

THE CHRONICLES OF ENHANCED MALES

PART ONE: LIVING ENLARGED

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FOREWORD

What is power? Is it money? Social status? Career? Family? Sex?

Whatever answer you pick, you're not wrong. However, whatever answer you pick, you're not right, either. Power is not a one-way street. It is a synergy of different factors, intertwined, complementary, which merge into a superstreet that can either be the Stairway to Heaven or the Highway to Hell. Most of the time, it's both.

Of course, different people have different needs, and the relative proportion of individual factors we use to measure power varies from one person to another. For some, career is the key factor that makes them feel powerful; for others, it's money; and finally, there are those who measure power by the number of sexual partners they've had. It is all relative and susceptible to discussion and analysis, but I'm afraid I'd go too far, trying to explain every little detail.

Besides, since the very beginning of mankind, people have strived to find answers to numerous questions about the essence, being, and other matters that human existence relies on, including the matter of power.

Likewise, I have spent my entire 36-year-long career trying to answer miscellaneous questions dealing with the essentials: "Who are we?", "What are we?", and "Where are we going?"

What is the force driving us forward?

Power?

Could be. But, what kind of power? What forces underlie it?

I'm Dr King, a psychotherapist, and I specialize in behavioral therapy and psychoanalysis. I've had over 2500 clients. My main field of expertise and the focus of my work is the theory of the evolution of libido, within which I have developed various methods for overcoming various problems. Throughout my career, I have encountered many cases in which problems were often caused by deficits in self-awareness, self-confidence, and valuing one's own capacities and achievements. Or, to put it simply, the problems stemmed from the deficit in power.

Over the years of working as a therapist, I have devised the so-called, "mirror technique", whose goal is to make the patients see themselves where they currently are, and, by the end of therapy, realize who they really are, leaving my office as better, more self-confident, and more successful people.

I have triumphantly applied this technique in almost 95% of the cases. Numerous colleagues have been talking me into writing a book about this technique, to patent it, so to speak, and profit from it. However, I'm one of those people for whom money doesn't rate high on the list of power factors. I was happy just having my patients come to me and leave my office satisfied.

So, what made me decide to write this book?

Throughout my long career, mostly men have been turning to me, looking for help, and one could notice a sort of a pattern in the sample. The root of their problems was more or less the same. It was sex that was stopping them from reaching their true selves and their full capacities. This

pattern inspired me to perfect my methods in the field of sexual therapy, so I could help my patients more adequately.

Numerous sexual dysfunctions, such as inability to achieve an erection, premature ejaculation, or inability to climax, were main reasons why my patients decided to turn to me for help. Sexual dysfunction pushed them towards anxiety, depression, and into a vicious circle they couldn't break.

One of the most frequent problems my patients spoke of was inadequate size of the sex organ. They are not alone in this; it is the problem most men suffer from in the contemporary world, where power is directly proportional to the size of the penis.

Self-confidence induced by a large penis is the key to success in life, be it sex, love, or work. It's easier to find a partner, a job, or achieve success of any kind if your body language exudes self-confidence resulting from the size of your sex organ. True, statistics have shown that the danger of catching an STD and dying in consequence is greater as well. This book will also deal with the problems of men whose penis is large or too large.

Now try imagining how, for some people, everything is diametrically opposite because their penis is too small. It is harder for them to approach persons of the opposite sex, because they know that it is just another failure waiting to happen. Other people will get the jobs they want, because during the job interviews, their body language, impeded by the size of their penis, shows the employer how anxious and insecure they really are.

In treating this problem, therapists most frequently resort to the traditional approach, explaining their patients that they have no choice but to be themselves, and founding their therapeutic approach on the efforts to make the patients happy with what they've got.

My approach goes one step further, because I wasn't satisfied with the results that basically summed up to pulling the wool over everybody's eyes. What we were solving were mere fragments, while the real problem remained unsolved.

I decided to explore unconventional methods that could help my patients solve their problems. At first, I suggested using auxiliary methods, such as vacuum erection devices, so they could begin by eliminating at least one problem on the psychological level.

But this merely solved the temporary problem of achieving an erection, not the problem of permanent penis enlargement.

On one of my travels, I met a cultural anthropologist who was then conducting a research in an African tribe that exercised a ritual of penis enlargement. In their value system, penis size was a characteristic of every grown man that had to take part in the ritual. My trained eye couldn't overlook the data in his report showing that the average penis size in that tribe was significantly greater than that in the rest of the world. The anthropologist had an interesting collection of research on penis size in other tribes around the globe, and I focused on those that had the largest average values. Taking further interest in those tribes, I discovered that what they all had in common were penis enlargement rituals. The rituals in question revealed an ancient technique which, if applied properly, resulted in permanent enlargement of erectile tissue.

I decided to approach a couple of my patients with the proposition that they could, apart from attending our sessions, try doing penis enlargement exercises at home, in accordance with the clearly defined instructions, and we would record the progress together.

This was a rather risky step to take, since I could have been labeled as a charlatan by many, which would result in my losing both my current and my future patients.

At first, we were equally skeptical, both my patients and I. But, as time passed, the results began to show, first in terms of enlargement (in some patients, noticeable in a matter of just a couple of months), and then, consequently, in terms of life changes. Changes for the better. My patients became more self-confident, more self-aware, and significantly more extrovert; they advanced both professionally and romantically.

It was truly eye-opening, no matter how rough it might sound, that size really does matter. With larger penis came greater happiness for my patients.

We recorded their progress together, in the form of notes and audio diaries, created based on a series of conversations. I tried to make the conversations, although taking place in formal sessions, more casual than that in the standard sessions. I asked them to be open and detailed in their descriptions, and that is exactly what we had achieved.

Later on, while listening to the conversations and reading the notes, I realized that, by virtue of this casual form and the quantity and quality of information thus obtained, many people could benefit, since it was a simple way for them to recognize the extents of the change that had occurred. I entertained the idea of publishing the results in a series of books.

I contacted the patients that had participated in the application of this method, so I could ask for their permission to publish the collected material. I was shocked when a few of them explicitly demanded that I use their real names in the book, which I, of course, refused to do, in accordance with the legal and moral code of every respectable therapist.

- Ok, then at least don't sugar-coat it. Let the people see, hear, and feel the real truth. – they would most often add.

Needless to say that most of them agreed to participate in the project, which is why this book includes the experiences of all those men who have agreed to share their stories with the readers.

I'm telling this story in their words. No censorship or sugar-coating.

All pieces of information in this book are published in agreement with the patients. The names of the persons, institutions, and locations have been altered for the purpose of preserving their discretion and privacy. Some of the original names have remained unchanged for the purpose of authenticity.

Any resemblance to real persons or institutions is purely coincidental.

PART ONE: LIVING ENLARGED

I open my eyes. Daylight is shining through the curtains. Burning sun is multiplying my headache by ten. Last night's alcohol mixing and pulsating in the synapses. Beer, vodka, tequila, a margarita pool with a waterslide, maybe even the filthy water from the cleaning lady's bucket. Nothing out of the ordinary; Sunday is the best day for getting wasted. Sunday has that edge other days of the weekend lack. The edge you go stumbling along, knowing that you'll most certainly fall off the thing. Fall straight into Monday, which strikes your head like a hammer and leaves you squirming like a worm in search of an aspirin.

Where am I, anyway?

I try to sit up. Who followed me on my Sunday adventure? I have rarely been a lone ranger. My eyes land on a sun-kissed ass on the right side of the bed. The best I've ever seen. I come closer. It's round like a melon and sprinkled with golden hair visible only in broad daylight. Two dimples of Venus in the small of her back. Her skin smells like some sweet pastry. If Heaven exists, there isn't a shadow of a doubt that this is what it's supposed to look like. I run my fingers across her skin. Slide up her back. The owner of the round perfection shifts gently. My touch rouses her from her sleep. That's when I catch a glimpse of the clock beside her head.

- Fucking shit!

It's 8:22 a.m. I've got no more than 38 minutes to get to work. I jump out of bed. Look for clothes. One of my socks is in the middle of the room, the other one under the bed. Where are the pants? I find them on the sofa, under the shirt. Everything's all wrinkled, as if I just pulled it out of the dryer. I see a stain on the left shirt pocket. I cover it up with my jacket. The erection makes it impossible to zip up my pants. Maybe I could cover it up with my jacket as well. I hop around like a kangaroo in heat as I put on the sock.

- Shit!

It's 8:25.

-Have you got an aspirin? – I ask my last night's hostess.

-Mhmm... – she mumbles and turns towards me.

The covers slide down, baring her breasts. Perfect, just like her face. Her right cheek is blushed. A pillow scar across it. She doesn't open her eyes.

- Where is it? – I ask her.

- I haven't got any... – she mumbles again.

- What do you mean, you haven't got any? You just said...

- I've got coke... – she waves her hand, pointing towards the bathroom.

- Fuck...

I run into the hall. What floor is this? I call the elevator and it takes it forever to come up. I get in and press the first floor button five times.

- Come on already...

The doors close. The elevator begins to rise with a slight shudder.

- What the...?

It stops on the twelfth. The doors slide to the side. In front of the elevator, there is an older lady, looking at me with distrust. Keeping her eyes on me the whole time, she walks inside. Although the circle around the first floor button is flashing bright red, she pushes it once again. Just in case.

My pants feel tight around the crotch. I realize that I'm still standing there with an erection. Just great. It might as well spring out of the pocket and wink at the granny. I pull my jacket over the thing, but the woman won't stop staring at me, from head to toe. It's getting claustrophobic in the elevator as we descend. It feels like forever.

Ding. First floor. Finally.

Decisions we make shape the path of our life. The buttons we press, the doors we enter change us for better or worse. Most of the time we make those decisions by ourselves. Sometimes, others make them in our behalf. Could my life be better if I made different choice is the question we ask ourselves all the time. What would happen if elevator took Mark on seventh or ninth floor instead of twelfth? Would this turn of events change his day and life? Explore this possibility in Author's Cuts 1 and 2.

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I run out of the elevator, out of the building, and straight into the street. I'm welcomed by the sound of car sirens and the bustling crowd. This city never sleeps. The hangover is back and it's ready to knock me down. The uppercut and the double hook. Crushing my skull like an iron fist. I keep one hand on my forehead, and the other one in the air. The taxi drivers ignore me. I guess it's no wonder, if my looks match the state I'm in. I didn't even get a chance to look at myself in the mirror. I suppose that a pile of shit would be the most apt description of my appearance. A pile of shit in a 3000 dollar suit.

- Taxi!

One of them finally stops.

- ThinkBean. And hurry, please.

When your day starts with a rush and being late, it's dumb to expect that it will continue with a green wave and empty streets. It seems that everyone who owns a car has decided that today is the day to hit the streets. I've been working at the ThinkBean for five years now, and I have never been late to work. The driver does his best to make sure that I don't break the winning streak, but it's no use. I leave him a tip and run up the stairs and into the elevator at 9:05. Luckily, it is empty and fast.

I hurry down the hall, hoping that no one will notice that I've just entered the building. I'm one step away from the office.

- Overslept again, did we?

I hear the kittenish voice behind my back. I turn around and smile.

- Laura.

- That's why it's not good to sleep alone. No one to wake you. Right?

She gives a throaty laugh. Laura, my secretary.

- Has anyone noticed that I'm late?

- No. But you have to see Angela at 9:30. Have you been a bad boy? Or does the old hag want you to be?

She laughs again and instantly puts her hand on her mouth, looking around to see if someone's listening. I like her silly little flirtatious jokes.

- Could you get me two aspirins? And a coffee?

- Oh, it's been a wild night after all?

- Something like that. - I wink mysteriously and shut the door.

The desk is tidy. I'm not one of those people who have to check ten times if they've locked the door and turned off the stove, but my desk has to be in meticulous order. No paperclip may stick out. The files are neatly arranged. That's discipline. I wouldn't be where I am today if there weren't for discipline. I take a look at the time. 9:12. I can squeeze in a jelqing session before my meeting with Angela. I didn't get a chance to do one yesterday, and dedication is really important in this matter. Another segment of my everyday life where I show Spartan discipline.

I meet Laura at the door and she's carrying my coffee and aspirin. I take the tablet and just swallow it. The coffee's still hot.

- Leave it on the desk. I'll be right back.

I slide down the hall and into the men's room. It's freshly cleaned. Vanilla scent. I hear the silent, monotonous buzz of the vents. All stalls are free. I lock myself up in one of the stalls and drop my pants below my knees. My buddy down there is asleep, and I need it wide awake for this. I slap it against the thigh a few times. Nothing, it doesn't respond. I think of this morning's lovely croissant butt. It does the trick. That's right, up you go.

I grab it firmly with the thumb and forefinger of my left hand, making an OK sign around the base. I make another OK sign with my right hand, right above the left, and slide my hand up, slowly, counting to myself: 1, 2, 3. As soon as my right hand reaches the glans, I start sliding my left hand upwards. I place the right OK around the base and repeat the motion. 1, 2, 3. Slowly and firmly. One hand, and then the other.

The penis is getting filled with blood. It's thick and dark. My hands slide alternately up the hard tissue. I've got an erection. I wait for it to ease up a bit, so I don't risk a broken capillary.

I glance at the watch: it's 9:25. Ok, 20 to go. I've got enough time until the meeting. I continue doing jelqing, counting three seconds per motion.

Then someone knocks on the door.

- Mark, are you in there? The boss is looking for you. It's urgent.

- I'll be right there.

I wait for the erection to subside a bit before I go back to the office. I pull my pants up. Unlock the door. It's doesn't work. The mechanism is stuck. I push the door outwards. Try again. Won't budge. I turn the knob and pull the door inwards, but I still fail to unlock. I break into cold sweat.

- Hey! Is anybody out there? – I bang on the door.

No one answers. I bang harder and harder. I'm sweating like a banshee. What a dumb situation. What kind of excuse will that be? Why are you late for the meeting? I got stuck in the john. I pound on the door like a madman.

- Anyone?

- Mark? – I hear the voice of Matt Dobkins coming from the other side of the door.

Wherever you go, he's always there. Buzzing around, sticking his nose in other people's business, gossiping, eavesdropping. A rather annoying guy. But, this time, his annoyingness saves me.

- Matt? O, thank goodness you're here. Can you call someone to open the door? I got stuck.

- Why aren't you using the urinal? Are you shy? – like I said, a really annoying guy.

- Um... it was... urgent.

I hear laughter fading away into the distance. Great, that's just what I needed. Matt probably holds the world record in transferring information. In a matter of minutes, the whole floor will know what happened. Maybe I'm better off stuck in here all day.

It takes the handyman five minutes to get to the men's room and another five to fix the lock. It's already 9:42 when I enter Angela's office.

- Angela, I'm sorry. I've had a kind of a mishap...

She says nothing and just points to the chair. She catches a quick glance of my crotch and quirks her eyebrow. Shit. It's still visible. Now she'll think that I was playing with myself. As if this morning's mishap wasn't enough.

I can already see Matt, schmoozing with that twiggy yenta who works in the copy room: "Hey, you know that guy Mark from Angela's department? He was taking a dump this morning and got stuck in the toilet. I know, but he wasn't taking a dump, he was actually wanking off."

- Mark, are you all right? You look a little pale.

- I'm fine. I just slept badly last night. Thanks.

- All right. The reason I called you is a new client you're taking over.

- I'm afraid I won't have enough time for another client.

- What are you working on now? Ores and McCaleb? Don't worry. Clara and Adam will take over that account. This one is extremely important and we need to give him our best. I'm sure you can make that happen.

That's not flattering. That's how Angela praises people. Discretely and indirectly. Criticism, however, is a whole new ball game, but I'm on her good side, even when I do make a mistake.

- Who's the client?

- Greg Kolba.

- *The* Greg Kolba?

She nods and smiles. Suddenly, I forget I was just caught with my pants down. I'm in a great mood.

- What do I need to know? – I'm anxious to find out.

She hands me the folder.

- He's started a sports drink business. I've already sent you an e-mail. You will find a zip in the attachment, all details are in there. You can start right away.

I walk out of Angela's office, looking at the folder in my hands. The smile on my face is that of a boy who's finally stayed alone with his new toy.

Greg Kolba. Outfielder for the Yankees. When I was a kid, I worshiped him, although I wasn't even born when he first stepped onto the field. He was a nineteen-year-old wonder in the late seventies, when he came from Detroit to play for the Yankees. Tigers fans saw him as the next Ty Cobb. My grandpa, who introduced me to the world of baseball, thought the same.

Unfortunately, fate doesn't care about plans and hopes. It seemed that, although his talent was indisputable, he lacked that certain something, necessary for becoming a real star. As if he didn't adapt all that well to the new club and the new town. By the end of the eighties, he came around and had two amazing seasons, but in 1992, he got injured and was mostly a benchwarmer during the next two seasons. Everyone wrote him off. He himself thought of retiring.

Thanks to his coach's patience and faith, he made an incredible comeback in the season of 1994-95. Although he was already 35, he was superior to all others. And then, a strike broke out, preventing Kolba from entering the Hall of Fame and preventing the Yankees from winning the title after so many years of waiting. They won the title in 1996, but by then, Kolba's spark was gone. He retired the following year. Although the unfortunate set of circumstances didn't let him shine, there was something about him, about his moves, strikes, and manners that made me appreciate him more than the other players. He wasn't the best, but I've always wanted to play like he did. And now, he's going to be my client.

- What's with the mysterious smile? – Laura asks me as I walk into my office. – Was Angela a bad girl?

- No, she was really nice.

- Nice girls are boring. Oh, yeah, she's not a girl.

- Don't be like that.

- Why? Do you like her? Are you going to do something about it? Huh? – she keeps teasing me. I chuckle.

- And how come you never took me out for a drink? What's wrong with me?

- Nothing. You're wonderful, beautiful, smart... witty... wait, what else?

- Go on, you're doing so well.

- Charming, strong, and independent. You've got lovely cheekbones.

- So why don't we go out?

- I don't think that would be a good idea. We'd spoil these moments of sweet anticipation.

- Oh, yeah? Ok, then, if that's so, you're not my type anyway. – she smiles naughtily.

- Oh, yeah? – I burst out laughing as I walk into my office.

- Your new cup of coffee is on the desk. – she winks.

- I don't know what I would do without you. – I reply.

- You'd go down like the world economy.

Flirting with Laura began three years ago, when she started working at ThinkBean. We met by the coffee machine. She started a conversation I quickly got absorbed in. It's no wonder, since she's the kind of a woman a man cannot be immune to, except if he's a Tibetan monk or a bearded

member of the Jihad army. We were both shocked when, later on, they introduced her to me as my new secretary, and introduced me to her as her new boss. We quickly dealt with the confusion and went back to the way things were before.

And the way they still are today. We've never slept together. Both of us see flirting as a kind of stress relief at work. Sex would probably ruin everything, because sex never travels alone; it's always accompanied by a whole bunch of various emotions. And soon it all becomes blinded by lust and ruined by jealousy.

If I had met Laura somewhere else, in a sea of other women, I'd approach her. Scandinavian face, high cheekbones, dark blue eyes, C cups, perfect ass. I fantasize about her. A lot. But here, she's my right-hand person. That's it. For moments of pleasure of uncertain duration I look for others, with whom the possibility of things getting complicated is not that great.

But it hasn't always been this way. If you had met me some 20 years ago, you would never have recognized my face underneath all those pimples and braces. The self-confidence strutting around the tenth floor of ThinkBean spent its high school days in the basement. On a couch covered in ketchup stains, with porn mags and video games stashed underneath. I was a squabby little boy whose real life began in college. Although, back then, I still had no luck when it came to women. The few relationships I'd had ended before they even began. The reason?

What you would call a million dollar question. Or perhaps not. Why do women usually leave men, other than:

a) Looks? No. I looked quite decent. Handsomish. Laura recently told me that I reminded her of Julian Morris. To be honest, I had no idea who he was. I had to look him up on Google. A rather likeable guy.

b) Money? No, I've always had a decent amount of money. My folks insisted on sending cash, but even in college I preferred earning my own money.

c) Caveman manners? No, it's not that either. I've always been polite. Holding doors open for ladies, paying bills, and being infinitely thoughtful. I've never chomped or slurped. I've never been an asshole. It wasn't that I was trying to be like that. That's just who I am. A good guy.

d) The car? Back then, I was driving a piece-of-junk Honda. Nothing special, but it could take me from point A to point B relatively quickly. And the seats were quite easy to recline.

e) Lack of personal hygiene? No. I wasn't a clean freak, but I was clean. I showered every day. I never left the toilet seat up or covered in pee, nor was my room filled with trash and dirty laundry.

f) Small penis? Bingo. When you're endowed with just a bit over 5 inches, no matter how smart, caring, or clean you are, in a matter of just a few months, be sure to expect *the talk* that starts with: "we should talk" and the next thing is "...I have realized that this doesn't work...", "...I've been having a dialog with myself for quite some time...", "...I'm trying to understand my desires...", or

“...I’m just not ready to be in a relationship right now...” and it usually ends with “you’re a great guy”, “...it’s not you, it’s me”, “I’m going through a strange phase right now”, and the like.

Anyway, you get the point. Of course, she doesn’t end up lonely, contemplating her own desires. The very following week, she will be fucking Steve Lavelle, a promising running back and a future used car dealer. Steve’s dick was the talk of the town, a gossip I learned was true once I saw the thing in the locker room (I’d spent two semesters trying to be a wide receiver).

Forgive me if I get a little carried away or if my emotions get the better of me as I take a walk down memory lane. Although, those days, in Minnesota, I kept everything and everyone at arm’s length. And not just arm’s length. The Moon was closer to me than home.

That small penis of mine was the reason why none of my relationships could last longer than three months.

So, what’s changed?

Well, It’s bigger now.

How big?

7,25 in.

Bullshit! No way!

I know, a couple of years ago, I would have said the same. But I’m not talking magic. There’s no such thing as magic. You can’t just wave a magic wand and make your penis grow two inches. It takes time and Spartan discipline. And a lot of manual work. The kind of manual work that got me stuck in the john this morning and nearly got me embarrassed.

Jelqing is just one of the techniques used to stimulate penile growth, supposedly invented by Bedouins with a lot of time on their hands. You know, the sun is burning like crazy, you find yourself a nice oasis, and what else can you do but shake the snake while looking at camel asses. They might’ve been better off selling this trick instead of oil. More fucking, less fighting.

And it’s *so* simple. It’s all about those two OK signs and the slight pressure to the penis as you move your hands up, first one and then the other. Like milking your dick. And it grows. Not overnight, of course. Sometimes, it takes months and even years for results to begin to show.

I first heard of this jelqing thing some seven years ago. I had already been living in New York for four years. My situation women-wise didn’t change much after I arrived in the Big Apple. A whole bunch of exchanged numbers, and just a few consequential drinks and intercourses. Not a single relationship.

Not until I’d met Valerie at a Hurricane Relief concert. She was from New Orleans and she had spent most of the concert crying. We slept together that same night. Actually, we didn’t sleep at all. We made love five times and fell asleep just as the sun began to rise. I thought that for her, that night, I was just a shoulder to cry on and a happy pill that made her forget about the bad stuff for a while. But I was wrong. After that night, Valerie and I had spent almost every day together. We were soul mates for eight years.

The phone rouses me from my thoughts.

- Yes. Don't worry, Angela. I'll be ready for the meeting.

I open the folder. Inside, there is a ten-page contract, made in five identical copies. I know that Angela's team takes care of every detail, but my approach is even more detailed. I carefully go through every copy. Sipping my coffee, I check every paragraph, comma, and footnote. Everything's in order. Our client won't be financially damaged, nor will we, in case of a breach of the contract.

Then, I read the e-mail outlining the details about Kolba's product. After he'd said goodbye to baseball, Greg worked at a radio station until 2010, when bigger sharks invaded the calm waters of Kolba's life, bought the radio station, and cancelled his show. After that, he became partners with a fellow journalist, Ray Davis, a New Yorker who had spent his entire career in Baltimore, playing for the Orioles, and they came up with a patent for a sports drink.

Ten-color, ten-flavor powder that mixes with water and helps your organism replenish electrolytes. They had the great idea of making the drink for every MLB team, so that every team gets its own color and flavor. This idea would surely make them millionaires, but it didn't work. Afterwards, Davis gave up on their business due to health problems, and Kolba continued modestly, working on his own brand of sports drinks. He's named it KolBase-X.

Can you see why this is not a good name? No. Well, that's why, just like Kolba, you'd come to me for help.

I take a look at the time. It's almost noon. I walk out of my office. Laura isn't there. I go back to Angela's office, walking past Matt Dobkins and the twiggy yenta who are standing by the copier. Ha! They look at me mockingly, with smiles on their faces that would make lemonade go sour. I try to stay calm. I walk down the hall and see Angela through the glass. She's smiling charmingly and talking to a man in a Boss suit, with wide shoulders and short pepper-and-salt hair. I knock and get in.

- Oh, Mark, there you are. Let me introduce you to Mr. Greg Kolba.

Kolba turns around. He looks young. Just a few vertical wrinkles here and there on his tanned skin.

- It's great to meet you, Mr. Kolba. - I introduce myself. - I'm a big fan. I worshiped you when I was a kid.

Kolba smiles, showing his pearly whites. They must have cost a fortune.

- Thanks. I wasn't sure anyone remembered my sports career.

- You must be kidding. Hitting streak from 1994 was the best thing that ever happened in baseball. If there hadn't been for that goddamn strike, you would have made history. Especially after the injury, after everyone had written you off.

Angela is now smiling confusedly, with an imploring look in her eyes as she shifts her gaze back and forth between us.

- Forgive us. The lady probably isn't interested in all the details. – Kolba smiles at her charmingly.

- That's right, I'm sorry, boss. I tend to get a little carried away when it comes to baseball.

I invite Greg to my office.

- Mr. Kolba, it is truly an honor to be working with you. – I babble like an excited boy as we walk towards my office.

- Please, no formalities. Call me Greg.

- Ok, Greg.

We walk into the office, where Laura is waiting for us with her most enchanting smile. I offer Kolba a drink which he politely refuses and thanks me.

Ok, Mark, I say to myself. He is important and he is your childhood idol, but in this line of work, you are the boss. If you get all mushy, your ship, captain, will crash into a rock and take both you and your client with it to the bottom. So, no emotions. This is work.

- Greg, I'm not going to beat about the bush, because in this kind of business, it is essential to eliminate the weaknesses first, and then work with what is left.

- I agree.

- Your product has got a massive potential, but also a massive flaw that is preventing it from using that potential to the max.

I can see a question mark in those wide open eyes. Good. I got him interested.

- Again, not beating about the bush. It's the name of the product. It is a great idea to combine your own name with a powerful word like base, strong, energy. That's good thinking. I have come up with a lot of brand names for my other clients the same way, combining their names with words that say something about their products. The problem occurs, however, when you don't combine them the right way. Then the name of the product gets an entirely different meaning. Like in your case.

He's still just looking at me, saying nothing.

- The name of your product comprises Kolba and Base. That tells the potential customer that this drink is offered by a popular athlete and that it contains all the vitamins and minerals, that is, the base their organism needs on daily basis. But when you merge those two words into KolBase, it can make an average customer, including me, think of sausage powder (Kielbase).

He begins to blush. Now I have to help him relax before he breaks into sweat. I don't want to make him even more nervous by saying that the name of his product actually sounds like some kind of enema kit. Basic colon cleansing. Get it?

- Luckily, that's not an unsolvable problem. We will think of a new name together. You will give me a day to think of a few suggestions, and tomorrow we will meet again so we could pick a name. After all, it is a new product, right?

- Right... – he answers quietly, through his teeth.

- And for a new product, we need a new, powerful name.

He's finally brightening up. It's time for some icing on the top.

- I see no other flaw. – I smile.

He smiles back.

- What I consider to be the main advantage of your product is the idea of selling it to every team and the league. Just what you had in mind before. The fans would buy sports drinks of their favorite teams, and each team would have its own flavor. Yankees –blueberry, Dodgers – orange, Red Sox – raspberry. A superb idea.

- We've tried, but there was a bunch of legal and non-legal conundrums. It's hard to get in on that game. The two of us got carried away and were overly optimistic about this whole idea.

- One of the reasons you are here at ThinkBean today is that idea. It is that idea that will help you turn the couple of hundreds of thousands a year you make today into dozens of millions you can make if we launch your product properly.

I can see a sparkle in his eyes.

- Have you signed any kind of contract previously? Could your ex-partner Ray Davis have a problem with us realizing this idea?

- Ray... Um... Ray passed away this year.

- I'm sorry to hear that. I believe you were close?

He nods.

- We were friends.

- I know it must be hard for you to talk about it, but we have to take care of every detail. You do understand that?

He nods again.

- So, have you signed a contract and would it be possible for the Davis family to make any future contracts and product launches complicated?

- No, there was no contract. The idea was mine. Ray was... Support... And he backed out by his own free will. He wasn't interested in KolBase. His wife and kids moved to Oregon a couple of years ago. He wasn't in touch with them anymore. They weren't there when he... No one was there. Not even me...

Shit. Just don't get weepy on me now.

- All right. Don't worry about it. I'll check all everything, so there are no unpleasant surprises later. Like I said, this is your ticket back into the game. The name of Greg Kolba will be back in the world of baseball, big time. Can you picture yourself as an MLB sponsor?

Good. He's smiling again.

- What is also important is that you can become a millionaire. In today's world of uncertainty, where nothing lasts forever, that means a lot. In fact, it means everything. You won't depend on anyone. No one can decide that your life as you know it is over just because they see you as a decimal point in the statistic of necessary restructuring, cost reductions, and dismissals. You are neither a decimal point nor a percentile, Greg, but a person with a history and reputation. ThinkBean knows that, and that is why we will help you get the millions you deserve.

Truth be told, ThinkBean's cut will be 5% and I get 30% of everything the company gets. Imagine the figure on Kolba's account and you'll get the picture.

- Yes...

- Don't worry, Greg, you're in capable hands. You are familiar with the long list of people ThinkBean helped with their projects and careers. What I'm asking you to do is go home, get some rest, and I'll see you this time tomorrow, when you will hear my ideas. Then we'll get our offensive game started: Greg Kolba strikes back!

He bursts into laughter.

- See how easily I can think of a pitch that's related both to you and baseball.

- I'm impressed.

We shake hands, smiling wide.

- Ok, then, till tomorrow, Mark. And... thanks. I needed this.

- You're welcome, Greg. It's been a pleasure.

I watch his broad shoulders disappear down the hall, towards the elevator. He's smiling at everyone.

- So, how was it? – asks Laura, pulling a naïve face. She’s fluttering her eyelashes and pouting her lips.

I pull a face in response. I raise my eyebrow, grin, and stick my thumbs in the air.

All right. Time to turn the sausage and enema into a golden goose.

Kolba really was on a good track regarding the name of his product. So I start playing with his name and combining it with strong words that could mean something to all physically active people, as well as their synonyms. You know, power, energy, vigorous... That sort of thing.

Ok, so, to begin with, I combine his first and last name. GreKo. Hm. I search the web for a similarly named drink. There isn’t one, but that doesn’t mean the name is good. It would be ok if Kolba was Greek, and he was selling yoghurt or tzatziki salad under that name. I move on to KolFit, KolBolt, Kol-Boom... No, that’s not it.

There’s Greg in Aggregate. Good word. Solid. A drink that’s got everything it needs to have. Aggregates everything, so to speak. The problem is, I can’t think of anything appropriate that includes this word. Aggregator. No, too many different associations.

Hit&Run. Yeah, it sounds great, but the analogy with car accidents could be a problem.

I go back to KolFit as the best choice. But no, it’s acceptable, but not perfect. Besides, if he’s going to offer the drink to all teams, I’m not sure the ex rivals would give a chance to a Yankee. Especially the Red Sox. It has to be something else.

I continue writing words on the whiteboard. Connecting them with lines, making compounds and abbreviations. An hour later, I’m standing in front of an unraveled ball of word-yarn, and as the time passes, it’s getting more and more entangled. Fuck. On top of everything else, my forehead is beginning to pulsate again. The hangover always returns around two.

- Laura, please, get me another cup of coffee and an aspirin.

She walks in. She casts a cursory glance at me and leaves the coffee and the tablets on the desk, without saying a word. That’s Laura. Priceless. She knows when it’s time not to say anything. Especially when she sees me all gloomy in my armchair, trying to banish the pain above my left eye by pressing it with my thumb and forefinger.

As she walks out, I say a barely audible *thank you*. I don’t look up, but I know that she’s smiling at the door.

I get up. Take another sip of coffee and an aspirin. Erase everything from the whiteboard in one single motion. Fuck you, stupid ideas. It can’t scream Kolba. But it has to be some prominent trait of his.

Suddenly, I’ve got it.

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