to my uncles. And I did forget to say that there is one thing I ask in return for this money. For the rest of today, I ask you to refrain from saying anything that is hurtful to Jane or me. If you do say something that we find offensive, you must quickly retract it. For the rest of the day, I wish to be free from any of my parents finding fault with me, or saying that I do not measure up. And I am serious about this. I do offer you this bank draft, but I can call the bank and have it withdrawn before it can be deposited if we have even one argument. Jane can address the questions about the source of the funds after some important news."

Amir paused and switched to a much more festive tone. He announced, "And there is good news. I am pleased to announce that Jane and I are getting married in early July. You are all invited." Pamela yelled, "What, you are getting married to a slave? There can be no marriage to anyone wearing a slave collar." Amir said gently, "We are getting married, and you cannot stop it. If you oppose this marriage with one more word and do not apologize for what you just said, you will lose the bank draft."

Pamela stopped dead. She stayed quiet for a full 30 seconds. She said in a low voice, "I am not opposing this marriage, but I am asking you to be practical. How can you marry the property of your uncles? If they need funds, their slave could be sold outside of the family."

Mo and Fred then showed the bank check and the sales contract that they had just signed to Pamela and Yassir. Yassir asked, "You now own Jane? But how could you? Where did you get such immense sums? Did you make a terrible deal with my brothers?"

Jane stepped into the center of the room and looked at Amir's close relatives. She said, "I hate keeping secrets, but Amir and I have not told you a secret we kept from you ever since the first few weeks that I joined your household. It turns out that I had two key pieces of information about how to make serious money in the stock market when I came. The other two keys are found in this room. Those two items are Amir and those piles of old magazines. You may remember that the first summer, I spent almost all my time looking through those magazines. My excuse was that I was creating tests for Amir. This was a lie. We were working out the roadmap for personal wealth."

Jane paused and then continued, "Amir was able to borrow his \$250,000 college fund for the summer. During that time, we managed to make a profit of \$210,000 by the end of the summer. I am pleased to say that our holdings are now about \$23 and a half million, but today's checks take that down to \$22 million. We need a few weeks to make up for our spending here today. Yes, the money Amir borrowed was used for the one thing you expressly prohibited, which is speculating on the stock market. Speculating is one thing. If you know which companies are going to fail and which are going to succeed, then it is less of a gamble."

Fred blurted out, "If you had such a surefire scheme, why didn't you come to us earlier? We could have launched this with much more money!" Amir said, "I remember how I felt when Jane first talked to me about her insights on the success and failure of different technologies. I was very skeptical. It took a lot of time on my part to feel that I was seeing something real and not

imaginary or a trick. I do not think you would have been able to spend a few weeks of full-time effort to thoroughly test these ideas against historical data. What I am saying is that the easy part is having a surefire system. It is a hundred times more difficult to convince you that it is real.”

Pamela asked, “What about Jane's freedom? If you are marrying Jane, why not set her free now?” Jane answered slowly, “This may not make sense to you, but I prefer to be married as a slave, not as a free person. If I were free before the ceremony, then it would say to people that Amir could not marry someone who was a slave. But I am and he will. Besides, the invitations already say that Amir Hassan is marrying *The Slave Formerly Known as Jane Foreman*. It would cost too much to change the invitations.”

Pamela looked upset. Then she calmed down and said, “If I were writing the invitations, they would be worded differently. But I see what you mean about how expensive it is to change the invitations. I think it would cost me \$500,000 to object to what you just said. Could I see an invitation, please?” Jane asked Amir “Get an invitation.” She added that this would be a great time to bring in a bottle of champagne and some glasses. They had just taken care of a major hurdle.

## The Wedding of Amir and Jane

The invitations were very sweet. The text inside indicated that the invitations were expressly for the persons listed on the envelope, with the addition of any unshackled slaves in their household. The instructions were clear that to gain entry to the wedding, free people and slaves needed to send a response individually, called an RSVP. Who issues an invitation to a potentially large number of slaves? Who had slaves that were unshackled? Who had slaves that could be trusted to use communication tools without supervision? These aspects of the invitations had so many people talking that everyone wanted to attend. Jane and Amir got many contacts from people who wished to attend but were not on the invitation list. Jane and Amir anticipated this and sent out quite a few additional invitations.

Even Jane and Amir's closest friends and relatives did not know what to expect at the wedding. When guests arrived, they came into a large room with a wide central aisle. Amir was in the front, looking somewhat alarmed, annoyed, and concerned. Jane was nowhere to be seen.

When the appointed time came, Amir looked even more concerned. He kept looking at his watch. Jane and a close friend, referred to as a bridesmaid, came down the aisle. Jane was wearing her gold slave collar and a leash, being held by her friend. They hurried down the aisle. Another bridesmaid intercepted them halfway down the aisle and started to argue, “How can Jane be married this way?” The second bridesmaid whistled loudly, and a third bridesmaid showed up with a series of documents. She went to Amir to get signatures, then to Jane for more signatures. Once all the bridesmaids had reviewed the signed documents, there were two more quick whistles.

At that point, three men came in quickly wearing government uniforms. They set up a photo booth and some other portable equipment. They took a long time asking Jane for her personal information. Amir was pointing to his watch, and Jane was just shrugging. Eventually, they put

Jane in the portable photo booth to take her picture. The assembled wedding guests could not imagine what was going on. There was considerable noise and hubbub as the crazy scene played out in front of everyone. Finally, the government men studied the ID card the machine had just produced. It was then passed to the bridesmaids, and they all seemed to approve. They unlocked the leash, and the four bridesmaids walked Jane without a leash to Amir.

They turned and faced the wedding guests. The person officiating the wedding examined the paperwork and the ID card. Then he looked happy and finally started the wedding. At that point, Amir looked a bit more relaxed and happy. When the officiating person said, "Do you, Amir Hassan, wish to marry *the free woman* named Jane Foreman?" the guests went wild. They had just witnessed the entire process by which a slave becomes free. That Jane and Amir had invited as many slaves as possible to witness this made many points to many people. That they had made the event as silly and comical as possible within a minute of starting the wedding astonished everyone.

The reception was one for the record books. There was so much excellent food and so many wonderful substances that allowed people to have a good time; guests wondered who could pay for such an event. Amir's parents and his uncles were beaming. Their Amir was a very nice man who knew how to throw a party.

Just about every guest asked, "How does it feel to be free?" She said, "On a day-to-day basis, it is the same. I am the business partner and the life partner to Amir. I have already been free of leashes and leg shackles for a few years. But it was nice to know that the government was not keeping a file with my DNA, ready to grab and sacrifice me the moment my sale price falls below the price people are willing to pay for my internal organs. That is one advantage that free people do not appreciate having." Each guest made a face as if they were thinking, "Did I just ask the wrong question?" and went somewhere else, usually towards the food, alcohol, and the dancing. If they were expecting her to say, "It is wonderful to be free!" then they did not know Jane. This gave the next person a chance to approach Jane and ask the same question.

Of course, Jane's glib and scary answer did not address two advantages of being a free person: she did not have to be chained up for the night while she slept, and she did not have to wear slave restraints when she was a passenger in a car. Jane smiled because she regarded her answer as "more educational."

Many guests asked about her slave collar. She said, "This gold collar was awarded to me when I was very young. It shows the great deal of trust that was given to me. I like having this collar. When I no longer want it, I will remove it. For now, I am a proud woman, for six years, I have worn a slave collar. I was sold three times wearing a slave collar. I am now a married woman of some means. I am not taking this off tonight." The idea that a newly freed slave would want to wear a slave collar with pride was astonishing. It turned out that the law was filled with rules about how slaves needed to be restrained. There was not a word about the removal of a slave collar when a slave obtained their freedom. Perhaps *the woman formerly known as the slave formerly known as Jane Foreman* might inspire a new law that required her to forfeit the slave collar.

Amir and Jane slept that night in a large hotel suite. It was very nice. They had some difficulty signing into the hotel. The hotel staff was suspicious of an ID card issued on that very day when all the government offices were closed. The ID cards identified Jane and Amir as level two people, even though at best they looked like two college students, and at worst looked like a not so nice person trying to smuggle a low-class slave into a hotel as if she was level two! The hotel called the police, who came and examined all the paperwork. They determined that the hotel should not have called the police and fined the hotel \$200.

## **A Sweet Homecoming for Jane**

After spending two nights, and a long and wonderful day, at the hotel, the newly married couple traveled by train to Jane's hometown, Warren Ohio. They traveled "first class" and had comfortable sleeping quarters. This was the first time Jane had ever traveled in any comfort. Jane was, in fact, very much enjoying being free. Since there was some uncertainty in their travel plans and connections, they called ahead a few times to make sure Jane's friends knew she and Amir were coming.

All of Jane's friends and many others greeted Jane and Amir at the train station. They were tired from the long train ride. They went to Sarah's house and crowded into the rooms the best they could. Jane and Amir took a two-hour nap. When they woke, they called Skipper's to rent a large room for everyone. It was quite an affair.

Sarah insisted on starting off the proceedings by reminding everyone of the farewell dinner three years ago. She had demanded that everyone drink a glass of wine and then imagine the moment of Jane's freedom. She added, "We all missed the wedding and that magic moment. We have Jane alive and well. She is a newly minted bride. And she is free. I ask, no, I demand that we all drink a glass of wine to recall that moment and to delight in where we are now. And I do think Jane has a story to tell." Everyone wanted to hear from Jane. Glasses filled with wine were quickly distributed. They were all consumed quickly. All eyes were now on Jane.

Jane described the wedding in detail. She delighted in describing the total confusion they caused during the "slave freedom" sequence of the wedding. Several people at Skipper's then wanted to see the ID card. Someone remarked, "The photo looks very nice. You do not look disoriented." Jane smiled and said that each bit was carefully practiced. Deb screamed when she saw the description of Jane as "level two." She said, "What is this about? How did you get the government to write that on an ID card? Can you be arrested for having a fake ID card?" Jane had Amir show his ID card that also said "level two."

Jane said, "Questions about these ID cards and their status cannot be answered here in this location. There will be a serious discussion about these issues at Mr. Mitchell's house tomorrow at 10 am. If you were part of the Sophomore Summer Enrichment Program six years ago, you are welcome. If you are not, I will just say that the ID cards are legit. For anyone who is doubtful, I can give the computer access codes to verify my ID card. But the story needs to be discussed in detail behind closed doors. I will just say here and now that Amir and I are involved in a unique business that is quite profitable, moral, and legal. I wish I could say more right now."

Bit by bit, Amir and Jane filled in many details. They described Jane's examination right before the sale to the Hassan family. They told all they could about their life together, leaving out the business details. There was a thirst by everyone for the rest of the story.

## Mr. Mitchell Issues a Stern Warning

At 10 am the next day, ten people came into Mr. Mitchell's house. Amir was taking Rose's place in the gang of ten. They had decided they should now use the name *The Five Couples* instead of the gang of ten. Some thought that switching their name was erasing Rose's memory. But keeping the name made it hard to add Amir. Somehow saying, "The Five Couples" was difficult without remembering Rose.

When they entered, Jane was happy to see Danny wearing a gold collar. She asked him how he was doing. He said, "Mr. Mitchell purchased a car for me. I am able to do errands around town all by himself. I have been meeting many people who want to be friends with someone with a car." Danny winked at the end of the last sentence. Danny was very different from the lonely young man whom Jane had befriended six long years ago.

Everyone gathered in the large study in Mr. Mitchell's house. He greeted everyone, especially Jane and Amir. He said, "If he had an invitation, he would have taken a whole train to the wedding." Jane replied, "Yes, and that is why we are here now, we want to save you from making such a large and unneeded expense." Jane and Amir described the wedding, along with the comical series of events technically freeing Jane when she was halted halfway down the aisle.

Mr. Mitchell asked about the financial issues. Jane told the group about their extremely busy first summer when Jane and Amir were working out their first investment ideas based on Jane's notebooks. Jane explained that the key insight came from the high school presentation, where the guest had never heard of "Microsoft." To Jane, that showed how rare were the insights she got from Mr. Mitchell's books. Jane gave an account of borrowing from Amir's uncles, obtaining \$210,000 by the end of the summer. Jane explained that the money was expanding by multiplying about 4.5 times each year. After three years, they now had about \$27 million.

There was a gasp from Jane's friends when she gave out that last number. No one had any idea. It is one thing to say goodbye to your friend, the math and science nerd, who was devastated at leaving to be a business teacher. To imagine that she had embraced the topic of "business" to the extent that she had such a massive "side business" was hard to grasp. What happened to the Jane that was teaching them calculus and studying chemistry and physics with them? Besides, it was so common to remark that everyone lost all of their money investing in technology companies that it seemed like a most unlikely path to wealth.

Mr. Mitchell asked detailed questions about the money Amir and Jane had obtained through the purchase and sale of stocks. He asked detailed questions about what they had purchased with the money. Amir explained that until recently, his closest relatives did not know. They did not buy anything extra at all. He said \$1,400,000 for Jane and to buy the acceptance of his relatives, especially his parents. They had spent about \$15,000 on their car and a long series of expenses



that they hid from Amir's uncles. Amir said they spent about \$12,000 on the wedding and the travel after the wedding. That was about it. They just kept their money in a savings account and a few stock trading accounts.

Mr. Mitchell said, "I want you all to stay quiet as I explain the danger in which you have put yourselves. First Jane, there are six social levels. Two of them have names with the letter 's'. What are they?" Jane said, "That is easy, level six is a slave, level one is a slice owner." Mr. Mitchell muttered, "I think I do not have to explain to you what a slave is, but let me explain what 'slice owner' means. It means that the person owns a slice of this world. They could own a large slice of the world's gold. They could own a vast tract of farmland. They could own a major company."

Mr. Mitchell paused to collect his thoughts and then continued, "A slice owner does not have a bank account; he or she owns a bank. A slice owner does not just buy and sell stocks; he or she installs the management and the board of directors. But that is not enough. He or she then keeps these holdings safe by holding the actual shares with layers of law firms to protect these holdings from any sort of lawsuit or attack. By way of contrast, your money is in accounts whose value is set by a few characters in a computer file. If you have a rich and powerful enemy, your money can disappear overnight. You are protected as someone deep in level two, but you are exposed if you think that you can become level one just with a large bank account. Just about every person who is level one was born to money. If they were not, they started a great company. To attempt to join the collection of jerks in level one by these methods is pure folly. You will vanish, and your money will vanish. You will have accomplished nothing with your life."

Everyone was silent for a few minutes. Jane spoke up, "Charles, I think Amir and I can continue this operation with some modest modifications. We use the savings account for money we want to protect from catastrophic trading losses. We could hold a maximum of \$40,000 in the savings account and hold the rest in physical gold. We can cap the amount invested in stocks at any one time. For large stock holdings that we intend to keep for several months, we can request the stock certificates. That way if the computer records are erased, we would still have most of our stock holdings in a secure and safe place."

Charles Mitchell replied, "That approach is much better. In my opinion, that should be the way you should be operating at your current level of wealth. But to break into the ranks of the slice holder, you need to own majority shares in companies that you create from top to bottom. Every part of the company must owe their allegiance to you and no one else. Unless you do that, stop your stock trading, even if it is insanely profitable. Your greed will take you to oblivion."

Amir said, "You are saying that this world is rigged, that others can take what we have unless we protect it. I understand this. My wife has lived as a slave for six years because of the desperate choices her parents took to keep a failing business alive. I am sure they were loyal to their own staff, and as well as trying to protect their position. We just need to change our approach. What Mr. Mitchell is saying is that very soon, the stock trading must stop. Instead, the money needs to be used to form our own technology companies."

Amir continued, "I am majoring in business. I have a lot of seed capital. Who here is interested in starting a new company? The only requirement is that you have to be insanely loyal to us. In return for your loyalty, we will make sure you have the capital for your company to grow rapidly. I suspect that Jane's basic approach to picking stock winners can also create a list of technologies that are on the cusp of development that would flourish in this marketplace."

Mr. Mitchell chimed in, "This is a sound approach. Amir and Jane, you do have a crew of people who are totally loyal to you. No one had ever heard of a technology company that was privately funded that was unknown to the billionaire class. You could be totally off the radar until the entire network was doing well. I am not sure how many of you want to be part of this. I think if we here are all in, I could get into level one just by collecting or owning 5% of the network. It might take ten years, but I see many of us in level one. Speaking of 5%, I propose that Emily and Danny form a company whose sole function is to offer business consulting, human relations, staff development, and management vetting for this proposed network of businesses. By doing so, it will be hard for any other parties to get an idea of what each company is doing. I also suggest that we work out some codes so that we can communicate. I think having a large number of words for the proposed network such as the octopus, the network, the web, the AJ System, would be good. If someone is trying to read our messages, we need to send them in many different directions. I think each of you needs to spend an hour with Jane and Amir to plan the rest of your education and to plan the launching of each of your businesses."

Amir added, "As I see it, secrecy is critical. This is a conspiracy. Each of us can do things like explaining to others that you want to study microwave communications, or that you want to create a company that makes or uses microwave communications gear. Each of us needs to be able to speak about our individual projects. Never speak of your individual project as being part of any larger effort. When it is clear that there is a connection between these companies, it will be too late for anyone else to stop this project. By that point, the network companies will be essential for the future of this nation and this world. But there is another secret that is even deeper, and it is essential that it be kept secret. I know it. Jane knows it. Charles knows it. But it is the one thing that cannot even be whispered outside of these walls. We all know that the technology was much more advanced forty years ago than it is right now. But we further know that our government leadership, which has access to the true details, is too busy or otherwise occupied to delve into this information. They assume the engineers and scientists know it, but they do not. We know it, and we are unique to have this information and be able to exploit it. Of this, we will speak no more."

Jane added, "I think the biggest focus of our network should be to provide a better solution for the problem known in the past decades as the *2038 Unix Problem*. The solution should be better than the patchwork of incompatible solutions that have caused so much fragmentation of our present-day computer networks. The trick is that you cannot make money directly from this solution. We must construct a full set of compatible hardware and software ready to sell when this solution is rolled out. If we do this right, we will have one single, vast, integrated computer network linking all parts of our world." It was an intoxicating vision of the future.

Deb had been very quiet during the homecoming and the meeting at Mr. Mitchell's house. She was, of course, happy for Jane. But she was also jealous of Amir. She very much wished that it

was her that was sharing Jane's life. She squeezed Cathy's hand. Deb and Cathy were planning on getting married after college and were already talking about raising children. Now, they would be raising businesses as well. Deb had to keep her feelings about Jane as buried as she possibly could.

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# Chapter 7: Jane Declares a New Epoch

## So Many Details

The biggest issue for Jane was freeing her family. During a break in the marathon discussions, Jane spoke earnestly with Emily about freeing her family. Jane described the break in contact she had with her family. She knew that if she were too involved with the negotiations, it would end in disaster. The man named “Jim” was clearly in a bad mood and not interested in disrupting his business, whatever it was. He was angry with Jane when Jane was a slave. He clearly would not want to have a freed slave purchase a family unit from him.

Emily took down all the slave serial numbers. She said, “I will approach ‘Jim’ by saying I want Jane’s father to construct and operate a small factory.” Emily promised to represent someone who had been told that though a slave, he was excellent at certain manufacturing processes that were hard to find otherwise.

Emily went into another room and made some initial inquiries. After about 40 minutes, she came out and told Jane, “You can purchase your family for \$390,000, which seems a bit expensive. Are you sure you want to do this?” Jane exploded wordlessly with joy. She just said over and over again, “Please, please, for the love of God, please free them.” Jane collapsed on the floor.

When she woke up, she realized that Amir had carried her to a couch, and everyone was crowded around her. Emily had obviously told them what had just happened. Sarah just said, “Jane, we are very sorry, we were so caught up in the happiness of seeing you free that we all forgot about your anguish about your family. We are very sorry for being shortsighted. What can we do to help?”

Sarah squeezed Jane’s hand. Jane said, “I want to affect the purchase of my family as soon as possible. I may ask for someone to help house them for a short time. Let’s see if we can draft the purchase agreement as soon as possible. I do not think we need any time in one of those dreadful slave processing centers. Can we just show up with a contract and a bank draft and register the property transfer with the authorities?” Emily just said, “When can you get a bank draft? I can write up a sales contract in about an hour.” Jane said she had a bank draft with her that she had authorized with her bank for up to \$700,000. All she needed to do was write in the lesser amount and sign it, and the bank draft was ready. Emily suggested, “This should be signed by Amir, to avoid having the name *Foreman* on any of the paperwork.”

Jane realized that she could not bring the discussions to a halt waiting for a contract to be written. Bravely, Jane got up and discussed the Microsoft 2035 problem and the *2038 Unix Problem* with the group as she awaited news about her family. She lectured, “In the 1990s, the danger of writing years as two digits was recognized. This became known as the Y2K problem. The y was for year, and 2k was for 2000. This was a problem facing the transition from 1999 to 2000. Microsoft solved its problem by using four digits for the year or moving the window forward by 35 years. Thus, the danger of computer crashes on Microsoft software was postponed

to the year 2035, which was one of the worst years of the economic collapses. There was no one to offer the solution to the year 2035 problem.”

She continued, “If we could get access to Microsoft source code, we would want to move the time window forward at least another 50 years. The Unix 2038 problem is a bit more complicated. The original problem is that time is measured in seconds from Jan. 1, 1970. With a signed 32-bit register, you can count up to early 2038. By converting to an unsigned 32-bit register, you get way beyond 2038, but lose access to the years before 1970. The best solution is to use a 64-bit register, which covers 290 billion years. This should allow computer networks to last way beyond the year when our sun burns out. The date ‘Jan 1, 1970’ is called the start of an epoch since it is the reference point, the zero, for keeping time. I propose we recompile every Unix distribution with a new epoch, starting on Jan 1, 2030. That will allow us to handle dates plus or minus 68 years from 2030 on any 32-bit application. Of course, we will do our best to convert as much as we can to a 64-bit system for storing the Unix date.”

## **Rescue Operation Number One**

Emily ran into the room. She said, “The contract is ready, and we are all ready to start the rescue of your family. How do you want to do this?” Jane said, “I will stay here. Amir, Emily, and Sarah should go in one car. Danny should drive an empty car for my family. After you get them, come here, and I will squeeze into Danny's car. We will go to Sarah's house and see how everybody is.”

An hour later, the two cars came back to Mr. Mitchell's house and honked the horn. Jane ran out and jumped into Danny's car. Jane could not speak for a few minutes. Her parents were crying. They said, “You must hate us for what has happened to you.” Jane said, “No, no, no, not at all. We have so much to talk about when we get to Sarah's house.” Her father said, “What is happening? Who is Sarah? Did she free all of us?” Jane did not want to say too much too soon. There were many things to explain. Jane quietly said, “There were two people at your purchase. The woman is the niece of my first owner. The man is my third owner. He and his wife are the ones who have purchased you. You are all in good hands. I suspect that you will soon be free from slavery.” While true, this was somewhat misleading. Danny was smiling at Jane's simple, reassuring explanation. Jane's brothers wanted to know about the gold slave collar. Jane told them it meant she could travel independently. They also wanted to know why she was not in car restraints. Jane said, “Due to a legal loophole, I do not need to wear them.”

At Sarah's house, each member of Jane's family took off their filthy clothes. They took a bath or shower and got cleaned up. Several members of the Five Couples helped with the cleaning process. Several people gathered clothes that were being prepared for the next Rose Chang Christmas Party. They found suitable clothes and then made sure everyone was presentable. When everyone was in the main room, Jane told her incredible story. Jane and Amir were wealthy enough to purchase them and free them, and not even worry about the expense. Jane was free but for only less than a week. Jane described her torment of wanting to free them earlier but knowing that the attempt would backfire unless she had the right “team” to do it for her. Bill and James beamed with pride when they realized that their own sister had transformed herself into someone who could pluck them all from slavery. James was over 15 years old. He could have

been sold once he reached his 15th birthday. It appeared that his excellent grades and school records kept him from being sold. In this way, Jane's pleas that her brothers do whatever they could to educate themselves were a true blessing to the family.

Jane mentioned that she used a little-known rule that allowed her to wear a gold collar at a very young age. Her brothers said, "Cut it off! Get rid of it!" Jane just said, "It is supposed to last for decades. I think it is very beautiful. It is covered with actual gold and is scuff-resistant. I am going to keep it until I am sick of it." Jane's brothers made a face like, "We knew you were crazy, and nothing seems to have changed!"

## **A New Factory**

Once the basic life stories were exchanged, and a meal was served, Jane started asking her father about what kind of work he would like to have now that he was in the process of being freed. Her father said, "I would like to set up another bicycle factory." Now Jane turned her brother's attitude against them all. She exclaimed, "Are you crazy? Isn't this how this madness all started? What are you trying to prove?"

Jane's father replied, "OK, OK, I assumed that you would stake me some money to get started. Now I need to tell you some secrets. When things were getting grim financially, I used someone else's identity and purchased a small, tax-free farm. The barn has several locked shipping containers loaded with bike parts. Your mother and I were constantly driving back and forth from the factory to the parts depot just to get three days of parts at a time. That way, if we were grabbed, we would restart the factory once we somehow got free. It looks like I will be checking out that farm very soon. Plus, if someone could offer some initial funding to get me started, I can make a factory that can make a profit with bikes at a much lower price tag. The problem has always been the financing. All funding I have had in the past has come with crippling conditions that guaranteed failure."

Jane raised her hand to show she was thinking very hard. She said thoughtfully, "So far, we have invested in technology companies. A bicycle factory would appear to be a losing proposition. But if it is possible to sell bicycles for much less than anyone else can, then we might make a profit larger than we expect. We are several years before we are ready to start our technology enterprise, but the experience of running a business in a hostile business environment may be invaluable. Mr. Mitchell wants us to construct companies with closely held shares of stock held in layers of law firms. This is the place to start. We need to make bicycles as no one else can and protect the business from any interference. This will be our first battle." She added, "Dad, check out your farm and let's inspect those bike parts. How many days will it take to write up a business plan?"

It turned out that Jane's father had been watching the bicycle market even when he was a slave. He was able to gather price lists for bicycle parts and completed bicycles. He kept those hidden in his office. He did not need to be updated about the last six years in his industry. All the contents of his farm were intact. He changed the ownership of the farm into his name, once his "free person" status was official. He was very practical. He set up an electrical line, some tools, and an empty shipping container near the barn. He was assembling bicycles with his wife and

sons while the paperwork was being filed for the new “Foreman Bike Works.” The new company was owned 35% by Jane's parents, 5% by Mr. Mitchell, and 60% by Jane and Amir.

Jane's father located an empty industrial facility close to the railroad tracks that still had a good roof. Amir and Jane set a maximum budget of \$220,000 for building purchase, initial utilities, initial staff, tooling, site preparation, new parts, and a basic distribution system. It was a bare bones budget, but Jane's father and mother seemed to be expert at delaying purchases, juggling things, and making do. They hired 15 people initially and discussed locally hiring over 75 people once the factory was going at full capacity.

## **A Memorable Segment on TV**

The local TV station heard about all of this activity. They wanted an interview with the new operators of the new facility. They were shocked to discover that the sweet couple they had spoken to were recently freed slaves. The researcher was puzzled as to why someone would free slaves and then finance their factory. If the new bicycles were even a modest success, this would quickly send a freed slave into level two status. None of this sounded possible.

The station filmed a great remote segment showing the long-empty building being cleaned in a rudimentary way to prepare for the installation of the workbenches and tooling. They arranged a studio interview with the couple and their backers. The backers were Amir, Jane, and Emily. Jane wore a scarf around her neck. No one recognized her at all. Emily apologized saying, “My well-known uncle, Charles Mitchell, is too busy to appear today. Anyway, interviewing five people is tricky enough; you do not want my uncle too, he can be a bit difficult.”

The newswoman posed the question to Amir, “Why invest in Warren, why invest in recently freed slaves?” Amir said, “This is a great question. I think it is best if this is answered by my wife, who is the daughter of these fine people. She shares their status as a recently freed slave.” While the camera was on Amir, Jane took off and hid her scarf. There she was, the camera on her, wearing a gold slave collar. She calmly said, “I have always liked Warren. I appreciate the fine education that I received at Warren G Harding High School. I have many friends here. Both my husband Amir and I have enough money to purchase my parents and to fund their dream of building an ultra-efficient bicycle factory. This brings numerous advantages to Warren. We bring perhaps as many as 75 new jobs, and the opportunity to purchase bicycles at half of competing prices since there are no shipping costs.”

The newswoman was a bit shaky on all of this. She asked, “Did you graduate from Warren G Harding High School? Are you still a slave?” Jane used the opportunity and added, “Yes, I spent three years at Warren G Harding as *the slave formerly known as Jane Foreman*. I was class valedictorian. I appeared briefly on this station as a sophomore, and you shut down the broadcast, saying you had technical difficulties. You were very upset by my simple question. You took the time to complain to the police. I told the police that I had been ordered to ask the question on TV. As a result of this shameful affair, the police fined my wonderful owner, Charles Mitchell, \$1000. I think if you invite someone to your station, you should not treat them that way, and you certainly should not treat Charles Mitchell that way. One of the reasons I am here is to ask formally for an apology to Charles Mitchell, your town benefactor, because your

insulting behavior caused him to have to pay that embarrassing fine to the police. I am not asking for reimbursement; I am just asking for an apology. I have assured him that he would get an apology since he wanted to put the factory in a different town if he didn't. And please do not cut me off saying you have technical difficulties. That will not be tolerated anymore."

The newswoman sputtered and said, "Well, we certainly had no intention of insulting Mr. Mitchell. I have interviewed him many times, and I had no idea that he was involved in any way with that affair. We just thought there was a slave girl who needed to be taught a lesson." Jane answered, "Well now I am a rich woman who can give this town a factory or take it away. I think you and your colleagues are the ones that need a lesson in manners. Why did you insult the people who are here to bring employment to our town? This segment has gone long. Why not cut here for a commercial?"

When they cut to commercial, the newswoman said, "How dare you ambush me like that?" Jane raised her voice, "Remember you are speaking to a woman who in one day can get a \$5 million bank draft to purchase this station and have all of you fired the next day. If I have a few free hours, I can have things printed in some industry publications that can prevent you from getting another job. Once you think through that, you can look me in the eye and laugh with me, and laugh with others who ask you about this interview. You can just say how surprised you were by what happened today. If you do that, we will be fast friends, and you will enjoy the parties I throw. Or you can tell me and everyone else how rude I am and never have a job again."

Jane calmed down. She said quietly, "What I want is that every slave should be treated with respect. A slave you encounter might be a millionaire five years later. Offering basic dignity to everyone is never wrong. I do not like to live in a society where rich people can throw their weight around, and everyone else has to do their bidding. But I was deeply hurt, and I felt I would not get any respect from anyone here unless I specifically threatened their livelihood. That crack of the whip brings out people's best behavior. Each day you make choices about how you treat other people. Choose well. And I do think a letter written and signed by the general manager of the station to Charles Mitchell would be the decent thing to do."

When the commercial break was over, Jane's parents briefly discussed having a business failure resulting in their slavery. Ruth Foreman said, "With the town's support, we can turn empty buildings and empty lives into resources for making quality products that will be cheaper than the competition. Remember the name, *Foreman Bike Works*." The segment ended with the newswoman saying, "I am amazed that freed slaves could do so much to help the economic climate of Warren." Jane just said, "This is a great town. It is just the very best! We can all rise above our present condition!"

And that was how Jane Foreman's high school friends found out she was back in town for a few weeks in the summer. When they managed to locate her, they all high-fived her for the amazing bit of TV she gave the town. Mr. Mitchell did tell Jane that the letter did arrive from the station manager. It contained a bank draft for \$1,000 with the suggestion that he donate it to charity. Mr. Mitchell made it a point to donate to the station manager's favorite charity and send him a great thank you note.



## Two Children Lead to another Wedding

Deb, Cathy, Sarah, and Ruth were having dinner one night. They started asking Ruth about her experiences as a slave for six long years. She hinted that some of the things she had to do were quite unpleasant. Deb and Cathy did get her to say the words “brothel” and “whipped.” Sarah just said, “We are very sorry.” She brightened up and said, “That was just the first year. Then I was assigned to a place best described as a slave orphanage. The problem is that since slave children do not thrive, and die in such numbers, each one is considered of little value. Thus, there is hardly any effort to help them.” She wept as she said, “I did the best that I could for them, but it was so hard to help even one baby. What can one person do? If I helped one child break the cycle, I was not doing my job for the rest, and I would be punished severely.” She cried for about four minutes.

When she was able to talk, Sarah was full of questions, “Were these babies and children slaves? Where were the parents? Were they alive? Were the babies for sale like other slaves? Who owns them?” Slowly the answers came out. Ruth said, “A slave does not have many answers. The building is at 325 Division Street; you can research the ownership yourself. The parents were dead. Some of them died during medical procedures. I do not know what they were, but it was a big joke among the management. I do not know if they could be purchased. But you could go in and ask. I would caution that so many of the babies and children are listless and are near death. I could help identify the better ones if you wanted.”

The next morning, Cathy, Deb, and Ruth showed up at the dark building on Division Street. They knocked, and someone opened the door. She said, “What do you want?” Ruth asked, “Are any of the babies here for sale?” The door-opener just said, “All slaves are for sale.” They were taken upstairs. Ruth got a chance to ask the other slave staff to help identify one or more small kids that were “recent additions” and still seemed bright, intelligent, and loving. The staff all pointed to two siblings; one was four months old; the other was 15 months old. Deb asked the staff woman how much they cost. She answered, “Most kids younger than two years of age cost \$400.” Deb and Cathy each had over \$400 in their bank accounts. Since Ruth was afraid of being re-enslaved, she left with Deb and Cathy as they went to their banks to transfer \$400 each. They came back, and each completed the purchase of one human child.

They quickly left with the babies and the sales contracts. Since the babies only had numbers, they needed names. They settled on Brenda and David, named after their favorite teachers that they both shared. They called their friends and gathered the basic baby supplies as best they could. They called Jane up since they needed a little financial help for the two babies they just bought.

Jane laughed and said, “I am not giving you guys a penny. But I will throw in \$3,000 to you as a wedding present.” Cathy said, “Who said we are getting married?” Jane laughed, “Of course you are getting married. You have two babies to support. You have rescued two lovely children. A whole community should know of this and celebrate. Let me offer you an invitation then to your own wedding. The way I figure it, it takes a long time to put a wedding together. So how about three nights from now? I think I can work out some details. Girls, go home, tell your parents. Tell your family. Tell your friends. Tomorrow I will get a bank card for you to each get a good

dress, a new haircut, and a nanny for the ceremony and the reception. I will be calling on Danny and Emily to work out the details of the locations, the food, band, the liquor, and the other critical supplies.”

Deb and Cathy were unsure of their parents' reactions. They decided to call all four of them together to make the announcement. Deb's dad just said, “Well, you get two babies, and Jane pulls a shotgun wedding. What do you want your parents to do?” Cathy replied, “Not much. Perhaps help with childcare while we get dresses and haircuts tomorrow.”

The ceremony was lovely. Deb wore a pink dress, to represent the baby girl; Cathy wore a blue dress to represent the older toddler boy. The babies made a brief appearance. Some people said, “The kids do not match your skin colors.” Cathy just said, “Well, my skin color does not match Deb, either. We are a family. None of us is going to match the drapes.”

The ceremony was very emotional. Ruth cried openly through every minute of the wedding. Deb and Cathy pledged their eternal love for each other and to their new children. Jane was very careful to stay in the back with Amir. They played no role in the wedding ceremony. Jane had asked that they find a part of the ceremony where Deb and Cathy could gently give a simple account of going into the slave baby hell and bring out two precious lives. When Deb said how they looked at each other and realized that each of them had between \$400 and \$800, so that they had to go to both of their banks to get the money transfers, the guests laughed. But the laughter was bitter with the realization that lives were being lost in nondescript buildings in their own town. How could such an atrocity be allowed? Once Deb and Cathy finished relating their story, they sat down. Sarah stood up and quoted the Talmud, *Whoever destroys a soul, it is considered as if he destroyed an entire world. And whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world.*

The party was fabulous. Jane had arranged for Skipper's to cater the party. There was good and plentiful alcohol, music, and good times. That night, Deb and Cathy fell into each other's arms in utter exhaustion. Jane had rented a wonderful room for them that night. They felt that they had the goodwill of the entire town. In the space of a few days, they were married with children.

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# Chapter 8: The Desire to Know the Enemy

## Peter has his Doubts

A few days after Cathy and Deb's wedding, it was time for some planning meetings. Naturally, Cathy and Deb needed their families to provide childcare for most of the day. They looked exhausted and told everyone how their children were doing.

Peter started the meeting. He said, "Jane, I think you are wrong about date issues in computer systems and networks. In my university lab, we experiment with a variety of computers. We have a few with unmodified software from decades ago. None of these have any problems or issues. You might be right about computer networks shutting down. But plain vanilla computer software seems to have been cranking along year after year without any problems."

Jane looked confused; she asked, "Are you sure?" Peter stood firm, "I think you are about to make the biggest bet in your life. Our future and fortune are at stake. I get the idea that you want all of us to be the instrument to transform the world so that everyone can better communicate and interact, but we cannot do this if we are solving a problem that is not a problem. We are operating in the dark. So far, we have no real information about what is happening in the computer industry except what we read in the trade press. Do not get me wrong; I am amazed at what you can do with the trade press and those golden notebooks of yours. But now we need to know about the key forces driving this industry, and we need to all recognize that we do not have a clue. My best guess is that entrepreneurs pitch their ideas to some central committee, and they either offer or do not offer initial funding. Our plan, of course, is to avoid this altogether. But it would be better if we knew more about this process. I am wondering what goes into the decision-making process other than the technical or business merits."

Jane stared hard at Peter, "I know you do not speak up like this without a plan. What are you thinking of doing?" Peter lowered his voice, "So far, our planning has been based on keeping a low profile. But I think we need to show our hand a tiny bit. I could pretend to be a major stockholder and say something at a public meeting. If someone asks where I got the information, I will mention Jane's name. Then it will be Jane's turn to get a phone call. I suspect they will invite Jane to a meeting. Jane, your job will be to go and gather way more information than you reveal."

Jane offered, "I will try to find a company that would bring out all the big shots to the stockholder meeting. It has to be a company where there is a major controversy. It has to be a company that is directly owned by a selection of level one people. Give me a few days to do some research. But Peter, you will not be pretending to be a stockholder. We will set you up with a newly formed shell company that has a major stake. To get away with this, everything has to be legit. They will be checking identification and proof of stock ownership to enter the meeting."

## Peter Travels to the *Black Moth* Meeting

Peter took a train to Louisville Kentucky. It was one of the longest trips he had ever taken in his life. Peter was playing a role, that of a confused stockholder. But it was more than a role. Thanks to Jane, he was the president of a shell corporation. The sole asset of his company was about \$230,000 of Black Moth Limited. He had the paperwork to prove this. He was on his way to a large meeting room in a hotel for a meeting of the stockholders. The board of directors was divided on a major expansion project. The purpose of the meeting was for the stockholders to vote (one share, one vote) to break the deadlock.

At the hotel, several staff people checked his ID card and his stock certificates. It was a complicated procedure. Peter needed to prove that he was the owner of his enterprise, *Principle Investments and Technology*, and that his enterprise owned the stock. Eventually, he was admitted. Peter was surprised that there were only about 120 people in the meeting. Peter took a seat at the back of the meeting hall.

So much of the meeting was carefully scripted. But eventually, the time came to deal with the issue that had divided the board of directors. Two members of the board on opposite sides each gave a short presentation of their views. There was a point when stockholders could ask questions. There were two microphones, one labeled “approve of expansion,” the other labeled “disapprove of expansion.” Peter lined up at the “against” microphone. When it was his turn, he said, “I do not want this company to end up like Atari.” The moderator looked confused and asked, “What do you mean by that?” Peter replied, “The expansion is based on the company being the market leader for years to come. If market share dropped because of lagging technology, that would accelerate our problems because of the costs of expansion. What I want to know is, has this possibility been fully considered?”

Peter's attention was not on the canned answers to his question. He looked around to see if anyone had a startled or concerned look about what he had just said. He did notice two men in fancy suits staring at him, even after he got back into his seat. At the end of the meeting, Peter kept his eyes on them. When the meeting was over, Peter noticed that they were coming over to intercept him. The two men asked if Peter could join them for a restaurant meal. Peter asked, “What is this all about?” One of the men with a dark coat just said, “We want to talk about the Atari Corporation.”

The two men were pleasant. They refused to give their names. Over a very nice meal, they asked Peter repeatedly about his company and his investment in *Black Moth Limited*. They wanted to know what he thought of the prospects for the company. Peter had difficulty answering their very specific questions. They wanted to know his business history. Peter said he ran a business to help wealthy people invest. He had the money from “his clientele” and was investing some of it in *Black Moth Limited*.

The two men wanted to know why Peter had said something about Atari Corporation. Peter asked what the big deal was. They just said that knowledge of older corporations had almost vanished from the earth. How had he learned about Atari, and why did he think a reference to Atari would be meaningful to anyone else? Peter was puzzled about why mentioning an old corporation would cause such a strong reaction. Peter at one point said, “My friend Jane

Foreman mentioned Atari to me.” Peter immediately knew this was a mistake. When asked who she was, Peter said, “Jane was one of my friends from high school.”

Peter was trying very hard to think of some way of asking why they were so upset about hearing the name of an older company. But they seemed to be menacing him, and he was afraid of making them angrier. Peter was happy when they started asking more questions about Black Moth and the expansion plans. Peter kept saying that he felt certain that the expansion would be a mistake. It would be the move that would lead to oblivion. But it was frustrating that Peter could not offer a convincing argument as to why this was a reasonable concept. Peter now understood the power of knowledge of the past. He had hoped to find someone else who shared a love of fascinating details of the past. Instead, he was talking to some thugs who were determined to eliminate traces of the past. What was going on?

Peter was relieved that he was allowed to leave the restaurant and find a hotel room. The next morning Peter was off on a train back to Warren, Ohio. At one point, the train was delayed at a station, and a squad of police went through the train, making a list of everyone on the train. When they got to Peter, they asked, “Where are you going, and what address will you be at for the next week?” Peter answered. He wondered if the train was being delayed just to make sure that someone knew where to find him.

Once he arrived at Warren, he walked around the downtown until he was certain that he was not being followed. At that point, he walked to Mr. Mitchell's house. Danny opened the door for him. Peter ran inside and said, “Summon Jane. I think we are in real trouble.” Danny asked, “What happened?” Peter started to tell the whole story. Danny held up his hand to stop. Danny said, “Follow me to the library; you can tell Jane, Amir, Charles, and me.” Peter told his strange story about being asked politely, but firmly, about Jane and Atari. He described his terror when he realized that the train stopped just for him. Peter seemed surprised that no one seemed to be very interested in what he had said as if his story was merely confirmation of something they already knew.

## **Jane has an Invitation or a Summons**

Jane sensed the confusion on Peter's face; she said, “Peter, the morning after the stockholder's meeting, I got a phone call summoning me to something called *The Supreme Council of Sunnyvale California*. I cannot tell if I am being invited just for a friendly chat, or a meeting, or being summoned to an investigation. I am to travel by myself. I need to get some paperwork together. Sunnyvale is one of the ten cities in America where level one people live. It is guarded by thousands of police using what used to be called military weapons. I need to bring proof of the invitation so that I am allowed to travel to Sunnyvale. It is sort of like traveling to the Emerald City.” She looked around the room. Except for Charles, no one knew what the Emerald City was. Charles said, “The Supreme Council is a very important organization. If Jane is summoned, she has to go.”

Others had intended to argue that Jane should not go. Charles' flat statement stopped that line of discussion cold. Her mission would be to deflect interest in her work and business interests. The discussion switched to how Jane could answer the questions that might come up. Peter warned,

“They know much more than you think. Be very careful what you say. Listen to the questions, and think carefully before saying anything. I mentioned your name when I should not have. I know you will be more careful than I was.”

## **Jane Goes to Sunnyvale**

After a few days, Jane got paperwork in the mail. The papers gave her name and ID number. The invitation and her ID card would allow her to travel all the way to Sunnyvale. She was able to purchase a set of train tickets all the way across the country to California. She bought one ticket to Chicago, another to Emeryville/San Francisco, and a final ticket on the special train from Emeryville to the “Emerald City” of Sunnyvale. The trip was long, and Jane got to experience for herself how big America is. She experienced days of traveling across the plains, into Colorado, through the Moffat Tunnel under the Continental Divide, followed by Salt Lake City, and then a trip over the Donner Pass across the Sierra Nevada Mountains. This is the old line of the California Zephyr train of decades past. Once in Emeryville California, she submitted her paperwork to take the guarded train into Sunnyvale.

Jane brought a new notebook to write about and sketch her great journey to California. The mountains of Colorado and California were beyond her imagination. It was late at night when she got to Emeryville. It took a little time to find the place in the station for the special shuttle train. There was a line of people waiting their turn. When Jane got to the front of the line, there were two very tough looking police officers. They looked at Jane, at her ID card, and at her letter inviting her to Sunnyvale. The cops found several things wrong. Jane was wearing a gold slave collar. Her ID card indicated that she was level two. Her letter said that she was “invited” to attend a meeting with the five most powerful level one people in Sunnyvale. This did not add up. The police agreed that she was a slave who was attempting an escape into Sunnyvale. They threw her into a dark cell until someone had time to sort out who she really was.

The result of this action was that Julie Hildebrandt, the chair of the Supreme Council, made some inquiries. There were several reports that Jane Foreman was on the long train to California. But there were no reports of her getting on any of the guarded trains to Sunnyvale. She called the chief of police at the Emeryville Station and said, “If Jane is not personally delivered in two hours, you and your staff will be guarding borax mines in Death Valley.”

Within a few minutes, Jane was pulled out of the cell, given a quick shower, changed into some clothes used by policewomen who work undercover, put into a police car, and sent in a fast police convoy to Sunnyvale. Jane was amazed at the number of police that were guarding the region. They whizzed through a border crossing. Every other car was being searched, but the convoy of police cars with their sirens blaring did not have to stop or even slow down. About 30 minutes later, they pulled in front of a small conference center. The police quickly got her out of the car and had her jogging into the building. Jane turned around to see two police officers carrying her luggage. She started to wonder if this meant that she would find some of her valuables missing.

As Jane got into the conference center, she met the five-member Supreme Council of Sunnyvale, California. She recognized Roger Carter from the days when she was sold after high school

graduation. She was introduced to Julie Hildebrandt, Roger Carter, James Chu, Lillian Min, and Fred Smith. Each had their specialty, but together they were the top governing body in America for technology issues. Jane thought, "So this was it, a five-member committee that controls technology companies with an iron fist." Jane sensed that the day of the billionaire clubhouse government was soon to be over, but she certainly did not say this to the Supreme Council.

Staff workers ushered them into an elaborate meeting room. The six sat around a big table. Julie started the discussions. She asked, "Jane, could you explain how your high school friend Peter Anderson showed up in Louisville Kentucky at a stockholder's meeting, and why he asked a question very provocatively?" Jane answered, "I set up a company so that he could learn investments. It appears that he purchased stock in some company and then went to the stockholder's meeting. I have no idea about a provocative question. Could you tell me what he said?" Julie looked very unhappy; she said, "Our records show that you purchased the stock and turned it over to Peter. We thought you might not be telling the truth. I am warning you now that if you lie again, you may never leave this building alive."

Jane's mind was spinning. Every word she said from then on had to be the truth. Any hope of doing anything else with her life depended on telling the truth, but perhaps holding something back. It dawned on her that she had always dismissed rumors of a small committee that decided all technology investment issues as a "conspiracy theory." Well, now that "conspiracy theory" was staring at her right in the face. Instead, Jane had focused on the date issues. It was clear that Peter was right all along. The date issues in all critical software had been fixed all along. Jane realized her only hope was to use any opportunity to switch focus to side issues, like the Unix 2038 problem. She also knew that she had to be totally honest about where she had learned about Atari.

Jane gulped and said, "I visited a house with many books about old technology companies. I liked these books and told my friends interesting stories about Microsoft, Adobe, Apple, and Atari. So yes, Peter had mentioned Atari at the meeting. I think Peter was hoping that he could find a friendly face that knew more stories about these older days of the microcomputer. But instead of a friendly face, his use of that sentence got me invited to speak to you. Now that we have established that, why don't you ask me whatever you have on your mind?"

Julie said, "Before we get to that, could you state for the record all of the contacts you have had with Roger Carter?" Jane said, "Sure, that is easy. When I was sold after I graduated from high school, I was presented to five bidding finalists. Roger was one of the five. As your records show, I was sold to the Hassan family. I eventually became a free woman and married Amir Hassan. Before the marriage, I wrote to Roger, asking him to sign my paper so that I could get this gold collar. He signed the paper so that I was able to obtain a gold collar. I have kept the gold collar out of respect to all the people, especially Roger Carter, who have placed their trust in me."

Julie asked, "Was that the only contact you had with Mr. Carter?" Jane replied, "As a slave student at Georgia Tech with a gold collar, I advocated that other slave/free teams obtain a gold collar. I explained how to obtain one since I had just done so. I collected the names of seven slave students who wanted a gold collar. I sent a second letter to Mr. Carter asking that he sign

the paperwork for the seven additional names. The contact I had with Mr. Carter was the privilege of him bidding on me, and his answering two letters that were entirely a matter of asking him to trust me, and for him to sign his name. I am as grateful for his helping my fellow students, and I am grateful for his helping me. Again, I want to stress the pride I feel when I recall these events, and that pride is reflected in my refusal to have this gold collar removed.”

Roger Carter had been nodding in agreement as Jane related her story. He added, “I will state for the record that Jane is speaking the truth. I do recall visiting her hometown of Warren Ohio and bidding on her. She was obviously smart, talented, and capable. I would have purchased her, except for some family problems. She was to be the companion for my nephew, but as the bidding got higher, my brother started acting up. He seemed to resent my purchase of an expensive slave as if I would be holding the purchase price against him for years to come. I did not want my purchase to complicate my family, which is why Jane was purchased by a family of much lesser means. And yes, I do recall signing Jane's two letters. They were very persuasive and well crafted. It would appear that Jane has well used her talents now that she has obtained her freedom. I ask this wise counsel to respect Jane. I sense that there are many issues that Jane has mastered and that we would profit from her analysis.”

Jane looked around. She had so much to think about, beyond what to say to survive the day. Jane thought about the guarded train to Sunnyvale, the tanks, machine guns, infantry troops, the barbed wire fencing and border patrols she had seen with her own eyes defending Sunnyvale. What was all of this military might guarding? Sunnyvale itself was no “Emerald City of Oz.” There were no fantastic sights. It was just another place where people worked and lived. It was, in fact, a place for people of all levels of society, but just one that included people at level one. She guessed that there were a few neighborhoods with some very, very nice homes. The idea that seemed so fantastic was that thousands were guarding the city just to protect certain people. The five people she was sharing the table with were some of those so-called special people. They dressed just like her. They seemed just like the other business people she dealt with in Atlanta. Why were the lives of the level one so much more special than the level two? Once again, she told herself that she needed to be very careful about what she said and to be very careful to pick up any clues about the lives of the level one.

Jane's train of thought was interrupted when Julie suddenly asked, “Jane, when was the last time you had any food at all?” Jane admitted that it had been about 19 hours. The Council looked shocked and asked what had happened. Jane explained, “I had been sick of the train food and was waiting to get into a good hotel at Emeryville, or Sunnyvale where I could have some proper food. But when I showed my papers to get on the shuttle train, the police threw me into a filthy cell. I had no food, no anything until I was late for this meeting. I am totally exhausted and hungry. I do not mind being detained, but a modest meal or two would have gone a long way.” The Council members looked very surprised. Lillian said, “How can this be; you are a level two?” Jane just said, “The police must have mistaken me for a slave with false papers. I am sure they would have sorted me out in a week or two. Someone here must have made a phone call. I was pulled from my cell, given a shower and some clothes, and then we raced over here in a police convoy.”



Julie added, “I made a phone call to the police in the train station. I told them who I was and explained that the five members of the Council were waiting for Jane Foreman. I then threatened them with guarding the mines in Death Valley unless they produced Jane in two hours. But somehow I forgot about food.” Julie turned towards her staff, “I do not care what it is, but get some food for Jane here in one minute. After that, have someone cook a full meal for her, I do not care if it is breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Make her something and get it to her fast. This poor lady has not eaten in a day, and this is not Yom Kippur.”

Within seconds, a plate of some pastries and some fruit was put on the table in front of Jane. About 15 minutes later, a hastily prepared breakfast was brought in by several staff persons. They all looked very scared that the food was not good enough or prepared fast enough. Jane thought that while the staff members were not slaves, she rarely saw slaves that looked as scared about whether they pleased their masters.

The meal was a good break in the proceedings. Since the Council members all ordered snacks from the staff, they could all have some food to eat. Jane used the time to tell her basic story, from the night raid to her marriage to Amir. She left out the financial details and the deep bonds she had with her friends, but she felt that telling her basic life story would put the additional details into a more positive light. When Jane was just finishing up, the rest of the Council were all telling Roger that the worst decision he had made in his life was not buying Jane.

## **The Interrogation gets Serious**

When the meal break was over, Julie started things off by saying, “Now let's make sure all the recording equipment is on. Jane, can you explain your remarkable trading system? We want to know who you have been in contact with, and your method of communications.” Jane was astonished. The Council was certain that she had a network of people in the technology industry feeding her “inside information.” Jane wished she had a network of friends. She would not be threatened with instant death if she had a few friends to tell her what to avoid.

Jane spoke very slowly, “I have no contacts or friends in this industry, or any other industry, other than the normal contacts someone of my status has who has been investing money. I have quite a few social contacts, but no one has given me inside information. My father, of course, has been telling me for years the secrets of running an ultra-efficient bicycle factory. But I know you are not interested in that.”

“But I do have an investment system. When I was a high school student, I was able to visit a private library in Warren. This library contained about a dozen books about the conflicts between technology companies in the early days of the microcomputer era. I found these interesting but did not study these carefully. In my senior year, there was a presentation in our school about the field of re-engineering. I asked a question about Microsoft Corporation. The presenter did not recognize this company name at all. I could not imagine how you could rebuild our technology without knowing about Bill Gates and Microsoft Corporation.”

“I concluded that these books had special knowledge that no one else had. I re-read them all several times. I asked for permission to borrow them and was refused. I copied down their

contents in several notebooks. I constructed company indexes, technology indexes, timelines, and more. I attempted to integrate all the information found in these books into a single document that I could refer to that held all the forgotten secrets from decades ago.”

At this point, Roger interrupted Jane to ask, “And you did this analysis before you graduated from high school?” Jane nodded yes. Roger added, “So when you were offered for sale, you already had those notebooks?” Again, Jane nodded yes, and then she continued, “The second element in my method was finding stacks and stacks of old and new business magazines in Amir's house that summer. I could use the entire matrix of information combined with news reports on current technology companies to predict the rise and fall of the financial fortunes of companies. I spent a day or so convincing Amir that I could predict the technology stock market. Amir borrowed the \$250,000 college fund from his uncles for the summer. By the end of the summer, we had holdings of \$210,000. I should mention that my dear husband Amir has made many improvements to my methods, including adding proper risk controls.”

James Chu seemed to have all of Jane's trading records. He asked for a list of her investments that summer and for an explanation for each one. Jane was able to list the 15 companies she had started with, and why these seemed to be good ideas. Jane listed which were total losses, which were moderate losses, which were moderate winners, and which one was a massive winner. James nodded and told the Council that Jane's historical trading history matched her verbal account before the Council.

Julie seemed flabbergasted at this turn of events. She asked, “Who were your contacts who fed you information?” Jane said, “I have none. I would have done better if I could have talked to people. I just used news stories and compared these stories to my knowledge of the previous development of technology. Where my knowledge failed, I consulted my precious notebooks.” Julie turned to Roger Carter and asked, “Did you have any idea that such a thing was possible, that books written in the 1980s or 1990s could offer such profound insights?” Roger answered, “Frankly no. I had no idea, but I thought we would learn interesting things here. I think we are all getting a real education here.”

Julie turned again to Jane, and asked, “What is the value of your holdings now?” Jane said that she had not been able to check the value of her stocks for a week, but they should be in the range of \$25 to \$30 million. James nodded. He did say, “Jane, your holdings went up in value by about \$2 million in the last week, so that you and your husband now have about \$29 million.”

Julie now spoke gravely, “We now get to the heart of our issue with you Jane. What are your intentions? At the rate you are going, you will be the technology industry in a few years. We cannot allow this exponential growth to continue. So Jane, were you intending to stop at some point? Were you planning to uproot our social order? Do you imagine a revolution of slaves and lower classes against the level one stratum of society?”

Jane remembered her obsession with critical dates and operating systems. She said, “I did think that I could use my funds to start a company to rebuild some of the major operating systems so they would be without date defects. I am talking about the *2038 Unix Problem* and similar

problems with Mac OS and Microsoft software.” Jane continued to discuss her idea of improving the computer environment with better operating systems.

Roger interrupted and said, “The date issue is very complex. We will be here the rest of the night before we get to a resolution. I think I am the only person on the Council with any experience with older and more modern computer operating systems. Could I suggest that we stop this meeting, and I take Jane to my house for the rest of the day? We will come back tomorrow with a resolution of this case.”

Julie frowned and said, “I do not like this, but I do not want to argue with Roger. Jane is to be considered a dangerous person still under investigation. I like the fact that she still has a slave collar. I want her to wear a nationwide locating device on her collar, to be leashed or restrained at all times. Jane is not a slave; she is a level two free person. But she is under investigation. I want to see her at 10 am tomorrow in these chambers.”

Roger used his phone to request a car with a set of slave restraints. Staff members fetched a locating device and a leash for Jane and Roger. Within minutes, Jane had a locating device locked to her collar. A leash was on her collar, and she was led to Roger's car. Jane had never heard of a nationwide locating device. Jane thought it was interesting that she had one now that she had obtained her freedom from slavery. When she was placed in the all-encompassing embrace of the slave car restraints, Jane wondered if she would live to see the next day, or whether she was already a slave again.

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# **Chapter 9: The History is Revealed**

## **Jane Visits Roger Carter's Home**

A slave drove Roger and Jane to Roger's home. In the driveway, Roger stated that he wanted to hold the leash. It was mid-afternoon, and Jane was very tired. Roger walked with Jane into a house that felt bigger than Charles Mitchell's house. Jane soon understood why. Roger asked one of his slaves to assemble the entire staff. Soon, about twenty slaves were gathered in the entry hallway.

Roger spoke, "I would like to introduce you all to my friend Jane Foreman. She is a free woman who was once a slave. She is under investigation and will be staying at our home tonight. We will all eat at the hexagon tonight. Deepshikha, please make the usual arrangements. I am sorry this is on such short notice. I have been asked to restrain her with leash and chain as if she was a slave, but she is not a slave. She is our honored guest. I suspect she is tired and will be having a nap. Will someone find a bed that she can use that is equipped with restraints?" A tall black woman raised her hand.

Jane was led by the tall woman to a small room in the slave quarters. She took off her clothes and pulled a thin blanket over her body. She whispered, "So sorry," as she attached a chain to Jane's leg. Jane did not mind at all. She drifted to sleep quickly.

After a few hours, the same woman came and unchained Jane. She helped Jane get dressed. She laughed and said, "You look like an off-duty policewoman!" Jane explained that she was wearing the same clothes that she had been given when the police rushed her out of her cell. She started wondering what happened to the clothes she had been wearing while she was put in the jail cell.

Her helper said, "Let me make a few phone calls to see if we can find your clothes. I cannot believe they put a guest of the Supreme Council in jail. I also cannot believe the Supreme Council would put you into chains." Jane said, "Do not worry about that. I would appreciate trying to retrieve all the items that the police took from me. I think I am missing a few items from my luggage. Do not worry about the leashes and chains. I spent quite a few years as a slave. I have been free only a few weeks now." Jane's helper bowed and said, "You are our honored guest. Let me help you get washed up, and then come with me to dinner."

## **A Hexagonal Dinner**

The dinner was in a large room with a big, hexagonal table. There were four place settings on each of the six sides. Roger was there, as were his slaves. Jane joined the table. Roger asked everyone to stand and just say their name. Jane was very surprised. She was able to remember about six names. She remembered that Roger's close dinner companion was named Lucy Ling and that Jane's helper in the bedroom was named Samantha.

Roger glanced at Lucy, the woman with a gold collar who sat next to him. She said, "Thank you all for sharing this table, and thanks for the world's bounty for sustaining us." With that, everyone sat down. Roger said, "Perhaps I get lonely, but every once in a while, I like to share a table with my entire staff. I apologize that some of the food may be too cool or too warm since it is hard to share the table and fuss over food at the same time." With those words, four people got up and rolled carts to the table. Some of the carts were chilled, and some were warm. Jane guessed that all of the food would be served at its perfect temperature.

Roger said, "As we get our food and get started, could you, Jane, please tell your story? Try to keep it to 15 minutes. When your story is done, you will have plenty of time to eat to your fill."

Jane told her story. She decided to stick to the things that had been discussed before the Supreme Council. She was afraid that this was all a trap to get her to admit to things or mention details that had not come out before. Jane did emphasize that she was very afraid of the threats to her life made by Julie, the head of the Council. She told everyone, "I am scared that if I am considered a threat, then my husband Amir will also be considered a threat. I think his life is in my hands. I can live with my own errors. If my husband were to be executed by a misstep on my part, that is something I can barely speak about." Tears streamed down Jane's face.

The whole table was listening to her every word. When she described how Roger had bid on her but was unwilling to outbid Amir's uncles, the table erupted with jeers to Roger for making such a mistake. Roger stepped in to describe the bidding process. Everyone laughed when it was revealed that it was Roger's brother's attitude that had stopped Roger's bidding. It appeared that his strong attitude about Roger was well known to those who shared the table.

There was laughter as Jane described the crazy wedding with Amir and her release from slavery entirely within the wedding. There were tears when Jane described the wedding of Deb and Cathy. It was very clear that some of the horrors of slavery were hidden from Roger's household.

At one point, Jane got up from her seat and closely examined the gold collar on Lucy. Jane was certain that it was made by the same company that made her collar. Jane and Lucy started to joke that this made them cousins. Jane noticed that Lucy and Roger were both in bare feet, and their toes and feet were being very friendly with each other. At that point, Jane started to understand why Julie Hildebrandt was concerned about having Jane spend time at Roger's house.

Jane did ask Lucy if anyone at the table had small kids. Lucy said that she and Roger had three small children. The whole household had about 15 small children. They were all in a distant wing of the house, being cared for by seven temporary "workers," which allowed all of the staff to join Roger for dinner. This was one of the many details that made these dinners so special. Lucy said that any children reaching age 15 were given a choice about working in the household or at a different place. Jane wanted to ask if Roger freed the children of slaves, or if they stayed slaves. But she did not want to ask about anything that would spoil the mood. Jane went back to her seat.

The financial details of Jane and Amir's life amazed everyone. All the slaves asked for \$250,000 for a summer, with lessons from Jane. Roger just said, "Fine by me, but you need to pay back

any losses, and I get to keep 10% of anything over \$10 million!” There was a roar of acceptance of those terms, but Jane knew that slaves were not allowed to trade in the stock market and that winning was not as easy as she made it look.

Roger filled everyone in about the discussions before the Supreme Council. Roger added, “Jane, before it gets too late, or everyone drinks too much wine, we need to talk about the terms of your release from the Council. I think you need to promise not to form any technology company yourself. I think this is what terrifies the Council about you. You need to send a message to the Council each time you buy or sell a security. They will just ignore it. Some will try to front-run you, but that will work to your advantage when you buy. We need to get the old books about technology. I assume these are in Charles Mitchell's library?” Jane said, “Yes, but I do not want to say that, I do not want Charles to get into trouble.” Roger used a calm voice and said, “Perhaps, but what you ask will cause you to forfeit your life. Charles does not want the books that badly. I think a good compromise is to arrange for the books to be lent for five years to a secure library in Sunnyvale. The Council will accept that. We can also allow Charles the right to visit his books anytime he wants. Hopefully, in five years, the situation will change, and Charles will get his books back. Jane, do you still have your cell phone?”

Jane said, “I somehow still have my ID, wallet, and phone. I am missing a notebook of sketches I made of the Colorado Mountains from the train and a few other items. I am also missing the clothes I was wearing in my jail cell last night.” Samantha jumped up and said, “I am going to call the Police to get Jane's missing items.” Roger asked Jane to call Charles Mitchell to request that he make a five-year loan of his “special books.” Jane made the call. Charles was deeply concerned about Jane. Jane said, “I think I will be fine. We are working on a compromise. Part of the compromise will be for you to retain ownership of those special books you have, but to offer them as a loan to a special collection in Sunnyvale. If I understand right, it will be written up as a five-year loan. You will retain ownership. Is this something you could do?” Charles said, “Of course. I want you to come home safely. Be careful.” Jane said, “I am being as careful as I can.”

Samantha came back into the room and announced that the Police would be returning several items belonging to Jane. They would arrive in about two hours. Roger nodded, turned towards Jane, and asked, “Jane, we need to finish the business of compromise. Can you live with the terms that I just listed: no financing companies, notice given when you buy or sell shares, and Charles offers his books on a five-year loan?” Jane said, “Yes, I can live with this. Does this mean that Amir and I get to stay alive?” Roger just said, “Well, I would hope so. We are covering all the concerns that the Council has. To shoot you after you agree to this would be quite wrong. I certainly would vote against it.” Jane just said, “I just hope that the historical record does not show numerous examples of 4-1 decisions of the Supreme Council.”

## **More Details Come to Light**

Roger said, “I would like to tell you a story, but it is one I have told so many times, I want Lucy and Samantha to tell it. Please tell the story of the financial collapses, modern slavery, and our current governance here in the United States of America.”

Lucy laughed and said, "OK, I can play this game, Roger. Put me on the spot, well, please chime in when I forget a key part of the story." She turned away from Roger and looked right at Jane. "Well, Jane Foreman, my collar cousin, this story is just for you. Please pay close attention. Take no notes since I do not want to get into trouble. Back in 2019-2021, there was a cataclysmic collapse of the world economy. Centralized control of all institutions failed utterly. It was a grim period of mass starvation. About the only group that survived intact socially and financially was the network of billionaires. They had yachts that could stay afloat from two to three years or had secret sheep farms in New Zealand. They inserted themselves into the process of rebuilding society. The billionaires settled in ten guarded cities. Each of the ten cities in America with an enclave for the level one had a similar Supreme Council. Sunnyvale's Council specializes in technology. There were other councils for social issues, finance, police matters, resources, food, medical issues, news and media, legal framework, and finally one to resolve disputes between the Councils."

None of this was obvious to Jane or anyone else who did not know how power was wielded in America. "The constitution was ignored decades ago. Only the billionaires had the ability to make rules that would be followed across the country. As the nation got back on its feet, the billionaires stayed in control. There was no call for a constitutional convention. You may wonder why. At the time, no one knew how rules were being set, and everyone was so focused on staying alive and getting the next meal."

"Today you have visited Sunnyvale California, and you have not only met the Supreme Council but have been threatened with execution. Some people who hear this story do not believe this could be true. I suspect that I will have less difficulty convincing you." Lucy looked at Roger, and Roger smiled and added, "What Lucy is leaving out is how wrong these Supreme Councils are. They are the part-time work of extremely wealthy people with a dozen or hundreds of businesses to run. It is amateur hour. It is frustrating. Governing should be the work of skilled technical workers, not the whim of distracted level one people. The whole system is wrong, and now it is an even worse anachronism. You look confused. What I am saying is that we have a feudal system of governance, in an industrial society."

Samantha joined in, "You also forgot to explain the beginnings of modern slavery, and how it is destroying this country once again. It all seemed reasonable in the beginning. People were starving, and credit card companies had plenty of liabilities. Few people could pay their credit card bill. Instead of allowing bankruptcy, the credit card companies started to seize and sell off their customers. This boosted the balance sheet of the credit card companies and helped the bankrupt customers since they were often sold to people or organizations who would feed their new property. The cash flow from customers with big credit card balances usually made huge profits for the credit card companies even if the balance was never paid off. Because financial institutions extended far more credit to whites than to blacks, slavery is much more of an issue for white people than for black people. I know that it is wrong to be amused by all of this, but it is clear that white people really messed themselves up with all of this. My great-grandfather lost his house in the 2007 housing crash. I think my people just got screwed first." Jane muttered, "I do not remember being taught any of this at school."

Samantha continued, “The rule of keeping children together with their families until age 15 was instituted to avoid the worst abuses of slavery, but the cruel permutations took their toll. Jane brings us a series of stories: her entire family made slaves not because of what might be called legitimate debt, but because of manipulations of the parents; creditors, who pushed the family into slavery; the children were enslaved even though there was no financial call for it; Jane was able to stay with her friends only through high school graduation, as long as she was constantly chained to something; and finally, the tale of children and babies dying quickly because the parents are no more, perhaps as organ donors. And that that is just one person's stories told over the dinner table. What horrors would be found if we asked a hundred people about their experiences?”

Roger interrupted, “Let me add my thoughts. First, there were several financial collapses. Once the economy crashed to almost zero, it came back because millions of Americans constructed their own garage or backyard business. Bit by bit, things were starting to come together. But when a few companies started up mass production again of key items, it wiped out millions of simple businesses. The economy tanked again. The one thing that has always annoyed me is that at no point in our spotty recovery have we been able to revive any practical form of air travel. Apparently there were massive hidden subsidies in the past which we are unable to duplicate now. Such a pity.”

Roger regained his thoughts. He added, “This was when the billionaires stepped in to restructure society. They demanded protection from the rest of society. This was when the specific six levels of society came to be created. Ten cities for the level one were named to be defended against anything or anyone. We find ourselves in defended city number four. I think we can agree that a frontal assault against the fortress would bring out massive firepower and repression. I think that the direction that Jane Foreman proposes to go in is the only way to challenge our very broken system. I would like to suggest that we each fill each other's wine glasses in a toast to Jane Foreman and her very bold plan.”

## **Jane Foreman's Bold Plan**

Jane was very confused. What was her bold plan? She had wanted to get into level one by any means necessary. Now that was blocked at every point. If she could stay alive and hold onto half her money, she would be lucky. Her every move would now be examined by a committee of the most powerful people in America. How could she be executing some bold and magic plan that would overturn the existing social order? And why would a level one person set this in motion? None of this made any sense to Jane at all.

Jane decided to take the bait. She asked, “Can someone please tell me what my bold plan is?” Samantha moved her chair close to Jane and whispered in her ear. Jane nodded and asked, “How do I set up false identities?” Roger said, “You should be able to figure this out for yourself. If you cannot, call me up and say that you need help on the *Argentine Project*. I think you can do the rest yourself. I will monitor your progress by seeing no activity about you on any computer system. Good luck. Now let's find our kids, put all the temporary help in the big dorm room. Jane, you might as well join them.”



Just about everyone got up from the table at once. About three people stayed to deal with the dishes. Roger and most of his slaves went down a long corridor and then up a staircase. There were several rooms with children of different ages. In a few minutes, the kids were in their parents' arms, and the temporary workers were leashed. Roger held Jane's leash. He told her, "You stay with me since I am personally responsible for you." They went down another corridor to a large room with mats on the floor. There were small stands near each mat with drinking water, a flashlight, and a nearby potty. There was a proper bathroom that was quite deluxe. The eight slaves (if you include Jane) took turns using the toilet and then picking out a mat. Each slave was chained to a nearby anchor, and the door was locked from the outside. Jane was behind in her sleep, and her head was filled with wine and confusion. Jane's mission was to change society so that no one had special privileges, and as many slaves as possible could be freed. Even with a deluxe bathroom, this appeared to be an unlikely place to start a social revolution. Jane fell asleep easily.

## A Fresh Day

Jane woke up early. There was enough light coming through the window for her to look around the room. Everyone else was sound asleep. She noticed that some of the mats in the room were arranged very close together so that two people could sleep together. These seemed more popular than the mats that were more isolated. Jane was glad that she had not accidentally taken one of the popular mats. She noticed condoms on a shelf close to the "couple's mats." Jane used the little potty next to her mat and waited for the door to open. Samantha came in and unlocked everyone. She brought in a cart with eight small baskets for laundry. Everyone put their laundry in a plastic tub that already had their name on it. Samantha passed out bathrobes for everyone. There was a line for the bathroom, but everyone was polite. Jane used one of the sinks to wash up since she had already done her business. A few minutes later, Samantha used a key to open a latch on the wall. She pulled a lever, and a pair of tables slid into the room. She pulled in a second cart, loaded with food. In two minutes, the tables were set, and everyone was eating an amazing breakfast. Someone came in quickly, placed Jane's two suitcases on her mat, and alerted her that the suitcases were there.

Everyone at the table was curious about Jane. She had a slave collar but had the clothes and luggage of a free person. She told them that she was a freed slave who had run into some problems and that Roger and his slaves were helping her. Everyone nodded and started to say how nice Roger and his slaves were. One of the child care workers said, "If you have a problem, and you come to Roger's house, he and his slaves will make it better."

Just then, the door unlocked, and Lucy and five other women came into the room. Lucy was breastfeeding a small baby. The women were all asking about their children, and how they had behaved last night. By the familiarity, Jane realized that these workers regularly came to the house, and they knew each child by name and temperament. Jane knew that when you get caregivers together to discuss their charges, the conversations could go on quite a long time. Samantha came in and said, "The self-transport needs to start in 30 minutes. Is everyone feeling OK to walk back to your company? It is about 55 degrees outside, will anyone need a sweatshirt?" Everyone raised their hands. Jane made note of the need to dress warmly.

Everyone ate quickly. Conversation stopped. Another cart came in with clean clothes, with a sweatshirt for everyone. Jane asked, "Did they clean the clothes that quickly?" One of the child care slaves said, "Oh no, they keep a few sets of clean clothes here for each of us. They are careful to launder our clothes and keep track of our names. The house treats us so special; we love it here." They finished their breakfast and switched to getting washed up and dressed. Jane did hear one of the women say, "Next time, I sleep with Roberto!" The women all looked at one of the two men, who made an expression like, "Everyone calm down, and wait your turn." They all dropped their bathrobes onto just one mat and put on their clothes right there in the center of the room. Jane joined them, to much hilarity. One of the women said, "You look like you would be very sweet with children. If you were part of our crew, some of the women here would wish you were a man!"

Jane walked with them to the entry hall, as the slaves formed into a line, all chained together. They wore simple sandals without socks, and the lead person wore a large tracking device. Several women and children went outside to wave goodbye to them. Lucy held Jane's leash so that she could join them outside as well. All in all, it seemed like a lot of time and effort had been expended to allow all the slaves in Roger's household to have an adult dinner together. It was very hard for Jane to think that Roger was some nasty person trying to trick Jane into saying or doing anything to get her into trouble. Whatever Roger was, he was the person that he said he was. Jane now felt like she could fully trust him.

About an hour after the slaves left, Roger came in with a small item. He said, "This is an encrypted USB hard drive with 10 trillion bytes of material. The password is digit 4, the word 'ever' followed by two exclamation marks. This should give you plenty of material for your project." Jane put a sticker over the USB port and wrapped it up with some of her clothing. Jane hoped that if it were discovered, the person would not think that it was something for a computer.

## **Back to the Supreme Council**

About one hour after getting the hard drive, Jane got into a car with Roger to go to the Council meeting. By then, Jane's clothes had been laundered and packed into her suitcases. Roger strapped and locked Jane into the car, drove what seemed to be less than three miles, and unlocked and unstrapped her. He put a leash on Jane and walked into the Council building. He instructed a staff member, "Please chain Jane in a corner of the hearing room. Get her a donut, coffee, or anything that she needs. Please stay close so that Jane can be unchained when the meeting starts." With that, Jane was in an empty room, except for some staff members.

After about half an hour, the members of the Supreme Council walked into the hearing room and took their seats. Roger motioned for one of the staff people to unlock Jane, to attach the leash, and to bring Jane before the members of the Council. Julie said, "I hope that Roger has been a suitable host." Jane said, "Yes, he was, I had a pleasant evening." Julie then asked, "Can I inquire about where you slept last night?" Jane answered, "I slept in a very pleasant room with open sleeping for myself and seven slaves. We were all chained up to our sleeping mats, and the door was locked for the evening." Jane wondered why she was asked this question. Perhaps

Roger had a reputation for taking advantage of his female guests. If this was not true, then chair of the Supreme Council was asking an odd and inappropriate question.

Julie continued, "Roger has a proposal that I think I can accept. It is a bit of a slap on the wrist, but we are not finding any real wrongdoing here. The Council is not concerned with people making money. The Council is concerned about any one person or faction that could upset the balance of technology in the marketplace. Jane, I am going to pass a document to you. This is what Roger says you have agreed to this." Jane read the document and said, "This is exactly what was discussed over dinner last night. I agree to these terms." Julie said, "Against my better judgment, I am going to accept these terms, with a few more clauses. I want you to cease all stock trading and allow us to track your location until I have received all the items that I will list now. I want you, Jane, to surrender your high school notebooks. We are going to give you a list of all the stock trades that we have documented. I want you to correct this list if you can see an error. I want you to write up a master document that explains why you bought or sold each security. I want to review the diary of your trades, look at your reasoning, and see if I can see your logic in your magic notebooks. If I am satisfied, there will be no further punishment. Do you agree to my terms?"

Jane answered, "I do accept these terms. I do need to keep my notebooks until I have turned over my homework assignment. I cannot cease trading until I have a chance to phone my beloved husband Amir and tell him to do so. We both trade using the same methods. I assume we are both under the same restrictions. One concern I have is that to do a full accounting I need to locate the magazine articles describing the new companies. My report needs to be based on my memory if I cannot locate the source articles in local libraries. Please do not think I am trying to hide anything if I cannot give exact quotes on certain items. I would like all the members of this Council to review my materials before any further sanctions are placed on me." All of the members of the Council nodded their agreement to this idea.

James Chu stood up and whispered into Julie's ear. Julie said, "My apologies, but there is one more restriction. You, your husband, and anyone else that knows about your methods can never offer any advice about the purchase of stocks. The only exception is to make general statements about being lucky or saying that stocks are risky. Any public or private mention of any stock as recommended or not recommended is strictly forbidden. Is that understood?" Jane answered quietly, "I understand this very clearly."

Julie said, "Please call your husband to tell him about these restrictions while the staff prepares a document with all of these terms. Once you have signed the document, we will unlock you, and you will be free to go. Until we have received your full report, you will keep the locating device on your collar. Once we get your report, we will mail you the key so that it can be removed and shipped back to us." Jane nodded her agreement. She called Amir. Amir was grateful to know that Jane was alive and able to travel back to Warren. A few minutes later, a document was produced. As soon as Jane signed it, her leash was removed. She could put her life together again.

Julie said, "Since you had problems traveling through Emeryville, I would like to travel there with you and make sure you get on a train without any problems. Do you have any train tickets

back to the east?" Jane said, "I have no return tickets." Julie just said, "Wonderful; I will accompany you to Emeryville. I assume we have no further business today." The other members of the Council shook their heads to say, "No." Jane noticed that Roger had an alarmed expression on his face. Jane knew she had to be very careful.

## Leaving Sunnyvale

Julie drove Jane to the train station. There were five parking places reserved for the Supreme Council. Jane enjoyed stepping out of the car from a front seat and not being locked up. Julie was greeted by name. It was clear that she did not need to purchase any tickets. Jane also noticed that the "border crossing" was gentler by train. There was a special tunnel with steel doors. The tunnel ducked beneath a hill, which hid the barbed wire fence from train riders.

Julie started asking about the dinner at Roger's house. As expected, she was fishing for something that Roger said that would get him in trouble. Jane decided to speak about taking a nap in someone's room and then the big dinner at a hexagonal table. Julie seemed to be familiar with the table and his eating with his entire staff. Jane mentioned the visiting child care workers, who slept in a special room. Jane said, "It appears that Roger goes to great troubles to ease the slavery restrictions on everyone, but at a certain point, everyone needs to follow the rules."

Julie wanted to know if Roger had said anything that showed that he wanted to change the social order. Jane just said, "Of course, doesn't everyone?" Julie looked surprised as if she was getting her evidence easily. Julie asked, "What did he say?" Jane carefully told the stories of freeing her family, of her friends learning about the facility that took care of babies and small children, of how there was a high death rate, and of how her friends took what money they had from the bank and purchased two babies. Jane gave enough details to break even the hardest soul. She added, "Once I told that story, Roger said that should not be happening. I hope I am not getting him into trouble." Jane noticed a few tears on Julie's cheek. She just said, "No, you are not getting him into any trouble."

Jane started to ask about Roger, "Why doesn't he use his money to deal directly in the slave trade to discourage it? He has billions. Why does he allow all this death and suffering?" Julie said, "He tried to intervene. It caused a scandal in the Council. They told him he needed to restrict his money to technology and related companies. I think if he could trade all his holdings away to end slavery, he would do so. But he cannot even stub his toe in the business side of slavery without the world coming down hard on him. I wish it were not so."

The train pulled into Emeryville. They got out and located the ticket area. Jane bought a set of tickets back to Warren. As she left with her tickets, she noticed Julie making a gesture to someone. Jane knew something was up. Julie said, "I want you to stay right by my side." Just then a group of television camera operators and other reporters gathered in front of them. One of the reporters gave a countdown with his fingers. Jane knew that in half a second, she would be on live TV, probably nationwide.

Julie just faced the cameras and said, "I am Julie Hildebrandt, head of the Supreme Council in Sunnyvale. I am here with Jane Foreman, who just gained her freedom. She has been able to buy

and sell technology stocks and now has more than \$25 million. She was asked to appear before the Council to answer questions about her trades. Jane, can you fill people in about your experiences?" Jane sucked in air and did her best. She started, "Well, the Council reviewed the stock trading activity of my husband and I. They will be continuing the review of these records. We did not use any inside information but instead used a trading system that we now realize is destabilizing our delicate financial markets. We have been asked to refrain from further trading until all of our records can be reviewed. Julie, just before the TV cameras appeared, we were speaking about what happened when I tried to travel to Sunnyvale. As I was in this station, I showed the Police my ID card and this letter inviting me to appear before the Supreme Council. The letter has some simple computer codes that can be used to verify its authenticity. Instead of typing these into a computer, they pushed me into a filthy jail cell. I was late for my meeting before the Supreme Council. Julie had to call the Chief of this police station. Why look, there she is here, come over for the camera ..." The Chief looked terrified and stepped between Julie and Jane.

Jane continued before anyone else could speak, "Chief, can you tell the nationwide audience why your Police took a level two citizen with a valid letter to appear before the Supreme Council and put this person into a dirty cell that should not be used for a pig?" The Chief just said, "When we got the phone call from her honor here, we realized our mistake. We did give you a shower." Once again, Jane was quick to pick up the conversation, "So you insult the Council and figure that giving a shower is your version of an apology. I find that an interesting point of view. But let's talk about theft. Numerous phone calls were made on my behalf to obtain all the items stolen by your Police Officers from my luggage. I am still missing a nice red-brown leather-bound notebook that I used to sketch the mountains and scenery on my train trip here. Perhaps it can be located while the TV cameras are still rolling." Jane noticed a dozen Police Officers calling on their radios and racing around the station. Jane quickly said, "I am sorry Julie, I hope I have not changed the topic. I know you are here to make sure I am not again assaulted by the Police. Is there anything else you would like to add?" Julie looked totally shocked and was struggling to form some words. She finally said, "Yes, we were upset about the delay in starting our hearing, and we were deeply distressed to learn that you really could not testify once you were brought here because you had not eaten any food for a full day. And I do hope someone can find your leather book." Just then, an Officer came running up with Jane's sketchbook. Jane said, "Well, the police ignored two phone calls from a billionaire about returning my things. It takes a nationwide TV hookup for them to return my things. Citizens, just address letters to the Supreme Council of Sunnyvale California. Please send letters about abuses of the local Police to the Supreme Council. Hopefully, they will investigate and bring these outrageous abuses to an end. There, I think we are done with this interview."

Once the cameras were off, Julie yelled, "What the hell was that?" Jane answered quietly, "Sorry, but I did not know what to say. I improvised. Next time you want me on TV, give me a script." Jane picked up her luggage and walked to her track. While she was doing so, they were whooping and hollering in Warren, Ohio.

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# Chapter 10: Days of Preparation

## Back to Amir

Jane waited three hours for her train. She was happy to get into her seat and to park her luggage. She had purchased first class tickets for herself. She needed to pull herself together for the long road ahead. She did not know how any of this would play out. She remembered that she had turned off her phone after she last called Amir.

Jane turned on her phone. Within a few minutes, she saw that she had over 15 messages. She hoped that there was no emergency back home. Before she could call Amir, her phone rang. It was Amir's mother, Pamela. Now Jane was terrified. Had something horrible just happened to Amir? She gulped air and said, "Jane here," in a fast, neutral tone. Pamela just said, "Good gracious, where are you? How are you doing?" Jane said, "I am fine. Is everyone OK there?" Pamela said, "Heavens, I turn on the TV, and all they show is you talking with that odd lady in a train station. It sounded like you are in trouble. She also said that you had millions of dollars. I do not think you want this information public. What is going on?"

Jane replied, "Yes, and I just signed a big document promising that I would not discuss it with anyone. That lady made the broadcast so that the entire country would be asking me questions. I think she wants me to violate my agreement so that they can execute me. Please believe me when I say that I wish I were not in this position. But I do not want to endanger Amir. Right now I am on a train that is just pulling away from the San Francisco area. I am on my way to Warren Ohio to be back with Amir. Once we have had a chance to talk together, we will decide what we can say and what we need to keep to ourselves. I love you, and I love Amir. If you talk to him before I get to Ohio, tell him I am on the way. Bye."

Once Jane had hung up, she realized she had many more messages. Most of the messages were from people she did not know. She decided to call Amir. Amir was frantic. He wondered if Jane was under arrest for what she said on the TV broadcast. Jane described buying tickets and turning around, seeing three or four TV cameras pointed at her. Jane said, "I just improvised to keep Julie from saying too much about us. I think I really derailed her presentation. No one is going to think I am some horrible financial criminal; they are going to be writing up the abuses of the police. I wonder if the Post Office will be able to carry the load." Amir said, "I passed the Post Office, and saw a line two blocks long to buy stamps. You may have started something." Jane laughed and said, "Well, at least I am selling stamps. Perhaps I should make a commercial endorsing the Post Office."

Jane kept saying, "I am safe. I am free. We cannot make any statement whatsoever about buying and selling of stocks. We can buy or sell no stocks until I can write up a long report about all of our trades. They have attached a gray box to my collar so that they know where I am. There is no running away from these people; we have to do what they say. Both of us have to be very careful every hour of every day." Jane also told Amir that she thought the broadcast was a crude attempt to force or trick Jane or Amir into violating the agreement. Jane kept saying, "These people are

devious. Trust my close friends. Trust your own family. Trust no one else. I love you. I am sorry this got to be very dangerous. Be safe.”

Jane looked at her phone and sighed. She would be in the mountains in a few hours and would not be able to talk to anyone. She called Amir again. She said, “Honey, I think we need to have a spokesman. I want you to switch my phone service so that I have a new number. Then give a phone with my current number to Danny. Can you do this? I want him to be our spokesman. Just tell him to say that we have no statement to make before we can talk to an attorney to find out what we can say. Make sure he is well rested so that he can say that again and again. I may be in the mountains soon. Phone service is very spotty there. Please do not worry if I do not answer the phone for a day or so. I love you.”

Amir worked quickly. Danny got a new phone that rang when anyone called Jane. Danny identified himself as the spokesman for Jane Foreman. He wrote down personal messages. When people tried to tell him police horror stories, he just said, “Jane cannot help you. She said on the TV broadcast what to do with that information. I am sorry, I cannot help you. Have a good day.” Emily helped Danny on some of the tricky calls. After a day, the phone rang constantly. Danny did the best job he could. Danny also did quite a few TV interviews. He clearly stated that Jane could make no statement about any specific stock. He added, “The chair of the Supreme Council of Sunnyvale stated to Jane that she would be executed if she made any statement about any specific stock. We all love Jane. Please do not think that your stock market question is worth a human life.”

Many reporters asked if Danny was a slave of Jane and Amir. Danny just said, “My owner has a business relationship with Jane and Amir. I am trusted in many ways. I am the spokesman for Jane and Amir.” Meanwhile, Jane's phone stopped ringing, except for the few people who knew the new number. At one point, she asked Amir what name he used to order her phone number. He said, “Your phone is listed as *Best Gold Collar Enterprises*.” Jane said, “You are the Best Gold Collar in my Enterprise. I love you.”

## **A Violent Press Conference**

When Jane's train pulled into Warren, she stepped down to the platform with her two suitcases. Jane was met by several reporters. Jane stepped quickly through the station. She spotted Danny's car in the lot and walked quickly to it. Amir was in the back seat. He jumped out and helped her put the bags in the back. Danny pulled out ahead of the reporters. Jane said, “We need to get rid of the reporters. Anyone have any ideas?” Danny just muttered, “I tried to answer their questions, but they want to talk to you.” Jane said, “Let's have a press conference on the front lawn of Mr. Mitchell's house. Amir, I want you to stand next to me, on alert, with a pillowcase.” Amir asked, “What are you talking about?” Jane smiled and said, “Just stand next to me with a pillowcase. You will quickly figure out what to do.”

When the car got to Mr. Mitchell's house, Jane saw several dozen reporters waiting close to the house. Jane stepped out and said, “I will give just one press conference in the middle of the front lawn in 30 minutes. Call all your camera crews and colleagues. There will be no further access to me after this one press conference.”

Jane spent the time using the facilities, changing her clothes and collecting her thoughts. Jane and Amir walked to the center of the lawn. Danny was already there so that the camera operators knew where Jane would be standing. Jane said, "I will start in two minutes. I will give a short statement, and then you can start asking questions. When I am tired, we will stop. After that, please leave town, for your own good. If you are an out-of-town reporter in town after tonight, then we will make sure you deeply regret that decision. I view this situation as a threat to the love of my life. At this moment of time, your life means nothing to me. Of course, that does not apply to local reporters, as long as they are polite. Are we clear about the ground rules?" The reporters all nodded, "Yes."

A camera operator signaled, "three, two, one" with his fingers. Every eye was on Jane. She said, "Good Afternoon. My name is Jane Foreman. For six years, I was a slave. As many people know, I am originally from Warren Ohio. I currently reside with my husband in Atlanta, Georgia. Three years ago, we began trading stocks using a very unusual method. I was summoned to Sunnyvale California to testify before the Supreme Council to explain what we had been doing. They were not pleased by what I had to say and want further information. We have been threatened with execution if we speak about our trading concept, or about the prospects of any individual stocks or group of companies. I have asked my husband to cover my head with a pillowcase if I start to answer a question that might lead to our death. My hope is that he will then hit me over the head and carry me away so that our lives might be spared. I am also telling Mr. Hughes here that his owner has asked him to assault and apprehend any reporter that asks an inappropriate question. As a slave, he cannot be charged. He merely needs the testimony that his owner ordered him to do what he did. Under these circumstances, you might take months to get out of your coma, while Mr. Hughes' owner might face a modest fine. Emily, can you equip Danny with a baseball bat? He may need it."

Jane continued, "As you all know, Amir and I have been very lucky trading stocks. We have been asked to stop. Our methods are under investigation. I have been asked to submit a detailed diary of all trades. My report needs to satisfy some very skeptical people. Very specifically, I cannot comment on any individual stock or group of stocks. I cannot tell you what I have bought or what I have sold. I can say that Amir and I came up with a very different approach that seemed to have startled the Supreme Council. I relied on published information, which I utilized in a most unusual way. I am sorry that I cannot say another word about this. All of the items that I relied on are being confiscated, as soon as I finish writing my report."

"I would like to make it clear that we welcome this investigation. We realize that if we continued doing what we were doing, we would be in danger of destabilizing the delicate balance of technology companies that the Supreme Council is trying to maintain. Our desire to exercise our legal rights to use the financial markets to our advantage should never be confused with any attempt on our part to upset anything on a national scale."

"Our use of the funds for our own life has been modest. We live in a two bedroom apartment, with one bedroom converted into an office. We have purchased a used car, paid for my freedom, paid for my immediate family's freedom and business, paid for all the support Amir has received in the past from his generous family, paid for our wedding, and paid for another wedding of two close friends here in Warren. Recently, I helped my immediate family to set up a bicycle factory



here in Warren. While we have used the money to help others, Amir and I have been living modestly. If you visited us in Atlanta, you would think we were ordinary college students.”

“I just got off the train. I do not know how things are going here. I am assuming that my very clever parents have already started the production lines at their new factory. I see that Danny is giving me a *thumbs up*, so that is apparently true.”

“Until about three weeks ago, I was a slave. I have been blessed by having a series of owners who have allowed me great freedom to choose my own course. My most recent owner has been Amir, my beloved husband. Assuming that the investigation into our affairs finds us to be clever, lucky, and legal, we will be putting our lives back together again. Our first priority will be to help others in my immediate circle of friends, who have supported me in my darkest hours.”

“OK, that is enough from me. Now, I will take some questions, and remember that the welfare of your widow and your children depends on your choosing questions carefully.” One reporter asked, “Do you feel that you had an unfair advantage over other investors? After all, about 80% of technology investors lose all their money within a year, and yet your money seemed to multiply again and again?” Jane answered, “Good question. My method involved finding a set of printed materials. Fate allowed me to understand these items had a special role, and I studied them intently, not knowing their true potential. When I started to live with Amir's family, I got access to a large collection of technology trade publications, which showed the true value of the insights that I had obtained. Fate gave me insights that no one else had. I think the Supreme Council will decide that what I did was legal, but it should be brought to an end. I have seen advertisements for stock picking lessons that cost ten thousand dollars or more. That is not fair to those who do not have that much money. Let me turn the question around. If you had a new idea for a new business, would you feel an obligation to share it with others?”

Jane called on another reporter. He asked, “If you are a free woman, why do you wear a slave collar?” Jane answered, “I get that a lot. I am free. You can go to the police, and they will verify it for you. I wear my gold collar because it shows how much I was trusted when I was a slave. I am proud of being trusted. It is very pretty, and every so often, I still like to walk around with my husband holding the leash.” Jane smiled broadly on the last item. No one knew if she was kidding.

A voice called from behind the cameras, “What stocks are you invested in now?” Amir was slow to react. But Deb was already behind the reporter asking the question. She wrapped a leather strap around his hands. Danny grabbed his bat, held it horizontally in both hands, and charged into the reporters. The reporters scattered, but the one who asked the question could not move aside. Deb held on tight. Danny pushed the bat into his chest and knocked him to the ground. Danny called for Amir's help. They carried him into the house. A few minutes later they came out.

Meanwhile, Jane and Emily kept the press conference going. Jane just pretended that she was asked a different question. She answered, “Yes, I was Valedictorian of my high school. It was a very proud moment. Next question please?” After a few more questions, the press conference was over.

They all went inside to check their prisoner. They pulled out his wallet and found an ID card that said, "Fred Blair, of Sunnyvale California." There were business cards under different names, including one that was for a reporter for a newspaper in Chicago. Emily asked him, "Who are you? Why are you here?" The man said, "I have nothing to say." Emily said, "Chain him up with short chains in the corner of my bedroom. We need to talk to Jane about Sunnyvale."

## **False Identities**

Once their mystery prisoner was immobilized, everyone gathered in the main room. Jane spent two hours carefully describing her trip to Sunnyvale. She added, "I have two mysteries. How does one create a false identity? What is on this USB drive? Peter, can you take this drive and tell me what kind of things are on it? I will write down the password for you. Emily, can you fill us in about false identification?"

Emily looked nervous and answered, "So you are wondering why I could teach a course under the name Emily Johnson?" Jane said, with some irritation in her voice, "Yes, I want to know how you did it. This seems crucial for our plans, though, at this point, I think that using false identities will get us all killed."

Emily said, "Well, I might as well tell the story. One summer, I worked at the data center that keeps track of all citizens. I was working there because they like to have level two people staff the center, considering the sensitive nature of the work. I learned some of the master passwords. No one knows that I know them. I found them on someone's desk when I was on the night shift. I decided to write them down."

"I can make any changes I want to citizens' records. The amazing thing is that there is no logging the changes. As long as you have the time to type in a lot of things, you can fake someone's entire life. I found a record of a child that died at an early age, erased the death record, and filled in the life details, medical records, and school records, to make it look like that other person is alive. Then I obtained an ID in the false name. Instead of being a level two person, I become a level four, and I get to do a lot of things without people taking notice of what I am doing. What do you have planned for us, Jane?"

Jane said, "My original idea was to have each of our couples here set up some companies. But now we know we are under intensive surveillance. I thought that each couple would set up a few companies. On the train here, I tried to imagine what we could do if we could set up a multitude of false identities. I imagined each couple could have a pair of false identities. They would have a first house in one community and a second house in a nearby community under the false identity. If done right, the couple would appear to be functioning in two different communities. For me, it is more complicated. We may have to find someone who looks like me to wear a gold collar to use as a decoy now and then."

Emily said, "Not bad; that could work. How are we going to raise more money? Stock trading is out of the question. We need another game to raise money. We just need another \$50 million before we can do much of anything." William spoke up, "I am usually not the person with the big plan. I have an idea that just might work. What if we form a fake company? Jane, once you

are allowed to trade, take half your money and invest in the fake company. Send a message to Julie and her cronies that discloses your investment. You are required to do that. I think they will want to get in on the trade and invest a fortune. Then we fold up shop and collect all the money. When she comes running to you, Jane, you shrug your shoulders, because you are a victim as well. We will need to cover our tracks very carefully. Someone collects all the money in bearer bonds, and we end up with \$50 to \$100 million.”

Jane was horrified. She said, “We will all be executed for that. There is no way we could do it.” Peter added, “If we make the company so terrible an investment that even the slightest checking would reveal it was no good, even admitting that she lost money would be an admission of criminal behavior on Julie's part. I think she would just lick her wounds and wait for another moment to pounce on you. I think we have a shot at getting away with it.”

Emily joined in, “How about listing all the slave traders in one state as being the board of directors, CEO, and key staff? That would really foul up the slave business.” Jane said, “Once again, you are being very dramatic. Once the company is announced, the real people will scream bloody murder, and the whole idea collapses at once.”

William said, “No, this is brilliant. Remember, we want just one investor, Julie Hildebrandt. She gets a message that you are putting money into this company. She does a search for the name of the company. She finds a list of the board, staff, and all. It is a long list. Each of them is a real person. She does not phone them because she wants the money invested within minutes. She is greedy. But we need some real Public Relations materials circulated. These will list a company name, address, and description of the technology, but no names. If we do this right, the list of names only comes out after the fraud, not before it. We need one person to pretend to be the founder of the company, one of us. He or she brings the paperwork in to say they are the founder of a new company. We quickly issue new stock certificates. Yes, this is stock fraud. It is a crime. As soon as the certificates are issued, Jane, you buy \$15 million worth of stock. Julie, if she is as greedy as we think she is, will buy a lot more. As soon as her check clears, buy bearer bonds, say that you are using the money to fund the construction of a factory, and leave about \$2 million in the account.”

William continued, “Jane, do you think Julie would try to invest where you invest without looking for more information? That is the key question.” Jane answered, “There were some things that made me think that Julie does not pay close attention to rules. She used the fact that I wore a collar as an excuse to order me in chains for the day. She asked me inappropriate questions to attempt to embarrass Roger Carter. At one point, she seemed to have slipped up and ordered me to send my stock trades just to her instead of to the Council. She arranged for the TV ambush at the train station. And who knows what she did to get that jerk chained up in the corner of Emily's room? So yes, I think she may do something that she will in time regret. I say we give this a try. We will, at least, strike a blow against entrenched money and power.”

Zach chimed in, “Wow, we are really crossing the Rubicon on this. What is on that hard drive? Let's call Peter down and find out. By the way, I think there is less on the official record about me. If you need one person to pull off the banking part of this, it might as well be me. If caught, I can claim that my only aim was trying to swindle Jane.”

Peter came down the stairs. He just said, “Well, we have hit the jackpot. It looks like Roger Carter really wanted to do this operation himself. He plotted the whole thing out. But somehow, he came under suspicion, and he was unable to do it. Instead, he has turned his whole blueprint over to us. Besides transforming society, I think the group that pulls this off will end up being worth multiples of ten billion dollars. It appears that the first step is to rewire all the computer networks to handle multiple protocols. Roger seemed to think that if you had enough money, you could underbid any other company handling network traffic. For a modest fee, you can vastly upgrade the network traffic and reduce costs. As far as anyone was concerned, the data pipes would seem to be exactly as they were before. Once you flip the switch, you can offer services not possible today, but which were common in the microcomputer and web era.”

Peter added, “I am just telling you what was in a few readme files. The main payload of the disk drive is the source code for some browsers, Google search, Facebook, and other major services. The idea is to put together our own software products set to release on the same day when we flip on the network switch. If we do this right, there will be no turning back. We move to a new society in which we hold more keys than the bleeping billionaires. Over a short time period, we will duplicate the progress made by Internet companies in 1990-2010. Hundreds of companies will lose value or topple. We are going to make everyone rich and powerful very angry, except maybe Roger Carter. When we flip the switch, we had better be in hiding somewhere no one can find us. By the way, Jane, please do your homework assignment for Julie. You need to be free of the trading restrictions.”

## **The Prisoner**

The discussion went on for several more hours. The girls all decided to go upstairs and talk to their prisoner. They asked him who he was and what he was doing there. He was quiet. Jane said, “Do not worry. A slave that is tightly bound usually dies within two days of thirst, starvation, and muscle death. Then it is just a corpse disposal problem. I think we can chop him up and add him to the pig farms around here. The cops can come and ask about him, but with a bribe, they will forget about the case. Are you sure you do not want to talk?”

He finally said, “OK, I am Fred Blair, a lawyer in Sunnyvale. I was asked by a client to come here and ask a question that would get you upset. I just did not realize how sensitive you were.” Jane said, “Who sent you here?” Fred said, “That is confidential.” Jane said, “Really, I do think you will be telling us soon. Emily, can you pass me that whip you have in the bottom of your closet? Fred, I would like to repeat my question, confidential or not, who sent you to Warren Ohio?” Jane used her considerable strength to whip Fred on his back and rear end. The scream filled the house. Fred quickly said, “My client is Julie Hildebrandt. She wanted me to encourage others to ask questions about your stock trading.”

Jane asked, “What are you going to tell Julie? Do you think her plan is succeeding? Have you taught reporters a lesson in hounding me? Are you going to answer me, or are you going silent?” Emily said, “Look, we are rapidly reaching the point where we will need to kill him. Stop here. Send him back to Julie. Let him tell Julie how angry you are about the way that Julie has treated you. Right now, you have just shredded his clothes. Hit him again, and you will do more damage to him than can be easily repaired. I do not mind where we are now, but disposing of bodies is

more of a pain than you think. I say stop here.” The way Emily said that made Jane wonder if Emily did have experience disposing of bodies.

In the end, they put a temporary steel collar around Fred's neck. They tied him down and melted solder into the keyhole that allows one to take off the collar. They took away his ID card, phone, and wallet and gave him a sleeping pill. Once he was passed out, Danny and Amir took him to the train station. They bought him a ticket to Emeryville and carried him into a train compartment. They knew that the next day, he would be found and would be sent to the police. It might take a week or two, but he would eventually be sent to California.

Meanwhile, his phone and other possessions were shipped as a parcel on the same train, addressed to the phony address on his business card. Anyone who was tracking his movements via his phone would see the steady progress of him traveling. It did take two weeks to sort it all out. When he finally made it to California, Julie was furious. She was upset that Fred had revealed his mission. That was supposed to be confidential.

## The Heist

Step one was for Jane to finish her report to Julie. Jane added details that would cause Roger or other members of the Council to ask some serious questions. Julie accepted the report without any questions. Jane was even more certain that Julie was not sharing paperwork with the rest of the Council. Julie's inappropriate behavior was helping to set the trap.

Emily focused on one false identity. She found a boy, born in Utah, who died at age two in another state. The boy also had a common name. Emily made a complete copy of the citizen's record. Then she started editing it. She added school records, health records, family records, and job records. She often found other people to copy bits and pieces of a record, just editing the name. She uploaded a recent photo of Zach wearing a disguise. When she was done, she had enough material for Zach to order a replacement ID card. They used an address where people were a bit sloppy about who picked up the mail. Zach had no history at that address and was able to pick up the ID card without anyone asking him who he was.

They decided to target the state of Indiana. Emily got a list of all 22 slave traders in the state. Each person was on the board or had a key position for a new company. In September, Zach filed letters of incorporation for the company, *Indiana Advanced Communications*. The information filed indicated that the amount of stock to be sold was between \$2 and \$5 million. The address was a small office that Zach had rented with his phony ID. Zach set up a bank account. That required that he show his phony ID card. The bank made a copy of the ID card. He told the bank that they would be selling stock and that if they raised enough money, he would be withdrawing bearer bonds to set up a new factory in the region. The banker took a look at Zach and showed an expression that seemed to say, “I do not believe you are capable of this.”

Emily created some public relations flyers about a new company that used “Advanced Japanese radio technology” to allow slaves to communicate better with their owners. It was all about saving time, money, and the lives of slaves that might be forgotten in isolated places. The material was too good to be true. There was an offer for advanced technology at basement prices.

The flyers were loaded onto a widely used computer system in such a way that they could be located if someone was searching for it.

As usual, Jane added her insights. She knew that billionaires wished that GPS technology could be revived. The billionaires were too greedy to share the wealth they had accumulated. They would never allow a level of taxation that would allow for GPS technology to be revived. Jane knew exactly what to say that would excite the brain of a billionaire who wanted an instant solution for the control of large populations. Jane shuddered at the thought of what life would be like with slavery and GPS technology. She knew that there would be no way to end the nightmare.

Jane sent a money transfer for \$17 million. She also sent a money transfer to purchase \$12 million in gold within the hour. She was cashing out of the system. Jane sent a message to Julie saying she was buying the stock. By now, these messages were routine. Previously, Jane had sold all of her stock to have \$27 million in her trading account. Each time Jane had sold some stock, she sent a message to Julie.

While \$12 million may have seemed like a lot, it was only 300 ounces, since gold cost \$40,000 per ounce. Jane knew that 300 one-ounce coins weighed about 21 pounds. She could carry it away in a backpack in an emergency. She also knew that she could buy 50 slaves with that much gold. She felt momentary guilt about “hoarding gold.” But she knew that project was more important than freeing a few dozen slaves.

The trap was set. A week later, Zach went into the bank to find out the balance of the company account. It was an astonishing \$111 million. Zach asked for \$109 million in Supreme Council bearer bonds. The bonds would be shipped by express mail to the business address of the company. They were expected to arrive in three days. Zach could barely sleep for those three days. Zach had already stripped the office of all paperwork. He made sure there were no fingerprints anywhere in the office. When Zach was at the bank, he was careful to place his hand on top of one of his papers to rest his palm when he used his pen to sign the paperwork. Everything was stripped clean. Once the box arrived with the bearer bonds, Zach put them into his rented car and left town.

He returned the car and put the bonds in a safe location. He gave Emily a signal that his ID was no longer needed. Emily deleted the computer records of the false ID and replaced the original file. Now any search for that citizen number would link to a dead toddler from a generation ago. There was no trace of a connection to Jane or her friends at all. Jane waited for another week and sent Julie a message that she had apparently lost all of her money on a fraudulent company. Jane waited for the explosion.

In a lightning raid, all the slave traders in Indiana and their families and associates were arrested by hundreds of police. Dozens of police raided the bank. Every scrap of information was seized. Julie did not trust anyone. She had hundreds of large boxes of information shipped to Sunnyvale. Julie called up Jane and demanded she tell her what happened. Jane told her, “My magic died when I lost my notebooks to you and the Council. I hope you did not invest in this. It is a real mess. It looks like classic insider fraud. I am very happy you are dealing with this; I know you

will get to the bottom of this and get my money back.” Jane added, “I cannot believe that I was taken in from top to bottom. Every part of the documentation screamed fraud. I think my experience has been to spot good technologies. I just found out how bad I am at spotting such an obvious fraud.” Julie started cursing. Jane hung up the phone.

Jane turned her attention to helping Amir with his senior year of college. It had been a very busy summer, and the school year was starting with way too much excitement. Jane had \$12 million in gold and \$109 million in bearer bonds, of which \$94 million was stolen from Julie and her associates. She had enough money to move the project to the next stage. She knew that her every footprint needed to be erased if she was to succeed.

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# Chapter 11: Years of Preparation

## The Senior Year of College

Two weeks before the start of Amir's senior year of college, Jane and Amir traveled back to Atlanta by train. They tried to slip into town quietly, but that was hard to do. Jane was a national celebrity. Jane and Amir told the story of why they were living in Atlanta many times to many reporters. Local reporters loved the story of how a local family of relatively modest means outbid a billionaire for the purchase of what was clearly the most valuable slave ever offered for sale. Jane and Amir also told the story of their marriage, and how Jane obtained her freedom during the ceremony. The local reporters were very respectful of the need to keep their financial details private.

Two weeks after the start of college, Jane and Amir made the shocking announcement that they had been swindled out of their money. They said they still had some money, but they were no longer going to try to invest in anything. They would just try to hold onto their money. Their goal was to wait until Amir could get out of graduate school and be in a position to start his own business.

Julie Hildebrandt traveled to Indianapolis to hold televised hearings on the *Indiana Advanced Communications* swindle. These hearings started in mid-October. Jane was summoned to testify. She was asked why she had invested in this company. Jane testified, "I systematically constructed analogies with the histories of the 1970s through the 2000s. I regarded the technology that was promised as transformational as the web was in the earlier era. What I did not know was the company was a sham, perhaps constructed just to collect my money."

Jane later added, "People in their 70's and 80's must remember using the web, Google, and Facebook in their youth. With these tools, everyone could communicate with each other so that each person could be his or her own publisher. This many-to-many form of communications was a revolution. Among other things, it allowed citizens to curtail abuses by those in authority."

This testimony was very close to the truth. The company was specifically constructed to collect Jane's money. Julie carefully avoided mentioning that she was the biggest investor. Jane was amused to see all of the slave traders in Indiana and their spouses testifying in handcuffs and chains. Julie very much wanted to get to the bottom of this affair. The only clue anyone had been a blurry copy of the ID card used to open the bank account. Since the ID number was linked to a child who died 20 years ago, it made it look like the bank was involved or was highly negligent. The common view was that Jane was a very clever slave with a blind spot: she could not recognize an obvious fraud. Somehow, criminals had pulled off a sophisticated fraud and made off with Jane and Amir's money.

Jane was grateful for her investment in her father's bicycle factory. She could tell people that the revenue from the bicycle factory allowed her and Amir to meet basic expenses without using their remaining money or relying on relatives. Jane told people that the college tuition and the



rent were covered by the income from the factory. She recommended that everyone buy their bicycles from the *Foreman Bike Works*.

## **Project Progress during the Senior Year**

Peter was the lead person to go through the hard drive from California. It was clear that Roger Carter had a very detailed plan to transform the primitive form of computer networking into the more powerful form on which it was based. Roger's plan was to allow each fiber to take the role of the existing four primitive modes. If a company needed to use three modes, it would now need only one fiber instead of needing three fibers. A bonus was that the new software allowed for much faster transmission speeds. Considering how expensive dedicated computer lines were, the entity setting up the new system could charge huge fees. It would still be a bargain for the customer.

The new software was a Trojan horse. By setting a hidden mode, you could carry those four existing data modes plus “even better mode” mode that followed historical HTTP protocols. Once you had significant parts of the national network converted, you could “turn on” full HTTP traffic everywhere.

If one were actively converting cables to the more advanced setup, one could make huge sums of money well before the day came to “flip the switch.” To express this idea another way, it was a way of extending the \$100 million war chest of the enterprise if one of their operations made significant profits before they could flip the switch. Once the whole enterprise was visible to all, they would make significant money from the rise in the value of their companies. They made the deliberate decision to use the fiber conversion project as a key funding mechanism for the whole project.

The other positive was that Roger had every detail worked out. Every computer program, every piece of equipment was listed and described. There were maps of cables, addresses of critical locations. It was one thing for Peter to look over this master plan and see that it was well crafted. The next step was to see if he could do a small project on his own. Peter did his best to locate equipment at his university to test. He was able to establish better communications with everything he worked on. He was so successful that his university wanted to hire him full time to upgrade all the computer cables on campus.

Peter was very enthusiastic about this project. The one thing that worried him was that it was clearly against the wishes of the billionaire class that ran the country. He was not sure that he could work out a way to keep his company from catching too much attention.

He had only two poorly worked out ideas. One thought was to support the needs of banks. If the enterprise could solve their data needs, it would be harder to think of them as “the enemy.” The other idea was to set up lots of regional offices, each with a different name so that this massive network of companies would not appear to be part of the same coordinated enterprise.

On another front, Emily constructed transitional identities for all members of the Five Couples. Each person got a new citizen ID card in the mail from Emily. No one dared ask her how these

were obtained. The only instructions she gave were to hold onto these ID cards. Do not use them and do not let anyone else see them. Everybody wondered what was meant by “your transitional identity.”

## The Summer after College

There were nine college graduates in the Five Couples. Since Jane was auditing her courses, she did not get a degree. Jane was a voracious reader, and she went to countless lectures and presentations during her college years. Her intellectual curiosity was well known by anyone who had any dealings with her. Sarah said, “When this is all done, every university will be fighting with each other to give you an honorary Ph.D.” Jane just said, “If I just require a university to free their slaves and to give a free education to slaves and recently freed slaves, they will pause before giving me that great honor.”

The graduations happened all over the country. Amir and Jane were in Atlanta. There were graduations in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, and Denver. It was now time to get to work.

As soon as all of the college graduations were done, the Five Couples all traveled back to Warren Ohio. They held a three-day conference. At the end of each day, there was a wedding. On Monday, it was William and Sarah. On Tuesday, it was Peter and Becky. On Wednesday, it was Karen and Zach. The weddings were fun and functional. The alcohol was for the guests and lightly consumed by the Five Couples. Some of them secretly filled their glasses with alcohol-free bubbly to make it appear that they were fully celebrating.

Monday's conference was on the core product. Peter gave the presentation. Each couple had an assignment:

- Peter and Becky would handle basic networking. Their goal was to take over the networking business by offering amazing prices and maximum technology. This was the only technology that needed to be deployed nationwide to enable all other enterprise projects.
- Cathy and Deb were assigned the task of bringing the signal from the major cables to computer screens. This would involve the assembling of a new version of the open-source Firefox browser, Wi-Fi software, and Wi-Fi hardware.
- Zach and Karen were assigned to write web-enabled e-mail software and website construction tools, plus turn-key ISP software.
- Jane and Amir were assigned to implement applications resembling Google and Facebook.
- William and Sarah were assigned to handle tasks that were falling behind or pick up small tasks that others could not handle correctly. The first specific goal was to support Peter and Becky to offer specific applications needed immediately to make the project functional.

Tuesday's conference was on secrecy and tradecraft. Everyone was briefed on the core operational secrecy needed to keep the project hidden from view. Each person needed three separate identities: their normal name and identity, their cover name and identity, and a transitional name and identity. The transitional identity was to be used to travel from their normal house to their cover house.

Emily explained, "Everything in your normal house has to be clean. A single loose piece of paper could be your undoing. The rule is, assume that the police might search your house at any time. They should find nothing suspicious. People might ask what your source of income is. Just say, 'I edit other students' papers. Right now I am working on someone's Ph.D. dissertation. I am being paid in food and barter.' Another key problem is messaging. We want your computer system to collect your phone messages and securely relay them to a different location. You should be able to use a computer remotely to get your messages. If you can do this, you should have no trouble living a double life. Peter and Becky are working right now on the software to provide this capability to us."

The tradecraft rules were complex. The biggest weakness was being followed by another car. After a lecture on the tradecraft of avoiding being tailed, everyone got into cars and practiced following and avoiding being followed. Everyone agreed that this was much more difficult than they thought.

Wednesday morning was devoted to focusing on the prize, transforming society. They all agreed that they were not doing this just to get rich. They could use their money to achieve specific social goals. They could also use the information platforms that they were rolling out to attempt to persuade people to push for a reform agenda. There was agreement that their money would help protect them from a counter-attack from the billionaires. But holding onto every dollar was not healthy or desired. If the population perceived them as being generous and helping build a better society, they would get a better reception for their social agenda.

There was a discussion of money, and how to divide the spoils of war. Jane presented a proposed split of ownership of the new enterprise. Each of the companies formed would be owned by one large holding company. The ownership of the holding company would be 5% for the Mitchell family, 30% for Amir and Jane, 15% for each of the other couples. There was a bonus of 5% for Zach and Karen because of the additional risk they would be taking for the heist and for their role in providing banking services for the enterprise holding company.

How much would they be able to pull in? Estimates ranged from \$15 billion to \$50 billion. A 15% share of \$50 billion seemed like a huge payday for a college graduate who was tasked with working round the clock for the next five years. That was a splendid hourly wage. The talk of charity did not faze anyone. Everyone sensed that over time, a generous person often ended up with much more wealth than they had when they started.

Wednesday afternoon was spent focusing on individual assignments. Each couple was assigned to live in a paired city:

- Peter and Becky were assigned to St. Paul/Minneapolis.

- Jane and Amir were assigned to Kansas City MO/Kansas City KS.
- Cathy and Deb were assigned to New York/Newark.
- Zach and Karen were assigned to Dallas/Fort Worth.
- William and Sarah were assigned to Tampa/St. Petersburg.

Jane announced that every three months, there would be a high-level meeting limited to the Five Couples and the key members of the Mitchell management team. These meetings would take place in St. Louis, and all participants should travel using their cover identity. Each company being formed should have a name that reflected financial services since that was an industry not being regulated. Peter's networking company needed a name reflecting "networking," the group suggested *Universal Networking Services*, which sounded bland and unthreatening.

On Thursday morning, everyone got dressed as they had for their own wedding, including the two couples that had married the previous summer. A very special set of group portraits was made of the Five Couples in wedding gowns and tuxedos, with each person holding a single rose. Deb decided that she preferred a tuxedo. Everyone knew that these portraits would only be printed up when the product was released in about five years.

After the portrait taking, everyone went their separate ways. Where they were to live and work was already assigned to them. Everyone needed to do their part of building a complex network of companies. Eventually, these secretive companies would all work in harmony.

Each couple now had two identities. They had their normal identity, with the names their parents gave them. They now had a new identity called their transitional identity. This was to be used when moving to their cover identity. They were not to conduct business or make friends in the transitional identity. Each couple was given a budget to purchase two houses in their assigned city, one in an area where there were many houses visible from the front of the house. This was their "normal house," where they were using their normal identity. As Emily had explained, at no time was there to be any contraband or suspicious items in their normal house, no matter how short a time this was to be. A paper document should be scanned, transmitted to a distant computer file, and then destroyed. It was as if they were on a mission in a hostile, foreign land.

They were also assigned to purchase a house close to farmland, about seven miles from their normal house, and which had no houses visible from the front of the house. This was to be their "transitional house." It needed an attached, locked, two car garage. This was to be purchased only with their transitional identity. At no time was anything from their normal identity to be used in the purchase or use of the transitional house. Everyone awaited instructions on how to construct their cover identity.

Amir and Jane traveled to a small machine shop in Pennsylvania. The workers sawed off Jane's gold collar. It was replaced with a clever duplicate that used a magnetic key. Jane could now disguise herself as someone other than herself or as a trusted slave. They paid the workers two one-ounce silver coins, worth \$2 thousand each. Amir knew that these people could keep a

secret. They also manufactured “traps,” hidden motorized boxes on motorcycles and cars to hide money or drugs. Jane wondered how Amir knew about this shop, but she decided not to ask that question. Amir was always full of odd surprises.

Peter and Becky were the first ones to get their cover identity. They quickly purchased a house and a starting business location. It was not hard to get competent staff. Peter set up separate companies to take on different tasks. That way, the hardware people knew little about the software, and the software people did not know much about the hardware. The people who did the installation did not know the details of the generation of their technology. Only Peter and Becky held all the keys.

Zach and Karen also got their cover identities early. Zach actually had two cover identities, one for technical development and one for his role as a banker. His bank largely brokered loans with other banks. He managed to arrange massive loans, using Supreme Council bearer bonds as collateral. It was brilliant since it kept the serial numbers from being seen by the authorities. The full value of the bonds was diverted to needed funds to start all of these companies without selling a single bond.

The risk to Zach was considerable. This helped justify his additional 5% of ownership share. Zach and Karen each had four different cell phones and four different ID cards to keep straight. Zach later said, “I spent five years scared that I would say the wrong thing or use the wrong ID card. It was beyond crazy.”

## Year Two

At one of the St. Louis meetings, there were two surprise guests: Lucy and Samantha from Roger Carter's household. They were there to invest \$50 million from *The Lucy Foundation*. The Lucy Foundation was a financial instrument for the personal slaves of Roger Carter. The investment would infuse another \$50 million of needed funds. Altogether, they had \$100 million from the heist and Jane, \$50 million from this investment, and maybe \$100 million to be pumped in from the networking business. This was a war chest that would take them over the finish line. As they were finding out, every project was costing more than they thought.

To make the investment, they needed to price the enterprise. It was a simple question. What percentage of this company can you buy with \$50 million? They came up with the figure of \$4 billion as the value of the enterprise at this stage. Thus, \$50 million would constitute 1.25% of the enterprise. Since the original agreement between Jane and Mr. Mitchell was that he has 5% no matter what, all other shares were diluted to make room for this new investment.

There was a point of hilarity when Lucy and Samantha took off their scarves. Neither one had a slave collar. Lucy explained that Roger had secretly freed all of his slaves years and years ago. Since this would not be popular in Sunnyvale, they all pretended to keep their old status. They used removable collars to keep up the deception. Jane explained how she used a collar only when she was playing the role of Jane Foreman. Amir frowned when Jane said that. Jane added, “He always likes to walk me on a leash. I am going to get my collar back when this project is done.”

Lucy and Samantha said, “What you are doing is amazing. You are going to help everyone in the country. By the way, our fund started with \$25 million from Roger. So far, we have doubled that. We expect this investment to be worth \$500 million in five years. Our plan is to pay Roger back with \$100 million. While Roger was not expecting to be paid back, we think giving him \$100 million will be a wonderful thank you from his former slaves.”

The success of the *Foreman Bike Works* showed what could happen if a good company got good financing. There were now major bicycle factories in seven different locations around the country. In the last two years, the price of bicycles had fallen 40% due to the influence of the Foreman pricing policy. Since bicycles were the most common form of transportation, lower prices were good for everyone. Jane was determined to see that more good ideas would be properly financed if she had anything to do with it. Another bonus was that her stake in the bicycle factory was now quite valuable. She could buy what she wanted without worrying about anyone asking how she got the money.

That year, Emily and Danny did set up an agency to hire computer programmers. They explained that there was a large demand for computer programmers in the financial industry. No one questioned the extensive background checks or the requirements for signing extensive secrecy agreements.

## **Year Three: Julie Hildebrandt Plays Rough**

Three years into the project, things had settled into a routine. Jane and Amir finished a three-day stretch in their public identity in Kansas City, Kansas. In the late afternoon, they got into their car and drove to their transition house near the edge of the city. Halfway there, they turned off their phones. Once in the isolated house, they opened the garage and put their wallets, ID cards, and phones on the car seat.

They got out of the car and knocked on the door to the attached house. An attractive couple, who strongly resembled Jane and Amir, came into the garage. Jane reached for a small magnetic tool that was kept in the garage. When the tool was placed on her gold collar and moved a tiny bit, the hidden catch opened up. Jane could open the hidden hinge and remove her collar. She handed the open collar to her double; she then expertly placed the collar around her neck. A slight wiggle of the magnetic tool locked the hidden latch. They checked that their clothes resembled each other.

The doubles put their wallets, ID cards, and phones in their own car, which Jane and Amir would be driving shortly. At this point, all the phones were turned off. The doubles drove away in Jane and Amir's car. As far as anyone could tell, they were Jane and Amir. They were going to a nice restaurant, and then to Jane and Amir's house. To anyone who was watching Jane and Amir's house, it would be as if Jane and Amir were taking a night out, and then getting home after a quiet night of entertainment and a meal.

About 45 minutes after the doubles drove away, Jane and Amir drove away from the garage, on their way to their cover house in Kansas City, Missouri. It was time to get back to work. Halfway

there, they turned on their phones. As long as no one was able to observe the switch, they were safe in their new identities.

At their cover house, they took out their transition wallets and phones. These were placed in a hidden safe in their garage. From this safe, they pulled out their wallets and phones for their cover identity. Jane and Amir made sure they made a round trip every two weeks or so. Jane's private joke was that she could have chosen a blonde woman to take her role, and no one would know the difference. Once someone saw the gold collar and saw her in her house, she was Jane Foreman. Her appearance did not matter. Amir shook his head and said, "While that might be true, at a key moment, it was crucial that the woman occupying our house should closely resemble Jane Foreman."

Three days after this transition, several cars drove close to Jane and Amir's house in the middle of the night. Four people in dark clothes rushed out of their cars and ran to the house. They pounded on the door and demanded that the door be opened immediately. The person playing the role of Jane put on a coat and opened the door. The men rushed in and demanded to know where Amir was. Once "Amir" came out of the bedroom, the house exploded with gunfire. Over 12 shots were fired. As far as the intruders were concerned, Jane and Amir were dead. One of the men walked over and very deliberately fired two shots into each of their heads. There was no doubt about their fate.

We need to acknowledge the true victims here, named Cynthia McCarthy and Paul Hanna. Their deaths would be silent; their families would be in agony over their vanishing into thin air. Only years later would they learn the sad and amazing truth.

One intruder focused on collecting the guns and picking up the bullet shell casings. The other three men quickly grabbed the computer and any papers that looked valuable. Nine minutes after the raid started, the four intruders drove off into the dark, leaving behind a horrifying crime scene.

Neighbors called the police. The police hated to deal with crimes like murder since there was no money to be had investigating a murder. This one was different. Fred Blair, the lawyer for Julie Hildebrandt, was with the police as they came to investigate. He said there would be a fat payday for the police, as long as they stripped the house of evidence and shipped everything to Sunnyvale, CA.

The police were primarily concerned about moving out all the contents of the house. They might as well have been hired to load a truck. They barely paid any attention to the dead bodies in the house. Since they had been shot in the heads, identification was difficult. But they had Jane and Amir's wallets, ID cards, and phones. Jane had on her collar, with the correct serial number in the metal, and issuing the correct ID signal. No further checking was thought to be necessary.

Jane and Amir's families were notified by the police in the morning. They were horrified and in deep grief. Jane and Amir never explained their double life to anyone outside of those that attended the St. Louis conferences. As far as their families were concerned, their hearts had just been ripped out.

Once Charles and Emily Mitchell heard the news they called Jane at her cover location. She was at work when Emily called via a phone patch that hid Emily's location. Emily was relieved to find out that the real Jane and Amir were fine. But the news was deeply distressing. Emily and Jane both wept on the phone as they thought about the distress of Jane and Amir's families. Emily could not think of any way to ease their agony. It was a blow to the gut, a reminder that they were not playing a game.

Charles called Amir's parents and offered his sincere condolences. Everyone agreed that they should be buried together in Warren Ohio. Charles knew that one way or another, the bodies would need to be reburied to be close to their true families. He made discrete inquiries as to how to arrange the caskets and burial to facilitate a re-burial.

The Five Couples had a code during phone calls. They would refer to someone as "the hard-working Peter" to refer to Peter in his cover identity. They would leave out the "hard-working" to refer to the public identity. The group used a phrase containing the word "that" to refer to the Jane or Amir double. Emily called the other members of the Five Couples to tell them, "The people that we love, Jane and Amir, are dead. We all need to gather in Warren for the funeral." To be certain, most asked, "Is the president of the company OK?" Emily said, "I need to call others. You can read the news from the computer wire services. It is so tragic *that* the people who we are so fond of are no longer alive."

Charles sent Danny to Kansas City as soon as possible to collect the bodies. Danny was also instructed to visit the transition household to secure any valuables and sentimental items. The one specific item he was asked to obtain was the magnetic collar tool from the garage. Danny got permission to walk through Jane and Amir's house. He was amazed that only large furniture items were left. When no one was looking, he removed the hidden hard drive from inside the computer desk. The computer's biggest secrets stayed in the house until Danny pulled it out.

The funeral was heartbreaking. Everyone laughed at the stories of Jane pretending to work at a brothel at night while she was in high school and all the other amazing tales of high school antics, and of a fortune gained and lost. For Amir's family, the loss was very tragic. Amir's grandfather had cast out Amir's father. Amir was poised to rebuild the reputation of his branch of the family. Now he was gone. He had so much promise and was so driven to succeed. And now he was gone in a hail of bullets.

The survivors of the Five Couples were in agony for knowing that Jane and Amir were alive and well. Tom Sawyer might have thought that watching his own funeral was a lark, but no one could say a word. Even trying to say, "Eventually, this will not hurt so much" seemed like trying to say the wrong thing. It was easier just to let the tears flow.

Each of the four couples placed a rose in each of the coffins. Each person cut a leather leash in two, placing one part in Jane's coffin and one part in Amir's coffin. Charles Mitchell placed an envelope in each coffin. Each envelope contained a piece of copper that had the true name of the deceased embossed on it. If no one was able to tell the real story, their true names were with them in the coffin for eternity.



Amir's parents and two couples carried Amir's coffin. Jane's parents and the other two couples carried Jane's coffin. The parents were assured that everyone knew what Jane and Amir wanted them to do, and they would make sure that their wishes would be fulfilled. They quietly told the parents that all of Jane and Amir's papers were missing, but they were sure Jane and Amir wanted their shares of the bicycle company to be placed into a charitable foundation, with the parents on the board of directors. It was a reassuring message on a bitter day.

While each person at the burial took a turn putting earth on the lowered coffins, Sarah whispered to Becky, "I hope, I hope that they were in love with each other. I cannot bear the thought that one or both of these people has a sweetheart who needs to know what has happened to their love." Becky nodded. Losing a decoy was as painful as losing a key member of the team.

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# Chapter 12: Flipping the Switch

## A Slow Product Roll Out

In certain isolated locations, a mysterious company would arrive and offer vastly upgraded computer services. In technical terms, the towns were offered high-speed broadband services. Residents would find that there were vast amounts of data to explore with a browser and highly integrated e-mail. The enterprise managed to work out the kinks in their products. The enterprise would quietly purchase the newspapers and other media in the towns where these tests took place. They did their best to spike any news story about their tests. News of these tests rarely made its way out of these isolated towns.

All of the test products were stripped of any brand names so that no one could get any clue as to who was behind these tests. What this was all about remained a mystery for years.

## Jane and Amir Re-Appear to Their Families

Quietly, Emily worked her magic with the national data center. She changed Jane and Amir's record from *dead* to *alive*. This transition from dead to alive went unnoticed, except by computers. Jane and Amir were both able to get ID cards and phones in their correct names.

Once these steps were taken, Danny visited Jane's parents, and Charles Mitchell visited Amir's parents. They each told the families that they had some shocking news about their child. Slowly, they told the story of the massive project to overturn the computer infrastructure of the country. Halfway through this process, someone had ordered the murders. At that point, there was a long pause; then came the shocking statement that decoys had been killed, not the real Jane and Amir. To announce this would guarantee that the real Jane and Amir would be killed next, plus many more. As Danny put it, "So with deep regret, we have not told you the truth. You need to know that a person, a stranger to you, is buried in your child's grave."

Danny quietly asked, "Would you like to call Jane on the phone right now, or travel to visit her? I have her new phone number here. I would ask that you keep this quiet except for some family members. Jane will be announcing to the world that she is not dead in about a week. At that point, all of this secrecy will go away." Jane's mother just said, "I want to talk to her right now. Please give me the number."

Danny handed the number to Ruth and slowly walked out of the room. He was very glad that task was done.

Jane was so happy to get a phone call from her mother, who put the phone on speakerphone. Jane said, "Hi there, I have been in hiding for the last several years, just like a fugitive from justice. How are you guys taking this news?" Robert asked, "How is it possible that someone could die, and police think it was someone else?" Jane carefully explained the different identities she had

used. She mentioned that they had found two people to pretend to be them when they were working in secret. Jane said, "These villains shot my double twice in the head. Visual identification was impossible. They relied on ID cards, phones, and the collar on her neck. I had been wearing a removable collar, and I had been trading it back and forth with my double. The police figured that any corpse wearing my collar was Jane Foreman. The result is that a brave woman is buried with a headstone with my name on it."

Jane explained, "I will be very busy for the next week. I need to be in hiding for the week after that. Why don't you take a vacation for me during that week? At the end of the vacation, we can all hold a joint press conference announcing my return to life. Once I am publicly alive again, we can focus on important things. I would like to tell you about my new job. We also need to have the decoys re-buried by their proper families. If you could, I would like you to attend the funeral of the person who died so that I could be alive today. Her sacrifice made so much possible."

Ruth asked, "When we were all slaves, you could send one message a month. Why could you not give us some sign that you were OK?" Jane said, "Well, the rules are that slaves can send their family members messages, but dead people cannot. But I know how you feel. I could have collected a bucket of tears from my sadness and regret about the pain that I was causing you. Please forgive me." Ruth just said, "What was so important that you had to keep this big secret?" Jane said, "The big reveal is in a week. I need to be in hiding when that happens. Let us work on the details. How about I meet you at Michael's restaurant in the Cleveland train station at 11 am next Tuesday? We will take it from there."

Mr. Mitchell's conversation with Amir's family did not go so well. They were quite angry and upset. Amir's father kept saying, "What have you done with my son?" Finally, he got them to speak with Amir on the phone. As Mr. Mitchell left the house, he sensed that the Hassan family should not be part of any press conference. There was a lot of healing that needed to happen first.

## **A Single Day: The Impact of the News Feeds**

At 7 am on that Tuesday, just about everyone in America with a computer got an e-mail. It instructed the recipient to obtain a file from a computer located in their community. That file, when executed, installed a browser program, called *Open Flame*, onto their computer. Launching the program brought news feeds, instructions, messages from their distant friends and community members. At the touch of a button, they had advanced e-mail and so much more. People were encouraged to call up their friends and neighbors to get them "activated" as well.

The news feeds explained that over the last five years, 43 different companies had been working in secret to offer advanced communications that were based on what was possible forty years ago, before the first great financial collapse. In glowing terms, the news system described how these old tools had been revised for the current times.

There was one blurb headed *Your Team*. It listed the members of the Five Couples, plus the Mitchell Management Team. There was a sub-heading *Are Jane and Amir Dead?* The text just said, "No. Some assassins had shot two people resembling Jane and Amir in an attempt to prevent a disaster to their stock holdings." There was a short video of Jane and Amir standing

and talking about their work right in front of the headstones of their own graves. Every phone started to busy out as every computer user wanted to talk to everyone else.

That simple announcement caused the futures on the stock market to plunge. No one knew what companies were about to fall in price. Bit by bit, people learned the names of the companies that made up the enterprise. Everyone wished they could buy a piece of these companies.

The news kept flowing. The news feeds explained that the billionaires had suppressed technology that could make tens of thousands of ordinary Americans rich. The news explained that each individual or business could set up their own “website” today. A single page was free, and a complex page could be set up for a modest fee. There was a “search engine” called *Phoenix* that would be able to locate any website in a fraction of a second. There was a careful explanation about how you could post a video of police abuse and then start a demonstration at the local police station.

The police, the courts, the TV stations, the Supreme Courts were all in disarray. Julie Hildebrandt was the obvious person to launch a counter-attack. But she was very busy trying to think of what she could do to prevent herself from being brought to trial for murder. She, of course, was the one who had ordered the murders of Jane Foreman and Amir Hassan. The whole idea that they could rise from the grave to go after her was insane. But this was exactly what was happening.

Once the stock market opened, Julie had another problem. She had invested in many of the companies that were collapsing because of this instant wave of new technology. Julie had borrowed vast sums of money against her stock holdings. She would have billions in losses unless she got out of the market instantly. Julie managed to get out with a position worth negative \$25 million. She arranged a loan to cover that but wondered how she would pay off the loan.

At noon that day, all the computer networks in Sunnyvale shut down. That was a twist of the knife that Roger Carter arranged. It made it impossible to mount a proper counter attack. It also prevented many people in Sunnyvale from figuring out what was happening to the rest of the country.

There were isolated attempts to shut down major data communications trunks, but this just shut down all communications, including essential banking and business traffic. Peter and Becky had done a superb job of switching almost every data communications client to the faster and cheaper networks of the enterprise. There were about thirty different companies created and managed by Peter and Becky. All the banks, big businesses, and all critical infrastructure used enterprise data communications networks. Shutting down any part of the network caused so much damage that the shutdowns were quickly reversed.

Not every house in America had a computer. But they were quite common. Those without computer hookups gathered in their neighbors' homes just to watch the news feed. There was an astonishing string of news stories. Some deeply criticized the billionaire class for running America without a Constitution for decades. There were lessons in American history you could

click on and learn about how a living document, the Constitution, brought liberty to America. There was a drumbeat of commentary and stories urging that America have a new Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

The news feeds featured maps showing the ten cities housing billionaires. Somehow there were amazing drone videos showing the vast police/military encampments around each of the cities. The commanders of the police forces were listed with identifying information. People were urged to call any relative who was defending the billionaires and urge them to leave the ranks and travel home.

The news feeds were openly accusing Julie Hildebrandt of arranging the murders of Jane Foreman and Amir Hassan. They also showed live video of canvas bags being used to cover the grave markers that said “Jane Foreman” and “Amir Hassan.” Temporary metal markers saying, “Cynthia McCarthy” and “Paul Hanna” were inserted instead. The news reporters said, “If Julie Hildebrandt had succeeded in killing Jane Foreman and Amir Hassan, this news agency might not have been formed. We are grateful that fate spared Jane and Amir, but we must find justice for these innocent people buried in these graves.”

## ***The Constitutional Bank***

There was one video feature that had everyone talking. Jane was being interviewed about how her family became slaves. She said, “My parents had a very poorly structured loan. It was designed to drive our family into slavery. When I was in a position to purchase the freedom of my parents and my brothers, they needed a modest loan to launch a nationwide business. This is the difference between a bad loan and a good loan. My associates have created a bank, *The Constitutional Bank*, which funds businesses based on growing your business. If you want to be driven into slavery, keep your money in and get loans from any other bank. If you want to grow your business, transfer your accounts to *The Constitutional Bank*.” There was a quick demonstration of an application that allowed someone to take a photo of the top of a bank statement. Once the photo was electronically uploaded, the account would be shifted to *The Constitutional Bank* in three business days.

Within days, the flow of funds to *The Constitutional Bank* was bringing the existing banking industry to its knees. Companies were reeling from all of the massive changes in stock prices, banking, and technology. Many people were cashing in their Supreme Council bearer bonds to cover their losses or to deposit in *The Constitutional Bank*. Banks and the government were facing a massive bank run. What was especially annoying was that two weeks ago, no one in the financial industry had even heard of *The Constitutional Bank*. How could a tiny, insignificant bank virtually take over the banking industry?

The solution to the crisis was far-reaching. *The Constitutional Bank* temporarily suspended the distribution of its bank account transfer application. *The Constitutional Bank* wrote up a list of “best practices.” If a bank promised to adhere to the best practices and agreed to have two members of Roger Carter's “staff” on their board of directors, then the bank could display a symbol on their doors and on all of their communications showing they were no longer trying to drive their customers into slavery.

Before a bank could use the symbol, the enterprise had to examine the bank's balance sheet. If it was weak, the bank was forced to take a loan from the enterprise and give up 15% or more of its ownership. In a matter of weeks, the Five Couples dominated the entire banking industry.

All of the entities making up the enterprise (except the bank) went public one month after the launch. This meant issuing a modest number of shares for a company that previously was in private hands. The IPO valuation was a staggering total of \$65 billion. About 10% of the company would be available for sale. Just to give an idea of how massive these numbers were, it meant that the \$50 million that Roger's staff had invested was now worth \$810 million. The IPO details were handled by *The Constitutional Bank*, which also collected all the massive fees that come from launching an IPO.

The IPO stock was all sold out in 90 minutes. The price rose significantly. When you added up Jane and Amir's holdings, you had to include their share of the bicycle factory, their share of the enterprise, the bank, and the bank's holdings of other banks; it was clear that they were the first people in post-collapse America to be worth more than \$15 billion. It was a staggering sum.

To tell the tale of the IPO, we have gotten ahead of ourselves. This narrative is now switching back to show Jane's experience on the day of the product rollout.

## **Jane's Week with Her Family**

Jane met her parents and her brothers at the train station in Cleveland as they had arranged. Jane's parents had planned to ask her what was so important that it had to be kept so secret. But the whole time they were at the restaurant, Jane and Amir's picture was on the TV. Most of the people in the restaurant were gathered next to the TV. They kept showing the stock prices. Worried people kept coming on describing the national crisis. Ruth asked, "What is going on?" Jane said, "America is just today learning about what Amir and I have done with the help of our friends and employees. We formed a total of 43 different companies to transform the way computer data is delivered to and from individual computers. The fun part is that to use the system, you get to watch a news story. It is like having your own TV station, except that the whole nation is watching. I do think we end up promoting your bicycle business quite a bit. Once this vacation is over, you may need to accelerate your expansion plans. We may have doubled the demand for your products."

Ruth turned to her husband and asked, "Should we cut things short and go back to headquarters?" Robert said, "There is not much we can do. To expand that much, we would need about \$20 million. Who is going to be able to lend us \$20 million?" Jane said, "If you did have \$20 million in additional funding, are there people at your company that could start to put it to work?" Ruth answered, "Yes, we do have an expansion plan. But where do we get that much money? No bank would ever lend us that much money." Jane picked up the phone and called Zach. She simply said, "Hi, this is Jane. *The Foreman Bike Works* has an expansion plan that requires \$20 million. Can you handle this as a priority project? Great. Thanks so much." She turned to her parents and said, "Relax. Enjoy your vacation here. I have taken care of the financing for our company."

Ruth asked, "So how much money do you have?" Jane answered, "That is hard to say. I own about 30% of an enterprise that is worth more than \$20 billion. We plan to dominate many sectors of the economy. Our group will be dominating banking, communications, and technology. Oh, I keep forgetting to mention Amir. Amir and I will probably be worth about \$12 or \$15 billion in a few months. Today is our launch day. Everyone is very confused on the TV. No one seems to understand all the changes. The idea is that Amir and I and the other four couples stay out of view for a week. We will let our product rollout speak for itself for a time."

Just then a young black woman came over and asked, "Are you, Jane Foreman? You look just like the lady on TV." Jane pointed to an empty chair and then said very quietly, "I will say that I am if you promise not to tell anyone else until much later. How are you?" The woman said, "My name is Mary Davis. I have been following the news all day. I cannot figure out how your news feeds keep coming out. You would think that the police would be unplugging every data cable in the country. What is going on?" Jane said, "We will both watch the news to see how this plays out. Oh, let me introduce you to my parents. Until a short time ago, they thought I was dead." Mary jumped up and exclaimed, "Oh dear, I am interrupting an important family gathering. I am very sorry." Jane said, "Relax, we are all having a good time. My parents have a lot of adjustments to make. They need to take the black border off the photos of me at their house. The whole country is getting used to new ways to communicate and do business."

Jane added, "Speaking of photos, I want you to have this." She opened her briefcase and pulled out an 8x10 photograph of the Five Couples in wedding clothes. She then pulled out a second copy, signed it, dated it, and handed it to Mary. Jane laughed and said, "In a few years, this might be worth a fortune, my autograph on launch day. This might be the only one I do today. Remember, please get up slowly and do not call attention to this table. Have a wonderful day." Mary got up and said, "Can I ask a personal question, seeing all of you in person, it looks to me that someone in your family tree might have looked like me. Is this true?" Jane said, "Yes, I do have some black heritage. Not much, but enough for some people to notice. It makes me remember that we are all the product of the decisions we make and the decisions made by those that came before us. I am not sure of our family story, but I hope it is quite romantic." Mary nodded and walked away slowly, clutching the priceless photo in her hands.

Jane turned her attention to her brothers. She said, "Let us see, if I remember right, Bill, you are 19 years old, and James, you are 22 years old. What are you guys up to?" Bill answered, "We are all working for the Bike Factory. Or should I say the Bike Factories? I supervise the inspection of new parts while James makes sure that advertising and publicity meet the needs of all parts of the company." Jane started to laugh, "Some of the video feeds that we prerecorded for the launch today mention the bike company a lot. I hope I do not get into trouble with you, James!" James just said, "If you spell our name right and avoid saying we make horrible bikes out of bamboo, I approve your messages. But seriously, what did you say about us?" Jane described how the bike factory was used as an example of what happens when a company gets effective financing. By contrast, the financing our parents got when we were kids was not ideal, since it got all of us into slavery. James just muttered, "Damn, you got that right. No objections from me on that one."

Jane said, "I can point out a certain similarity between myself and my father. When it came to choosing key lieutenants, we both value loyalty very highly. It would appear that having a

connection to Warren Ohio is the most important requirement for high office in America right now.” Bill just said, “Isn’t that the truth!” Jane added, “If we made a society with more trust, we would not need to be so suspicious of everyone.”

Just then the restaurant exploded with noise. Something was announced on the TV that caught everyone by surprise. Jane knew they were talking about the special application that made it easy to document police misconduct. Thousands of videos were already uploaded from all across the country. Bill asked, “What is the excitement all about?” Jane said, “I have no idea. Let’s go and visit the Rock and Roll Museum. Remember, we are on vacation.”

## **A Press Conference**

Before the week was up, Jane told her family that they all needed to get to Warren Ohio two days early. James asked, “Why, what is happening?” Jane said, “They are exhuming the bodies buried in our graves. I really need to be there. I need to call Amir right away.”

Several days later, everyone was in Warren. Amir was waiting for Jane and her family at the train station. Danny drove Jane and Amir to the funeral home. Danny gave Jane the magnetic tool. Jane and Amir went into the funeral home. What they did inside was not pleasant, but they had Jane’s gold collar again. It had been removed and cleaned in alcohol and other solvents. The collar had been nicked on the inside by a bullet. They had to use metal working tools to smooth it over. Jane used the magnetic tool to put the collar on. She said that it would be years before she would take it off again. With this task done, the bodies of Cynthia McCarthy and Paul Hanna could be sent to their families in Kansas.

It was time for a press conference. This one was not being held in the middle of Charles Mitchell’s lawn. This one was held in the grand ballroom of Warren’s biggest hotel. Jane remembered that her sale at the end of high school was held in one corner of the room. She asked that the podium be moved to that corner of the room. This meant that all the chairs had to be moved. Jane just said, “I will help move the chairs.” Seeing Jane at work, everyone pitched in to move all the chairs.

One by one, members of the press arrived in the room. Jane brightened up when she saw the video and non-video journalists from the Phoenix Company, which was one of Jane’s private projects. She made sure that they sat in front. Before the formal press conference started, she asked the journalists to give their names and their affiliation, and quickly to describe any unpleasant experiences with the Supreme Council. Of the one hundred or so journalists, only eight were brave enough to say they had an unpleasant experience with the Supreme Council. An assistant gave each of these journalists a blue pin for their shirt.

When it was time to start, Jane said, “Hello everyone, I am Jane Foreman. I am standing at the exact spot that I was standing when I was offered for sale at the end of my high school years. I am now wearing my gold collar. Two hours ago, my husband and I went to a funeral home and removed it from the body of Cynthia McCarthy. I am moving quickly from handling a corpse to handling the press. I hope that at each place, I am properly respectful. As you know, this is my husband, Amir Hassan, and these are my parents, Robert and Ruth Foreman. We have all been



on vacation for the last week, causing us to be a bit shaky on what has been happening day by day. A staff person is here behind me to whisper in my ear if I need to be brought up to date on recent events. I am going to start off by having members of my own news agency ask me a series of questions. After we have decided that the Phoenix Company has had enough time, we will turn our attention to the rest of you. As you know, we will be giving preference to those with the blue pins, but we will be calling on as many people as possible, taking as many questions as possible, friendly or hostile.” Jane pointed to her journalists in the front, and said, “Lisa, you have the floor until I say you don’t.”

Lisa asked about the state of the stock market. She asked, “Most of the indexes are down by 35% from the previous week. Should we be concerned?” Jane answered, “Things will pick up next month when we release our IPO. Also, people have yet to see how many existing companies will do very well with all in the new environment. The economists we work with predict that the stock market will be up by 20% from before the product launch to a year from now. Today may be an excellent time to buy if you can hold on for the next year. Oh, I should mention that it is possible to purchase the IPO now for the next three weeks at a 50% discount. The one catch is you need to be a slave. Any slave custodial account can switch to financial provider 508508, and you are all in at half the regular IPO price. No funny business, though. Any attempt to monkey around with a slave’s account will be severely punished.”

Lisa asked, “Wait, you just removed that collar from a dead person? Could you explain exactly what you are saying? If I do not like the answer, then I may quit my job.” Jane sighed and said, “Please bring the camera right up to me. I have a magnetic catch, and it pops open, like this. I can show where the bullet made a deep indentation. We had to file that down so that I could put this on without being cut.” Jane stopped and started crying. She sobbed, “If they had come four days earlier, it would be me in a grave with this slave collar. I want everyone to know how grateful I am to be alive and wish everyone to remember Cynthia’s sacrifice. Because of the catch, I can now put it on anyone else. Lisa, do you want to try it on?” Lisa said, “No, no, thank you, but I now understand what you said before.” Jane reached up and replaced the collar.

Lisa asked, “The bank that your companies use, *The Constitutional Bank*, is getting funds from every other bank. It is like a bank run into your bank. This is close to destabilizing the financial system. Do you have any comment on this?” Jane answered, “Dad, you told me that there were specific clauses in your loan agreement that facilitated our family being handed into slavery. Am I right on that?” Robert said, “Yes, that is true.” Jane said, “If a bank can legally change all their contracts to remove clauses like that and can assure its customers that it is not trying to make slaves out of them, they have nothing to fear. Is it my fault that I noticed that this is a really stupid aspect of banks, that they prefer to drive their customers into slavery? Is it my fault that I constructed a bank that is 100% free of these clauses and policies? Is it my fault that I have constructed a bank that makes money when its customers make money? Is it my fault that I am willing to say, if you have a choice, take your money out of banks that profit from your descent into slavery?”

Lisa looked alarmed, “Sorry Jane, I am trying to ask questions based on what we see as questions people are asking.” Jane said, “Not to worry. I just get worked up on some issues. Right now, I

am going to call on someone else. We may get back to you. Ralph, over there, with the blue pin, it is now your turn.”

Ralph asked, “You denounce the cruel rule of the billionaires, but it is clear that you and Amir are the newest overnight billionaires. It looks to me that we are replacing the rule of one group of billionaires with another group of billionaires. What do you have to say for yourself?” Jane answered, “Yes, a most excellent question. I would love to hire you, either as a journalist or as a political consultant/operative. Yes, it is true that Amir and I are now billionaires. I hope all the key members of my team also become filthy rich. When I last traveled to Sunnyvale to learn more about the billionaires, I was put into chains. I devised a plan to turn the tables on the billionaire class. According to my best information, Julie Hildebrandt has taken out a \$25 million loan to cover her stock market losses. If she cannot liquidate her other holdings, she risks slavery herself. Roger Carter has not opposed me. He has organized a fund for his slaves by donating \$25 million to it. That fund was an early source of funds for our enterprise. It looks like Roger's slaves now have upwards of \$500 million. They are in an excellent position to pay Roger back.”

“Amir and I need a certain amount of wealth just to establish ourselves and prevent a counter-attack. We will be setting up a charitable fund with the bulk of our funds. We will be freeing enslaved people, changing laws, suing slave traders, and anything else we can do to put America on a proper course. When I am done, the cursed trade in human flesh will be as diminished as I can make it. If you want to play the ‘you are just another billionaire card’ on me, fine. But if you stand against my efforts to change our society for the better, then we part company. I welcome you and all others who are sick of how our society has been run to join our efforts to fix what has been broken.”

The news conference went on for hours. Amir, Ruth, and Robert got to speak extensively. The amazing thing was the whole thing was covered live. The full text was printed in the newspapers. News organizations across the country were very afraid of Jane Foreman. Even Jane noticed that many TV clips of the news conference ended with the words on the screen, “This TV station does not own any slaves.” Jane wondered if it was really true.

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# **Chapter 13: The Aftermath**

## **Jane and Amir's Companies are Popular**

Jane Foreman, her enterprises, her bank, her news service were all very popular. There was a tremendous demand for new computers with built-in Wi-Fi. It was not surprising that most of these computers were sold by an enterprise company. To avoid the appearance of having a monopoly, the enterprise sold circuit boards and chipsets to other manufacturers. Some of the competing products were more advanced. Jane always said, “We love competition. This is how we all end up making better products.”

It seemed that everyone was setting up websites all at once. Every day, the Phoenix search engine kept up with all of the new pages. It all seemed like a miracle.

The biggest changes were in personal finance. The Constitutional Bank offered a range of services to help low income and low asset customers improve their positions. Bank offered attractive financing for the purchase of equipment that helped people earn additional income. There were free computer applications to help with budgeting and personal financing advice. Those close to slavery could get a free in-person consultation with a banker. The basic tools of personal finance were rigorously applied to those who were at the edge of slavery. The Constitutional Bank offered help drafting realistic expense budgets, attractive re-financing, and free access to all available job listings to those in need of assistance. The number of grateful customers of Jane's bank kept growing.

## **The Enterprise Tackles Slavery**

Slavery was a big problem, but it was difficult to deal with in one sweeping change. The problem was the amount of money at stake. The value of all of the slaves in America was close to the value of all of the industrial equipment in the country. The same was true in 1860 as well. To purchase the freedom of all the slaves would take more money than anyone could imagine. To free all slaves would force losses beyond imagination. To continue slavery would force suffering beyond imagination. As an institution, slavery had to go. There needed to be a political framework that would allow for the compromises that would bring emancipation to reality.

Jane's enterprise issued a drumbeat of propaganda to declare that one day America would be slave-free. In the meantime, the enterprise pushed for changes to laws, rules, insurance requirements, and social attitudes to make these changes:

- They advocated for more freedom of movement for slaves and for fewer required restraints.
- They widely distributed forms that prevent the seizing of children into slavery. The forms designated a guardian for the children in the event of parental financial insolvency.

- They declared all enslavements of “excess” family members illegal and started to sue for damages and to sue for the freedom of the improperly enslaved.
- They advocated that the value of slaves should not be used as collateral for loans.
- They offered small business loans to those on the edge of slavery. Some loans were made directly to some slaves so that they could purchase their own freedom.

Jane's most ambitious effort was to set up a network of slave processing centers in major cities across the country. These centers kept someone newly seized and handled all the examinations and paperwork for the seized person to be sold as a slave. These centers operated on a fee from the slave purchaser. But Jane's centers had an agenda to divert the flow of people away from slavery. This effort was controversial since Jane was directly involved in the slave processing business.

With the massive funding from The Constitutional Bank and with very low fees, these centers drove all the competition into bankruptcy. Instead of the horrible dungeon that Jane remembered, these centers were built to look like modern clinics. Trained staff carefully interviewed each person who was newly enslaved. All the paperwork was carefully checked. If there was a legal issue, lawyers would push for the person's freedom. The staff struggled to find some way to keep the “client” away from slavery. Even the “dorm rooms” were tastefully arranged. The doors of the dorm wings were locked at night, but no one was kept in chains. Only when there was no other choice was a slave collar attached, and the person was sold as a slave. Just this one effort cut down on the number of new slaves in major cities by about two-thirds.

Further, to be honest about it, the people who were now pushed into slavery were people with massive addiction problems, mental illness, or other intense social pathologies. The value of new slaves fell sharply.

## **A Meeting in Denver**

Jane got frustrated at the slow pace of the public movement to a Constitutional Convention. It was clear that if Jane pushed hard and nothing happened, valuable political capital would be spent to no avail. She knew she could blackmail key people, but that was no way to build a public movement. She needed a fresh approach. She needed to be willing to compromise significantly to reach this important goal.

Jane was determined to move the negotiations forward. She finally realized that she needed the support of Julie Hildebrandt. Jane said, “Well let's have fun with this.” She called up Julie and said, “I would like to talk to you in private about a significant offer that I have for you. We need to meet in neutral territory. How about meeting in Denver?” Julie wanted to know what she would get. Jane answered, “I will help solve several of your problems, and you will solve several of my problems. We will both leave the meeting very happy. Is there an opening in your schedule next week?” Julie just said, “Can we just discuss this on the phone? What do you have in mind?” Jane replied, “I am very sorry, but there needs to be an exchange of documents. We need to meet in person. I cannot tell you what we have in mind. But I will say it will be a very

big surprise. Let's not make a big deal about this. How about saying we show up alone or with just one staff person. How about meeting Wednesday at 11 AM at the restaurant of the Maxwell Hotel in Denver?" Julie said quietly, "Yes, I will be there. But I do not want any tricks." Jane said, "I promise there will be no tricks. See you there. Bye for now."

On Wednesday, Julie and her assistant showed up at the restaurant. Jane asked, "How are you? Good to see you. Are you hungry? Do you need to freshen up?" Julie sat down; she said, "I am doing fine. So what is the big secret?"

Jane said, "We have plenty of time. Let me make a quick introduction. As I understand your situation, you are in the worst of all possible worlds; you are in debt in a society without a Constitution. This society does not have the economic mobility to help you go from negative to positive. The best possible position is to have money in a vibrant economic society. If you answer 'Yes' to all of my questions, your own situation will be much better." Julie just said, "Let me judge what is best for me."

Jane lowered her voice, almost to a whisper, "Julie, please lean in close, I do not want anyone to overhear. I have been keeping a secret for quite a few years. I know that you invested a lot of money in the stock swindle when I lost most of my money. It is OK, but you should know that I have been having my staff investigate the heist. My people have talked to the perpetrators. They have been scared out of their minds that they would be caught. They never used the money. They thought that as soon as a bearer bond surfaced, the serial number would ring alarm bells, and they would be put in jail. Who knows? They might be stripped of their internal organs! They would like to return the bonds to us, as long as we sign documents promising that we will not sue or prosecute. Do you think you could sign such a document?"

Julie looked shocked. She said quietly, "So, I just sign something and I get my \$94 million back?" Jane answered, "Yes. And when I sign, I get my money back as well. I am very much hoping I can get you to agree." Julie suddenly looked alarmed, "Wait, how do I know if this is some sort of trap? You are going to use this document to prove that I was swindled and that I am more interested in money than justice." Jane sighed, "OK, you sign the paper and your assistant comes with me to watch the exchange. I assure you that this is legit." They both signed the document. Jane and Julie promised not to prosecute or sue based on their being swindled. They both agree that they have been made whole.

Jane and then Julie's assistant got up and walked to the stairwell. They went up two flights of stairs. A man wearing a hooded cloak yelled, "Stop." Jane held up the papers. The man opened a briefcase and pulled out a handful of bearer bonds. They slowly walked towards each other and made the exchange. Jane took the briefcase. The man took the signed documents. As they descended the stairs, Jane handed the briefcase to Julie's assistant. She whispered, "You can tell your friends years later that you carried a briefcase holding over \$100 million."

When they got back to the restaurant, Julie could not believe what was in the briefcase. Jane suggested they do a rough division, one-sixth for Jane, the rest for Julie. It certainly looked like all of the stolen money. Julie laughed and said, "You are a very good detective. But I wish the people responsible were caught." Jane replied, "You should be grateful. If this money was not

stolen, it would have been lost in the crash. You should be sending a thank you note to the thief, for preserving your money from your own mistakes, and then for returning it to you.” Julie just said, “Jane, you are the most frustrating person I have ever met. But I suppose you are right. I am grateful that I was ripped off and that I am getting my money back.”

Jane said, “OK, that was issue number one, now for the really big one. I am putting two papers in front of you. If you sign the first one, I will sign the second one.” She slid two pages over to Julie. Julie asked, “What are these?” Jane answered, “In short, the first paper declares your support for a Constitutional Convention and allows groups to use your endorsement for this. The second is my pledge to prevent any attempt to find you legally responsible for the deaths of our decoys. I promise to hide evidence and stop any attempt to find you legally responsible. It further restricts my efforts to find you morally responsible to this simple face-to-face conversation we are having now. This paper says that I need to stop 15 minutes after I sign the paper.” Julie looked at Jane and said, “No tricks?”

Jane answered, “No tricks. I will further promise to be your friend and to assist you in finding good opportunities in this new world. In fact, I will very soon be inviting you to a party to celebrate my pregnancy. But the friendship and the parties require the signature of the first paper. You can do this. You can be part of a new world of opportunities.” Julie changed her expression and said, “I am not doing this. You are just going to parade me around as one of your conquests. I will not stand for it.”

Jane laughed. She said, “If I can get you to support a Constitutional Convention, you can put a leash on me at every social interaction. How about this: I will always treat you with respect and never do anything to act superior to you. Clearly, we need some time to get used to each other. We have a relationship fraught with complexity. As a former slave, I do have a tendency to assert myself. As the head of the Supreme Council of Sunnyvale, you have a strong desire to show that no matter how things change, you still have a major role to play. I suspect that you will find a very important role in whatever provisional government follows a Constitutional Convention. I may end up playing a role as well. So we may have social and political interactions in the future. I would hope we can always be on the same side, since, damn, I do not ever want to be your opponent.”

Julie was quiet for about two minutes. She said, “Fine, I will sign, but you have to sign the other paper at exactly the same time.” Jane said, “Sure, no problem. Are you ready?” And that is how Jane got Julie to support a Constitutional Convention.

Jane said, “Now for the icing on the cake. Julie, you have the briefcase with the bearer bonds? Well, I am going to gift you my bearer bonds if you can do two favors for me.” Julie said, “What? That is \$17 million. What do you want me to do for \$17 million?”

Jane said, “I want you to write letters to the parents of the deceased of that recent unpleasant business and also send \$2 million to each family. So you end up with an additional \$13 million. Remember, I signed a document saying that I would not attempt to find you morally responsible, except for the 15-minute window that has not expired yet. I am not in violation of any agreement. This is my one chance to persuade you. Your efforts can be in secret. As you point

out, I am not trying to humiliate you in any way. I think it will be good for your soul to clear this up so that you can hold your head up high. Or you can decline this offer. Either way, all of our conversation is totally private. None of our discussions or these papers will ever see the light of day. These compromise me and compromise you. I will be seen as a hypocrite for publicly urging justice for the deceased. Look what I am doing here. In private, I am away from justice, and for what? Just to help get you to join my political agenda? Trust me, all of this makes me look like a jerk. This last deal is up to you.”

Julie asked, “How can I write a letter taking moral responsibility without taking legal responsibility? I am just putting the noose around my neck.” Jane answered, “Oh no. Not at all. You can say, ‘I may have said something that someone else misunderstood as instructions to do something terrible.’ You can lie. You can say, ‘This was done by my staff without my knowledge. The fact that these people were on my payroll makes me feel terrible.’ Remember I have promised to do my best to stomp on any investigation or legal maneuver against you. I have your back. All you need to say is, ‘I feel bad this happened, and I know money does not help, but I would like to offer some money to help ease the pain.’ The key requirements are that this is something from you, written in your words and is not something your staff writes. The other is the money. But you get to walk away with well over \$100 million.”

Julie said, “I look forward to working with you in the future. Congratulations on your pregnancy. I hope all goes well. I do agree to all three of your propositions.” Jane reached over and stuffed \$17 million of bearer bonds into the briefcase. It had been somewhat scary carrying all that money on her person to the meeting in Denver. She was glad to see Julie have to worry about the briefcase now. She signaled to the waiter that it was time to order lunch. She was hoping that when Danny ordered room service from their room, he had taken his hoodie off. Sharing a room with Danny was interesting. It had been many years since their love affair. But now she was a married woman. Jane thought, “Now that Danny is not guarding the bonds, I will ask him to stay in a different room tonight.”

## **A New Publicity Campaign**

Julie recorded a very remarkable video for the Phoenix News Service. Julie argued for a new Constitutional Convention. She said, “Our current form of government was ideal for handling an emergency. We are well past the emergency stage. Jane Foreman has shown that all the Supreme Council can do is to prohibit various technologies. Well, Jane showed that we are not as effective at stopping the spread of new ideas as we thought. What do we do now? Can we put the genie back in the bottle? No, there is no way to do that. We must embrace the future.”

Julie paused and then continued, “Many of my peers have expressed the idea any constitution would treat everyone equally before the law, even billionaires. They react in horror to the idea that under a Constitution, they or I could be brought to trial. I reject that idea. Neither my peers nor I should be treated differently than anyone else. I have reached out to the parents of Cynthia McCarthy and Paul Hanna. With my help, they are forming a scholarship fund for promising students from their hometown. We are working together to turn this into something positive that will always preserve the memory of Cynthia McCarthy and Paul Hanna. I ask everyone with financial means to find positive things they can do with their resources and to support a new

Constitutional Convention. It is my opinion that the wealthy citizens of America will gain more from these changes than the average citizen. We should embrace the future, guided by the best principles of American history. Thank you all for listening to me.”

Of course, there is more to changing regimes than good videos. Jane and her associates got down and dirty at this point. There were many sectors of the economy such as agriculture, steel, industrial goods, and the railroads that were not affected by the reboot of technology. The families that owned these companies were not interested in a new Constitution. Jane's network used the banking resources to pull loans systematically to disrupt these industries. One by one, the most vulnerable companies were squeezed. Once some companies signed on, Jane's network of banks switched their attention to other companies in their respective industrial sector. To each one, they threatened to pull all funding and to fund fully the companies that had signed on. If Jane could collect a dollar for each curse word that was uttered in a sentence containing her name, she would be able to double her holdings.

Of course, the irony was that by forcing a change in the political structure, she allowed the owner families to multiply the value of their holdings in the coming years. It is always better to own a minority stake in a vibrant economy than to own a majority stake in a stagnant economy. After a decade had gone by, Jane was being compared to Franklin Roosevelt, who also had to force capitalists to save themselves and to enrich themselves.

Public opinion shifted rapidly when it was clear that Julie Hildebrandt was embracing Jane Foreman's political agenda. There was great excitement when the police encampments around the Ten Cities began to be dismantled. The Second Constitutional Convention was scheduled for May 20, 2062, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. There were fifty members of the Supreme Councils. Twenty of them were delegates. There were political caucuses across the country. Every class was represented. Jane made sure that fifteen recently freed slaves were delegates. Altogether, there were 125 delegates. Jane was given the title of “hostess.” She said that she would act as just another delegate. She also reserved the right to turn over her duties to someone else, if the Convention proved to be too time-consuming. Unlike the First Constitutional Convention, the Second Constitutional Convention was televised.

## **The Second Constitutional Convention**

This book could report each twist and turn of the Convention, but that would triple its size. Instead, this narrative will focus on the key battles and how Jane helped to build a compromise.

Jane opened with a speech that covered the high and low points of the previous US Constitution. She said, “Regional differences were paramount in the 1780s. Now we have to deal with income and wealth differences. I like the idea of two chambers: I propose one based on geography and one based on income distribution. I am not sure how to do it, but I would like as much government business to be run through Congress. I say we stay away from an imperial presidency. Our biggest challenge is our judicial branch. We have allowed a proper judicial system to atrophy. I urge that we declare most of the laws passed in the last 30 years to be null and void. We should appoint a panel of several dozen professors of legal history and law to draft



a series of laws to get us started. Once we have the Constitution in place, we can try to pass as many laws as possible. Our legal system needs to start from scratch.”

Since the delegates to the Constitutional Convention were chosen by income distribution, having the Senate based on income distribution seemed very logical. At each major election, you would show your credentials and be able to vote in one of six different sub-elections. Jane Foreman and Charles Mitchell would be able to vote with the billionaires. Roger Carter's ex-slaves and Julie Hildebrandt would be able to vote with the millionaires. And so it would be down the line.

As the days wore on, it was clear that slavery was the most contentious issue. There were also arguments about taxation, limiting the role of the president, restructuring the police, and creating a military force. Just to refresh everyone's memory, the current police combined the roles of the military and the police. The police seemed to obey a set of laws known only to themselves. To get the police to stand down was very difficult. The billionaires and the banks had to cut off the funding for the police. In many areas, the police tried to sustain themselves by increasing their fines and increasing their power. The billionaires had to threaten to create a civilian militia to fight and execute all police officers that refused to stand down. There were some skirmishes. Over 200 police officers were lined up against the walls of their police buildings and shot. Police buildings across the country were burned to the ground. By the time the Constitutional Convention opened, police all across the country had been disbanded. Crime and disorder were reduced tremendously whenever the police were disbanded.

## **Taking a Break from the Constitutional Convention**

A week after the start of the Constitutional Convention, Jane needed to take a break. She needed to give birth. Jane checked into a clinic and gave birth to a daughter. Jane and Amir named her *Rose Cynthia Foreman*. Three days after giving birth, Jane returned to the Convention. She took very frequent breaks and used staff members to keep her up to date. It was hard to give birth to a baby and a new Constitution all at once. Both were totally exhausting.

Taking time out to care for her daughter gave Jane time to think over all of the issues. She knew that there were not enough votes or money to free all slaves. But there had to be a route away from slavery. She addressed the Convention and asked the question, “Can we all agree to write a clause that says that slavery will cease twenty years hence?” She found that this proposition was acceptable to three-fourths of the delegates. Jane then asked, “Can we all agree to ban the enslavement of those under the age of eighteen, including those born to a slave mother, provided that a guardian can be located?” She found that this proposition was acceptable to two-thirds of the delegates. She finally asked, “Can we all agree that anyone who is seized and processed into slavery is entitled to a legal proceeding so that any alternatives to slavery can be presented to the creditors?” This idea caused many arguments because of the time it might take to accomplish this. Jane rewrote this proposition with a clause that these court proceedings were limited to three days. She found that this proposition was acceptable to two-thirds of the delegates.

The court proceedings kept the most capable people away from slavery. In the end, the institution of slavery was teetering on collapse seven years after the Constitutional Convention.

On the seventh anniversary of the signing of the Second Constitution, Congress abolished slavery in America.

## Jane and Amir's Life after the Constitutional Convention

Over the years, Jane became famous for her *Three Propositions*. They were considered one of the important political compromises in all of American history. In the 1860s, an ocean of blood was needed to end slavery. In the 2060s, a series of political compromises and an ocean of money from the Five Couples were used to end slavery.

Jane and Amir never held political office. Once the Constitutional Convention was over, Jane was very proud of her role as a member of the Convention. She could have been president or senator. She could have held any office that she wanted, but Jane declined all offers. She just said, "I have a business to run. I have a family to take care of. I may speak out on issues now and then." Deb was elected Senator several times, representing the corporate interests of the enterprise. She became the political voice of the enterprise. Deb often traded off with Cathy, since they shared the job. Deb and Cathy liked to spend time with their kids.

The various enterprise companies did well, up to a point. As more people got back on their feet, they found the weaknesses of the enterprise company policies or products. It was inevitable that some people resented Jane, Amir, and the Five Couples for just dominating the economy. They wanted this whole colossus of companies broken up. They wanted *The Constitutional Bank* broken up into a series of regional banks.

Jane remembered how happy John D. Rockefeller was when the Rockefeller oil company was broken up in 1892. The stock value for some of the constituents of the Standard Oil Trust doubled, and some tripled in value. She set up a committee of enterprise staffers, legal experts, business consultants, and congresspersons to work out the arrangements. Jane and Amir accepted the recommendations. In the end, about 65 separate companies were formed from the enterprise. Jane decided to become the CEO of *The Constitutional Bank of New York*. This Bank set policies that were largely copied by other pieces of *The Constitutional Bank*. In turn, the banks helped to shape policies that were reflected across America, but especially in the companies that were once a part of the enterprise.

The breakup of the enterprise made Jane and Amir even wealthier. They now had about \$45 billion. The other four couples were each worth about half of that. In reality, about two-thirds of the holdings were charitable enterprises, but it is useful to think of the value realized by this group of friends who met in high school or college. The Five Couples lived in different places around America. Once a year, on the anniversary of Jane's capture, in the beginning weeks of the summer, the Five Couples would come back to Warren Ohio with all of their kids to a festival of eating and catching up that lasted for about four days.

Unlike so many other meetings of the Five Couples, there were no grand planning meetings, no desperate agendas, and no lists of projects that needed to be done. Deb always gave a short speech about how she felt once she realized that Jane's family was enslaved. She was hoping that the next generation would learn the history of their joint projects. But the children ignored the

speeches and ran around the room. Deb continued, “Now the people around the table control a huge portion of the American economy.” Deb always reminded everyone about all the twists and turns of their efforts. She always ended up saying, “I remember when Jane declared a new epoch. She was thinking about a computer epoch. But now we have a new epoch in our society. Thank you one and all.”

One year, Deb realized that the kids would never listen to her speeches. They were not fellow Senators. She hired a dozen kids from the high school and paid them to re-enact *The Battle of the Cafeteria*. Instead of having the boy turn purple, the “spectator” high school students crowded around and said, “Look, his face is turning purple!” No one was seriously hurt in the re-enactment. The gang's children loved it. They tried to crowd around to get closer to see what was happening inside the circle of high school students. It was educational for the high school students too. It was one thing to take a class in the Jane Foreman wing of the high school. It was another thing to play the role of Jane Foreman for Jane Foreman, her gang, and all of their families.

When the little drama was over, Jane sat down with the students and told more about her life as a high school student. She gave them all advice on how to do better in school. She told them that even the oddest book they come across might be a clue to a world-changing insight. It had been that way for her.

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## 2073 Afterword

I would like to thank readers who have made it through this book. Writing is very time-consuming. It is always good to be rewarded by knowing that the book is being read.

This book adds immensely to the literature about Jane Foreman and, hopefully, will be the basis of some full-length biographies. Until now, there have been some children's books which really could not tell the whole story. There have also been some adult books which focused on one isolated part of this story. My hope is that this will lead the way to some careful work which explores the full story in the detail it deserves.

Any mistakes and omissions in this book are my own. I wish I could have convinced Jane to describe the days she spent in the slave processing center just after her capture. I have to respect Jane's privacy on something that is still too painful for her to relate to others.

Julie Hildebrandt's death last year cleared the last obstacle to write out the story in detail. Finally, the details of the loan or theft of Julie's money can be mentioned and explained. This account explains why Zach Perez was so richly rewarded for his work on behalf of "the enterprise."

Most people are not aware that Emily Mitchell has been working with the National Data Centers for the last five years. All of the logging, password, and control weaknesses that she exploited were corrected years ago. Readers are cautioned not to attempt any of the tricks described in this book. All the loopholes in the law have been closed. You have been warned.

I have to say how pleasant it was to be asked by the Smithsonian Institution to work with Jane in preparing a large display about Jane. We created a duplicate of the bedroom we shared in high school, which shows how Jane was chained up every night. It was this work that led me to want to write this book.

I urge readers who want to get an "authentic experience" to visit the Smithsonian. We have all of Jane's writing from her youth, including her remarkable output in the two weeks after her sale, but before her trip to Atlanta. We have the original hard drive given by Roger Carter to Jane. The actual contents have been removed, but there is an excellent selection of documents from the original drive available online. The Smithsonian has the original of Jane's valedictorian speech from high school and her papers from the Second Constitutional Convention. I always laugh when I see the photo of Jane inside the official photo booth at the beginning of her own wedding, with Amir looking annoyed and confused in the background. I know how much my wife and I and our kids enjoy seeing this exhibit.

Every time I see Jane on TV or in various media presentations, I see her gold collar. She is a woman who has transformed our era. I am grateful for my chance to tell her story.

– Deb Coulter-Jackson

