

24th June 2006

6-24-2006 I arrived at Colombo greeted by Taher and Sam. Tahere is Zahid's son 18 yrs old intelligent well spoken and thoughtful. Sam is ESM general manager barley speaks a word of English but nods his head when you speak as if he understands, but actually does not fully comprehend more than a few words spoken in English. Sam is my contact with Zahid when Tahere is not around as he has traveled away to Egypt for college, and not coming back until he graduates in 2010. Zahid I have only seen rarely since I have been here.

I am staying in a 4th floor walk up apartment. The apartment has no front door to keep out the rain or mosquitoes (there are really only a couple of mosquitoes once in a while and not bad at all, but the ones they have are big). I said to Sam there is no door; he replied yes no door good, no, yes? Then I found there to be no hot water. I said to Sam there is no hot water, Sam said, "Yes no hot water it has not worked for many years." I waited for him to say he was going to put in hot water, but he said nothing more about it. I asked Sam, what about hot water? He said. "Yes no hot water." I asked how about a door; Sam said "Yes no door, no hot water, you like? Very nice place, yes?" and laughed. He said "you talk to Zahid about this." I called Zahid who told me; yes the hot water had not worked for years. I saw this is getting nowhere so now I take cold showers, and when it rains the floor gets wet in the apartment. All things being equal, the entire 3 bedroom apartment is spacious and very nice they even put up new drapery, even drapes over the doors. My bedroom luckily has an air conditioner, the apt is modestly furnished. All the windows look out to the tops of countless coconut palm trees with a few rooftops seen below, as well as the cross atop the Catholic Church a block away near the beach.

The beach is very nice with tall palm trees everywhere the only down side to the beach is that it is monsoon season and the surf is constant 4 to 6 foot chop morning noon and night, so enjoying the beach is not the best idea. Nearby on the beach is the Pegasus resort where there are Europeans, that is where I hang out when not working days.

Last Wednesday Taher took me on a drive south of Colombo to Bentotta, this was familiar as Galle Road was the road I took back and fourth while visiting the minister. Near Bentotta there is a natural barrier to the sea a couple hundred yards off shore with inlets to the sea spaced about 1/8 mile apart, sort of an inter coastal waterway. On the barrier strip there are more Palm trees. Within the breaker islands it is nice and calm. This

is the post card setting I remembered; especially at sunset there is nothing more gorgeous on earth.

On the way we stopped for coconut water from one of the coconut and fruit stands, I had Patawan, a delicious fruit looking like a cross between a plum and an apple with a skin twice as thick as an orange... You squeeze the fruit then peel the top half of f when the skin breaks from squeezing. The inside looks like garlic cloves, but is soft like jelly. You pluck out the lobes and eat, they taste like candy. But the broken lobes look like a broken egg, not appetizing, but you forget that because it tastes so good. Then we had a fruit called matua that looks like a Kumquat covered in long rubber thorns, this too you tear open and the inside tastes like candy. I think I will smuggle some of these exotic fruits back to Miami and try to grow them, the climate here is identical to Miami.

The next day Taher and I stopped at the nearby Pegasus resort for lunch. Afterwards we talked about things in general. Then came the question he was waiting to ask. "What do you think of George bush?" I told him. He said he did not like GB because the trouble in Iraq. I defended the USA by reviewing history telling him he would probably be speaking Japanese if it wasn't for the USA sacrifices, as Japan was not far away in WW2. I told him "The point is that America is always there to save countries whether they want to be saved or not, as in Iraq. Understand?" After we talked I found Taher to be understanding and not at all prejudice against the USA. He does not seem to hold an opinion against the USA; he says he loves going there. I see Taher as smart young man who does not let politics or propoganda rule his thinking. He was more intent on convincing me that not all Muslims are bad like Bin Laden, and that he apologizes for the actions, he disagrees strongly with the Suni as he is Shiite Muslim. Also Taher is wealthy living a life of privilege that is not to be confused with the jobless trouble makers in Europe who think the world owes them everything. Taher showed nothing but respect for all. He wishes he could go to college in the USA but there is too much hatred for the Muslims. He seemed to be worried that I may dislike Muslims (not me, remember the T shirt I was going to wear in Dubai) Taher asked my why all Americans hate Muslims. I answered it is because when talking politics Muslims say they do not like George Bush, so they are automatically identified with Bin Laden. This idea seemed to click with Taher. I advised him that when he is in USA and someone brings up George Bush, tells them you like George Bush, and avoid politics. He agreed. Later that day after Taher dropped me off, he went to meet his father, I assume to discuss what he thought of me and what my thoughts of doing business with them were. The next morning Taher and his father came to take me to Sam's house for lunch then a road trip to Negambo, only 25 miles away but seemed like a hundred with the bad roads. One of the first things Zahid said to me was that he liked George Bush, but then went on about the president's mistakes. The last thing Zahid and Taher mentioned about George bush's faults was a recent statement he made.

They quoted a speech he gave where GB said "...one problem we have in the US is that all our imports come from foreign countries". To this I had to agree was a mistake and let them have the last word. The topic of race and USA and Muslim relations was then officially closed. Politics have not been mentioned since. The Sri Lankan fishermen Love George Bush, they are mostly Buddhist.

I wanted to know about the rebels. I was assured they were not a threat to pedestrians. What is that supposed to mean? On the news with the last bombings they did not mention it as being a bomb, instead they said "If you were near Colombo and you heard what sounded like an explosion, it was in fact a sonic boom" I am serious, No mention of the bombings. I mentioned to Taher and Zahid that it was not a sonic boom but a suicide bomber targeting the air force personnel. They said No it was a sonic boom; they just want you to think it was a bomb. The military man who was killed by a suicide bomber they said died in an "unfortunate auto incident". Taher told me that both The USA and Japan are paying the Sri Lankan to settle their dispute.

Japan wants peace in Sri Lanka because Sri Lanka buys most of its imports from Japan and has many tourists annually who visit on business and vacation, as well as fishing for tuna in Sri Lanka territorial waters. The USA wants pace because there is a stretch of ocean on the rebel side of the island where USA nuclear submarines meet up and dock underwater. This area of Indian Ocean apparently has great strategically importance and the USA is attempting to lease the off shore area from the Sri Lankan Government. I think it has something to do with being within shooting range of Korea.

On my first visit 2005 after arriving at the Galle Face Hotel I finally got good nights sleep. I awoke at 5: am and opened the window to let in a nice breeze coming in off the sea. When suddenly a bat flew in and proceeded to fly in circles. If you come here do not open your window before the sun rises or a bat will fly in, I think to bats they think it is a high rise cave at tree top level, because they don't have this happen down stairs.

When I hit him with the broom he went smack against the wall, fell to the floor and began walking on his hind legs towards me then took off directly at me. OK this was enough, I took the broom and this time swatted him as hard as I could and he was knocked out the window.

Now in my apt when I go to sleep at night I don't come out of my bedroom until the sun rises, because there is something that scratches around the floor early in the morning before the sun comes up and I think it is probably bats, or worse. 2 blocks down I saw an old man poking a 6 foot monitor lizard with a stick trying to get the thing out of his yard. The monitor lizards are common here, this one climbed up a nearby tree to get away from the poking, and he was in no hurry. So in the morning I also remember there is a large tree with branches touching the open window in the kitchen and sometimes I do not remember if I closed it or not. The heck with the snakes, the lizards are enough to scare the crap out of anyone I know, they are black and have smooth scaly loose skin, and usually about 5 to 7 feet long. I asked about the many snakes I have heard about. "Oh yes" they say (OK right there when they said "Oh yes" I got worried) "Watch out there may be a cobra" I said "Where?" They say "Cobras everywhere" Great another reason to leave not the windows open (Here there is no such thing as a screen) or did I forget to mention I have no front door. The bedroom doors and all doors everywhere are cut really low to the ground to keep out any wandering cobras that might try to squeeze through.

My apartment is a penthouse on top of a large Garment factory owned by Zahid, and this has caused some confusion. When they say government it sounds like Garment, so I never know if they are talking about the government workers or the garment workers. They sometimes complain that the garment workers are no good and lazy who start projects and never finish them. I said "Why don't you fire them if they are no good" and everyone laughs, I said "what's so funny? They say "But you cannot fire the Garment workers". Then they say "If you need anything just tell the one of the garment workers they are very helpful.

More about my apartment. It is on the entire 4th floor of Continental Garment factory that makes clothes for export to the USA. There are over 100 seamstresses and hundreds of sewing machines. Imagine me, surrounded by over a hundred really nice looking native girls with great figures. The factory runs 2 shifts until about 8:30pm, sometimes I look down at the girls as they leave the main factory building, and sometimes they see me and laugh. I do not say anything to them because first of all they do not speak any English. These people seem to have a genuine childlike innocence, there is no such thing as a short skirt or shorts they all have long dresses, skirts or pants, and there is no such thing as cleavage... The factory runs like a fine tuned watch. Everybody smiles and seems happy while they work endlessly. They pay the best workers about 8000 Rupees a month (About \$80.00 USD). About every other day a container truck backs up to load up clothing for export. The latest production has been purple blouses. On the second floor is my office, which is also the board room, next to that is the factory canteen where the workers all have their meals. The complex is not one building, but 3 separate buildings with one staircase joining all together.

Food:

All the meals have curry, everything has curry even breakfast you have curry, they have what they call Pizza Hut, but doesn't taste like pizza, more like something you would throw out. They do have a Mc Donald's and KFC that are close to USA, but again the ketchup has curry and you have to go to downtown Colombo to get there. A block away from my apt next to the Catholic Church there is the local bakery that supplies bread to the Garment factory canteen. They are nice there but again do not speak English but rather agree with what ever you say with a smile. I tell them "make me some chicken and rice, but no curry, OK? NO curry" They say Yes ok then deliver curry. What ever they bring you be sure to watch out for what looks like a string bean, but is flat like a blade of grass. This you dare not eat, it is chili pepper, I ate them thinking they were green beans and almost could not breath until someone pointed out the difference. The best is the

cooked vegetables, but generally Sri Lankan food sucks until you get used to it or it is home cooked then it is not so easy as Isaiha would say.

In general:

I planned to start building boats a day or 2 after I arrived, but 2 weeks later I am still at least 2 weeks away from starting. The first difficulty began with the tools I had shipped by air. The tools I sent were basic air tools for fiberglass work and painting boats. Customs in all countries need an invoice of what has been sent, and there is where it started. On the invoice list of tools sent there are listed 2 paint spray guns and 3 Gel coat and resin spray guns. The government office takes this to mean I am trying to import actual guns, the type you shoot using ammunition. So they would not let the shipment clear at all. I sent them a catalog showing what they were, and they then said OK, but the duty is equal to the \$3000.00 they cost in the USA. That was a few days ago, and the company refused to pay. Today the customs sent a fax reducing the amount to \$1500.00, but the company says it is still too much, they said to customs the most they will pay is \$150.00. Mean while storage charges will start in a day or 2, and without the tools I cannot do anything. Sam says the Garment asks too much for duty for tools. He says "we wait until next week; you see they will reduce this amount."

The workers seem nice and friendly, but do not have the right tools for the job. They use a 4 inch grinder to cut fiberglass, but they do not use a diamond cutting disc as is required, instead they use a thick grinding wheel that creates clouds of irritating fiberglass dust. I gave them a diamond cutting disc I brought in my suit case and gave to replace the incorrect grinding wheel. As soon as I replaced it with the diamond cutting disc the workers noticed the difference, no clouds of irritating dust and a finer cutting line. I felt good as I had improved working efficiency with a minor change.

The next day I went to see them expecting the workers to greet me with gratefulness as I had made their cutting jobs much easier and less irritating. I was expecting to see them using the diamond disc in action, but instead I saw they had replaced it with the old grinding wheel. I said stop, I got a translator to find out why they changed back. They said they did not know they were allowed to use the new system. The translator informed them that they were to use the new cutting system from now on.

I thought, a misunderstanding, and they put the diamond disc back on. Later in the afternoon I went to see how they were getting along. Again the workers switched back to the old grinding wheel. Again I said stop and got the translator. I asked "what now", why they had changed it. The same workers responded,

"They are bringing it", I said "but I just gave it to you." They said again they are bringing it and all workers in the area looked to the back of the shop as if to convince me someone was really back there. I left and got Percy the GM he went down with me to straighten this out once and for all. We found the diamond disc in the hardware department. I had Percy ask them why they do not use it.

The workers say the grinding wheel lasts longer and costs less than the diamond disc. I asked how long the grinding wheel lasts, they said about 3 days and costs 50 cents. I explained right on the directions it says the diamond disc should last about 1 year with daily use, and costs \$4.00. I looked at their reaction and they did not believe me or the written product description. After a long discussion about the fact that the 100 grinding discs needed cost over 100 times what the one diamond disc costs per year they seemed to agree and again switched back to the diamond wheel. The next day I looked from around the corner at the workers to see they again switched back to the obsolete grinding wheel. I came around the corner and when they saw me they immediately proceeded to hide the entire cutting machine from me. I just said I give up, and then a worker showed me the new diamond cutting wheel to show me they have it, but put the Grinding wheel on because they were sanding now. I looked and saw they were cutting not sanding and said to Percy look they are not sanding they are cutting. I went back to management and told them the situation; they told me that they will have a talk with the workers. This circular ordeal took 4 days and ended back where it started with the workers using an obsolete grinding wheel to cut fiberglass creating huge clouds of irritating fiberglass dust.

Important advice to the traveler:

The first and most important precaution to take when venturing out in Sri Lanka is to bring your own toilet paper. TP can only be found in western culture hotels and the wealthy homes. Every toilet area has a hand held trigger spray, like you see in USA kitchens. No toilet paper and they toilet areas are always wet from spraying water. I see well dressed people go onto these toilet areas and when they come out they are neat and clean. I know they are going #2 at least some of the time yet there is no toilet paper. How do they do it? I refuse to ask. One time I went out unprepared, I had to crap the way the natives do using the hand held sprayer to clean with, but all I did was get shit on my hands and drench my underwear and pants and then wear the wet cloths until I got back to my apt. I ask the natives a lot of questions about their culture but I refuse to ask them how the shit without toilet paper. So again I give up and just make sure wherever I go that I have an ample supply of napkins. I have been practicing the traditional way so if I ever forget to bring napkins again at least I will be more prepared. By the way if someone says "We do it the traditional way", that means it is done the stupid way.

Tuna:

OK

One of the issues the Sri Lankan wanted help with was the fact that they do not have any long line tuna boats. Without long line tuna boats the tuna are caught with gill nets which damage the tuna and they do not get premium prices on the global market for their catch (at least that is what I was told). One issue was to give them training in boat building so they could build a sea worthy craft for long line tuna fishing. I then took a trip to Negombo to do a little research on this. After arriving I soon found fishermen who say they do have long line tuna boats. I said OK show me, I thought maybe there was something I missed in translation so I investigated. Sure enough they did have a few rickety old boats with bamboo outriggers for tuna and they were in fact catching tuna. So I had to ask Why is it others say you fishermen need tuna boats when I can see you already catch tuna with lines? Then I got the explanation. Yes they have tuna boats with lines to catch tuna. But what they do is they go out and catch only a few tuna at a time. Then they cut up the tuna and sell the pieces to other fishermen who use the tuna for bait to catch sharks which they then cut off the dorsal fin to sell to Japan because it brings in a higher price than tuna. So I had to ask, then why do you need to build tuna boats which are large and fast. They said so they can catch more tuna for bait to catch more sharks because tuna is the best bait to use for sharks.

That is not how it was told to me. Before this I went to Galle 90KM south of Colombo where I boarded 2 200 foot Japanese tuna boats that were unloading their catch of the last few weeks. The captains were very friendly but spoke only Japanese in front of me. The Japanese go by boat from Indonesia then put out 50 miles of long line and catch tuna they unload at Galle to be flown out to the global markets where they get top dollar. The average catch is 35,000 pounds of fresh tuna they then fly out globally getting a minimum \$3.00 per pound before shipping. I assumed that this was the Sri Lankan intention. It is not, they simply want more tuna to catch more sharks.

Machinery:

: While waiting for the tool issue to be resolved I figured I should at least prepare the area for gel coat spraying. I found a wide open area to spray and just needed a few fans to move the air. I told the GM to get me some fans he said OK, that was 5 days ago. Two days ago they told me that they did not want me to spray in the area I wanted to and instead spray in the "export" building. The export building is where they are building the 19, 22, and 24 foot boats. Ok I said, but I told them they need a large exhaust fan to get the overspray out of the area where the gel coat is being sprayed. They said yes no problem; we have this already hooked up. I said Oh yeah, show me. They took me to the export building about 2500sq ft. Inside I saw 3 funnel shaped suction ducts and an air duct system, all at least 20 years old and full of holes and leaks. Outside I examined the blower housing that was as big as a small car, it too was antiquated and also covered in rust, in addition it was raining that day and rain was hitting the housing and outside metal ducts. I said this is no good it will not work, they assured me yes, yes it will work, and we will repair. I asked when was the last time they saw it work, no one could answer, and they say they have been there over 20 years.

Later that day their electrician finally got the electric motor running, after they put on the fan belts to the turbine they called me back down the stairs. I saw that they had hooked it up and it was ready to be tested. So the manager said turns it on. It took about 10 seconds for the motor to reach full RPM and spin the 200 lb fan turbine at full speed. Upon reaching full speed the entire blower housing began to shake like an unbalanced washing machine, and the noise I cannot describe except it sounded like standing next a jet engine at full blast I quickly took cover behind a nearby boat as it looked and sounded like it would explode at any second. Just then the manager laughed at me, and against my warning to shut the monster off and get back he went right up next to it and held his hand near the mouth of the great roaring beast. I could not hear what he was yelling but his lips looked like they were saying "look it works". He motioned for me to come from behind the shield of the boats, I shook my head NO WAY was I getting near that mammoth contraption that probably never worked, and was on the verge of exploding at any moment.

The manager Percy finally shut it off as parts started to fly off it and dirt and junk was being spewed out from all the leaks and holes in the air ducts. Finally the leviathan stopped turning and it was again seemingly safe to come out from behind the boats. As soon as it was quiet, I said you need a new one; this thing is a death trap and a pile of junk. Percy replied, "Not to worry, we will fix." "Right" I said, Again Percy insisted "Yes we will fix today, no problem" Ok I give up, go ahead. The next day they began to disassemble the blower housing and remove the huge turbine fan. It soon became obvious the housing had been rained on for 20 years as the bottom was rusted through and collapsed as soon as they tried to scrape the rust off. Again I heard, "No problem we fix". Then I turned to look

at the fan turbine, which had been removed, it was completely rusted and banged up and looked suspiciously like it had flown out of the housing before. I pointed to the dents on the rim of the turbine as well as all the rust, but before I could say it is junk I heard, not to worry we will fix this too. I said how? Percy said we will sand it and use a wire brush. I said but how will you balance it, from then on he had no other answer except "not to worry we will fix it". That's it I give up I called the chairman and said they needed a new blower or let me spray in the wide open area with a few fans. The chairman who holds the purse strings told me that we must use the export room to spray and he will look into the blower matter, but he could definitely not afford the money for a new blower system.

The next morning I had a visit from one of the ventilation companies that install and service the air conditioning and ventilation systems in the other Garment factories. They told me they were sent by the chairman to resolve this once and for all. We spent hours designing new ducts and the new blower housing and motor, the design team at the factory drew up blue prints for the project. They said it would take a month to order the components and install the new system. Meanwhile I was thinking what am I supposed to do for the month? The next day they told me that I could go a head and spray where I told them the best place would be to spray 4 days prior.

But I still needed fans to move the air mass of overspray. I called the chairman to expedite the matter. He told me to tell Sam what was needed and he will get it for me right away. Remember Sam? (Don't get me wrong Sam is probably the nicest most hospitable person and the best cook I have met here.

He also grows his own vegetables and really knows how to prepare a delicious native meal) Sam is the one who nods his head but does not understand more than 3 words of English. I went to Sam and said I need fans to move the air when I spray gel coat. He replied "You are going to take your coat and move?" I said NO, I need fans to move the overspray out of the building. Sam replied "you are going to move out of the building now?" I got Percy to explain, at least Percy speaks a little English. Percy explained and Sam Finally said Oh , OK you need fans, I get for you right away, that was 3 days ago. I asked Sam "Where are the fans?" He understood but could not answer in English so we had to wait for Percy to come back from the boatyard. Percy then translated from Sam, "We cannot buy fans yet because we are waiting for payment from one of our customers and we have no money.." Percy nodded his head, and informed me that this is true he had not been paid in a month because they are waiting for a customer to pay them for a boat. Meanwhile the customer has many complaints about the boat, and has demanded a discount because of the imperfections on the boat they made for him.

But Sam says "Good news", I asked "What is the good news?" He said "the customs reduced their duty on your tools from down to \$900.00" I replied OK that is still expensive. Sam said "Yes that is still too much, I will not pay" He went on to say "In a few days they will lower the amount to \$700.00" I asked "Ok then you will get them?"

Sam replied "No, that is still too much I will not pay them more than \$300." Then he called up the customs office saying that I was to explain the tools are for making boats and we cannot start without them. I talked to someone who told me his hands were tied and there was nothing he could do. He explained that if I wanted to buy anything in Sri Lanka as a foreigner I had to pay 100% taxes. He made the comparison to me that if he were visiting the USA he would also have to pay 100% taxes on purchases because he would be a foreigner in the USA and then asked if I understood, I gave up and said yes I understand. Then he asked for Sam and I went back to my office. Later that day Sam told me they released the tools from customs for \$30.00

Lunch at the office:

The first 10 days were great every day at 12 they brought me lunch, what else, curry chicken and shrimp, at least it wasn't squid and skip jack every day like the last visit. Side Note They over cook one side of everything, and undercook the other side, and cook the shrimp until it is like leather.. After a while one gets used to Sri Lankan food and then you begin to like it. Kind of like Jail house food. For the first few days the meals taste like garbage , then you get used to it, then before you know it you like it and miss getting the 3 squares a day when you get out. Not that I have ever been to jail, but I have heard about it. Anyway every day they brought me lunch then one day at lunch Sam said you go out to lunch today OK? I said OK as I thought we were going out, but no Sam just left me there at the factory.

Without a car or any transportation. The only thing to eat nearby were the fish that the local fishermen laid out to dry on the hot pavement on the other side of the polluted canal, not to mention the swarms of flies all over the fish exposed to the air with cars swerving to the shoulder of the road to avoid running over the fish. I went to Percy and asked what about lunch? He replied quite seriously "do you like dried fish?"

Yesterday I met with a very nice white hair and bearded Senior Norwegian man who builds very nice fiberglass boats he sells in Norway and Sweden. He had lived in Sri Lanka 30 years and told me the truth about what goes on here. Talking to him and getting the unvarnished truth was very refreshing. He took me for a tour of his factory in the Free Trade Zone. His factory was first rate all the way with the latest technology and equipment. He told me he has so many export boat orders he cannot keep up and his production is at full capacity. He says he makes one boat per day, but I only saw one boat being built. And none were being prepared for shipping. I had to say something to him after all I had seen and heard about this crazy place. I asked him or said to him. You must like something about Sri Lanka or you would not have stayed here 30 years. He just looked at me and said "When I came here everyone said I was stupid to go." Funny, that's exactly what I heard; when I said I was going.

AJ continued our fascinating discussion telling me how people spend a few years in the Sri Lankan Navy and then when they get out they call themselves Naval Architects, he laughed and went on to say, they are not Naval Architects at all, they were only in the Navy but if you come from the Sri Lankan navy you are allowed to call yourself a naval architect, the government recognizes you as such , and with the government backing with credentials, anyone who gets out of their Navy can call themselves a Naval Architect and join the international society of naval Architects. AJ described his first encounter with Sri Lankan Naval Architects when telling me how the Sri Lankan Navy asked him to design and build a Tuna boat when he first arrived in the seventies some 30 years back, they could not afford AJ so the Sri Lankan Naval Architects designed and Built one themselves. The tuna boat they built had handles in the front as part of the rub rail. He asked them what were they for, The Sri Lankan Naval Architect told him it was so they could pull the 50 foot tuna boat up onto the beach. He tried to tell them they need docks, you don't pull a 50 foot boat up onto the beach, but they don't listen, they think every boat should be pulled up on the beach when not using it, they do not have any docks to tie up at. AJ went on about how ridiculous the naval architects are. I told AJ about how I see the traditional boats turn over regularly in port when coming back loaded with fish. And how I had this on video on my first visit. AJ laughed and agreed, he told me their designs are inherently unstable. The Sri Lankan design is top heavy. AJ said he had also seen many boats tip over. I asked him why you haven't built a boat for them to see the error. AJ told me he had but they would not use the new design, so he exported the boat to another customer. We both had a good laugh at the lack of logic in their designs.

I looked over at Percy to see his reaction, as earlier that day he told me that he had spent many years in the Sri Lankan navy and is now a naval architect and

had showed me his membership card to the International Society of Naval Architects. Percy had also reassured me days before the traditional fishing boat designs were stable despite me telling him when I first arrived they were not. Percy did not seem to even understand AJ's comments or he would have said something about the matter, or maybe he did understand and knew it was true. I did not pursue the matter; if Percy wants to call himself a Naval Architect let him. Percy does know a little about managing personnel. Whenever Percy has an idea he tells me, and then follows up with "see...? I have a small brain!" Again do not get me wrong Percy is one of the only glimmers of hope in getting boats built the correct way.

AJ showed me more of his operation where he made long line tuna rigs for Japan, he also makes fishing hooks and fishing gear he exports all over the world. Percy asked him why he doesn't sell any here locally to the fishermen in Sri Lanka

AJ answered "the locals cannot afford to pay for this quality" So Percy asked "Can't you make fishing gear with poor quality so we can afford to buy it?" AJ looked at me, rolled his eyes and told me I have a big job ahead. In A.J's office there was another Norwegian working on a project drawing, he waved but we had to go. I hope I can again visit A.J which is short for Arnuff Sandvick. The A is for Arnuff the J is for Jafferjee. Next time I will call him Arnuff. Not AJ like others. Arnuff is friends with Sudath.

Sudath is the sales manager who before the tsunami was production manager and had been with ESM 20 years, a well groomed handsome Sri Lankan who always has a pleasant comment and a smile. He definitely has the cool gene in him. He spends his days at work reading the paper and answering the sales calls. He tells me that the Garment has paid for ESM to make 1000 fishing boats for the local fishermen in the traditional design. I knew better than to tell him the design is flawed and all they will do is tip over, and did not bother to mention. I was there to develop boats for the exports not for the local boats being paid for by the aid sent after the tsunami.

Brothers;

I found out the chairman's brother is a big partner in AJ's business. So I asked AJ, why the chairman did not solicit your help to get things going at ESM. AJ told me that he had met with the chairman, but that the chairman thought the partnership investment was too high, he went on to say he knew the family and they would not spend the money required to build boats the way they are supposed to. AJ told me this right after telling me the chairman's brother is the one who finances his state of the art boat factory (a little Sri Lankan has rubbed off on AJ). AJ says he only sees the chairman's brother when he collects money, and the chairman's brother does not want to know about the factory operations.

I noticed a 60 foot Bertram Yacht on AJ's factory grounds that looked as if it been parked there for many years. I asked about it. AJ told me he brought it here but the Sri Lankan Navy will not let him use it because it is bigger and faster than anything they have, and they are afraid he may use it for warfare.

Instead he uses one of his 20 foot export boats for going out. He told me to never leave the boat in the water because the natives will steal, he told me they do not steal things like radios or fishing gear he said once he had a propeller stolen while docked for just few hours, when he put the boat in gear it would not go. Another time he went to go and the engine stopped running, he found that someone had taken the bulb you squeeze to get the gas going. AJ said when I put my 40HP engine on my boat here not to go out until I get permission from the Navy. He says if they see someone zooming across the water they are likely to blow you out of the water and ask questions later. So there goes my dream of cruising the breaker waters.

Engines:

The small day fishermen only use 15 and 25 hp 2 cycle engines on their 18 foot boats, but they run them on kerosene. I asked why kerosene? They told me that kerosene is half the cost of gasoline. They have one tank with gasoline to start the motor, but switch to a tank with kerosene once it gets started. They think Yamaha makes engines especially for them to use with kerosene. I said that cannot be true, I said first of all this market is too small to have unique technology, and if it were true kerosene would be used as fuel everywhere. I told them kerosene may be cheaper but I am certain you get more mileage from gasoline. They did not believe me. I even proved it. I took one of the 2 hp 2 cycle engines I brought and put in a pint of kerosene in one, and in the other I put a pint gasoline (both had oil mixed in the fuel) once I got them started I ran them both on the back of an 18 foot boat, I went up and down the canal until the engine with kerosene ran dry, I kept going and going on for another mile at least using the engine with gasoline that ran long after the kerosene engine ran dry. Finally I stopped the engine and said "see, you buy kerosene cause it is half of gas cost but only takes you about one third of the way that gasoline takes you. Wow! Were they impressed; a few days later guess what they had filled their tanks with? That's right Kerosene. I gave up.

Sat 7- 11-2006

Today we began designing and working on making the spray booth, in the export building. After all the back and fourth, Percy finally took the initiative to get something done. He said we will do it this way until we run out of materials then they will let us finish. Then I remembered the complaints "The garment workers always start projects and never finish them" At ESM the workers all came from the garment factories. I hope they meant government workers are lazy and not meaning Garment workers are lazy. . Anyway before you knew it 25 men and women took everything out of the export building. They carried the boats and molds out by hand! They did not use any wheeled devices. Our first order of construction was the blower and air duct system to move the overspray out of the spray booth. Percy then introduced me to the ventilation technician who was to install new ducts and blowers. Percy earlier had finally agreed to install new equipment. Percy introduced the man to me, Percy said "This is the man in charge of the sucking" I said "Excuse me?" Percy said "This is the man who does the sucking" Finally I got it, this was the man to install the new turbines and air ducts to replace the overspray from the spray booth with fresh air by forced ventilation.

Sunday 7-8

Went to bed late, had a good night sleep. Got up about 10 am went to kitchen to make coffee. I saw the barrier I put up to block entry through the front door was moved aside. I made the barrier with a few chairs and cutting boards and shelve pieces to at least dissuade any creature from coming in. But I noticed something had pushed a chair aside. OK, gosh dang it I am going to insist they put a front door on my apt. I see now any creature can climb the tree on the other side of the apartment up to the roof, then cross over the roof and drop or climb down to my balcony and go right in my apt, whether it is a Monitor Lizard, or Cobra. The creatures know how to get in where there is food, another reason not to come out of my room. Last night while listening with headphones to Yahoo radio (the only sanity here) I heard scratching above. I took off my headphones and listened carefully. Like a horror movie I went out to my balcony. The scotching was coming from the aluminum canopy above the balcony. I ran in the apt and took a broom and poked the awning canopy whack made a loud noise and scared whatever it was away (probably a Monitor Lizard) it won't be long until I will look like the old man down the street poking the Monitor Lizards to get out of my apt.

This morning I took a walk to the end of the street to the beach. I will put up pictures of the view soon, The beach is about a quarter mile, just past the Roman Catholic Church where I go now and then to talk to Jesus. God had to send me to the other side of the world to get me to go to church. At 4:00pm Percy is picking me up to take me to meet his family and have dinner some 40 KM away. Sam said call me if you need anything.

Just had dinner at Percy's. He has a Beautiful home in the back country. The area back from the coast looks like coconut grove in a lot of areas. Percy's house looks like a coconut grove 2 story. The house is square with a courtyard in the center and bedrooms off to the sides, each one air conditioned separately. In the spacious living room is a spiral stair case up to the formal upstairs that is an entire different set of bedrooms. Like they live downstairs then upstairs some of the time. There were 2 kitchens. One traditional and the other just like these. He has a son 15 and daughter 20 both children behaved perfectly. His wife was very courteous and was amased to have an American in their home. Percy's wife cooked a 10 course meal with great tasting food. The funny thing was when I sat down to eat at 8:00pm the rest of the family did not join at the table, they watched TV or were in their room and Percy did not eat, it was all for me. I asked "why isn't our family sitting down with us and why aren't they eating?" Percy told me his family will eat later and he just wanted me to eat" That was a weird feeling eating alone being watched and told eat...Then I had to use the rest room, just to be safe I grabbed a napkin, sure enough no TP..

Monday 7/9

Relaxed, cleaned the apt got a ride to Grails Grocery store for supplies. I will cook from now on. Food in the area sucks, unless your dirt poor. Cooked USA dinner slept well.

Tuesday 7/10

Servant cleaned and cooked breakfast. Percy came by with a carpenter to install a front door on the Apt. Found out the tools still have not cleared customs. Customs rep showed up at ESM and we sat to resolve. The whole delay is due to the packing list it reads 2 Craftsman spray guns, 2 2001 GW guns. They are convinced an American along with the new owners of ESM are importing guns, (possibly for a US led invasion like Iraq) I showed the customs rep the catalogue and hopefully the tools will be released. When I got home there was no door, so I called Percy and asked what happened, he told me that Sam told him not to do it that Sam had made arrangements, (yeah right he said he would get it done the first day I was here, I don't like it.) Today's lunch was the best native dish I have had outside ones home. Sam asked if I like, I said yes, and neglected to ask, when the hell are they going to put a front door on my apt. Mrs. Zahid is coming over tonight because she said she left some "items in the apt" I have no idea what she means, there is nothing in the apt but a few sticks of furniture and some kitchen stuff, We'll see. They owe me over \$2000.00

Wednesday 7-12?

I am not sure the day and date yet it is confusing between USA and Here.

They are starting to pay me now. Now that I have become familiar with the office staff at ESM and have been doing what I can I see now that ESM is a well managed business. I say this because the chairman has invested additional \$7000.00 on my recommendation to build a spray booth. Something even most USA builders wish they could afford. They are investing because in the background are investors from Australia who are telling them they should improve the shop so they can export boats. It is not just me there are other foreigners telling them to modernize. Now I see my job is to get it done, because the investors are millionaires and not hands on, they only tell ESM what to do I am hands on to tell them how. ESM is advertising they are working to be the leader in fiberglass exports here.

The tools still have not cleared, they had me Wright a letter to the customs office, we will see tomorrow if they get released.

Finally I am getting regular good food for lunch. Here they have servants bring you tea at 10 am then lunch at 12 then tea time again at 3 pm, and then it's time to go at 5pm. It is comforting to be getting into a routine.

The plywood here and all the wood here is exotic, unlike USA lumber, all the lumber here is of high quality hardwoods and cabinet grade finished plywood. The lumber here makes the USA lumber seem like garbage.

Percy's father in law has had a lumber yard here for the past 50 years and knows the best lumber at the best prices, and knows how and where to get other exotic lumber and plywood from Indonesia and Thailand. Percy wants to invest in selling the Sri Lankan lumber in USA, I see a big profit.

I am registering with the USA embassy. Things here are not that crazy once you stop trying to get stuff done in a hurry, eventually it will get done, and in the mean time relax enjoy yourself. This is what they said on day one and they are correct. Also I cook my meals now when I am not with someone who knows me. I see now that there are 2 types of cuisine. One is regular native food which is a little spicy but very tasty, that most people have, then there is the super hot terrible tasting food with bits of bone in it that is the crap the poor people eat at the little restaurants all over.

7-16

Large feast at the Catholic Church, with fire works and LOUD explosions every few minutes for 2 days.

Tools still not released, now here it is 3 weeks and they are now going in circles asking the same stupid questions for the 4th time. Like "what is this 80 grit?" for the 4th time it is sandpaper I explain, "What is this palm sander? Why do you need to sand palms?" It is a sander that fits into the palm of your hand, not to sand palm trees, I explained for the 4th time. Norwegians coming to see spray booth system being built. Norwegians want to hire for production of fiberglass products.

In my office I heard in the distance an American speaking, I made sure then went from my office to hang around where the Americans were. They were a father and son. The man published textbooks in Sri Lanka. He was talking to 2 natives who did not understand most of what the man was talking about. The man asked if ESM had any 19 foot pleasure boats he could buy for use on lakes and rivers in the back country. The moron (whose name I will not mention, cause he is actually a spy for the previous owner, sent here to infiltrate and sabotage the operation), said we do not sell this kind of boat, you must look elsewhere. OK that's enough I thought and rudely interrupted to announce my presence and to introduce myself to the man and his son. I said "we have the perfect boat for you it is in our export division of which I am in charge. To build new boats for export using USA technology" Boy was the man relieved. We versified for several minutes about this crazy place and other small talk. Then I took him to see the export division headquarters. At first glance he said "I'll take it" (meaning the new boats I am in charge of making). The man turned to me to ask how much, I told him \$7,000.00 USD. Ok the man said I will put a deposit and tell me when it is ready. As we talked out the man turned to the name I will not mention, and confirmed the price, the "moron" said \$6000.00 USD. Then the man turned to me and said how much is it? I said "its \$7000.00 If I am in charge of building it and it is \$6000.00 if you want the moron to build it" At that the man said he wants me to do it.

Later a customer came in with a job to completely refit and gel coat a 40 foot sailboat using USA technology (perfect timing, no way did he want gel coat done the traditional way and was pleased to hear I had the equipment).

Tuesday, 7-17

I asked the driver at continental to give me a ride to ESM, this was a new driver and they told me to tell him where ESM was. Now there are 2 ways to get to ESM one way is to take a bumpy road about a mile to a place where there is a 19 foot boat tied up. You get on the boat and someone pushes you across the Dutch canal to the other side and a guard on the other side at ESM collects you and helps you onto the road in front of ESM which is facing the Dutch canal, which runs North and South 1/4 mile from the beach. The other way is to take a really bumpy road that twists around and then goes for about 1/2 mile along the side of the Dutch canal. This road is really bad. On one side are walls, the road is only 10 feet wide, and on the other side is a drop of into the canal. The road is not flat but tilted down towards the canal and there are many deep large potholes, and areas where the pavement has broken off and fallen into the canal. When a car comes the other direction, someone has to back up into the nearest driveway opposite the canal side of the road. Anyway I told the driver to take me on the straight road, as I fear sooner or later one day I will end up in the canal. So the driver took me to the area where the boat is tied and dropped me off. I then saw the tide was rushing in and was sweeping large islands of lily pads and blocked a clear shot across the canal so after the guards and others yelled back and fourth they finally got the boat aimed to push across where the next break in the lily pads came by. I got in and they all yelled and off I went to the other side missing the islands of lily pads floating by. The guards collected me off the boat and there was my driver in the van that just dropped me off a few minutes ago, parked in front of ESM.

When I go up 4 flights of stairs or lift something heavy or just sweat a lot from walking I often say, OOOOOH Buddy, or OOOOH brother, something to let

out a breath. Well now when some of the natives see me at the garment factory or ESM they smile and say OOOOOH Buddy.

This morning at ESM to my surprise I saw one of the workers actually using the diamond disc cutter without being told to, so there is hope.

Here all refrigerators and A/C units are on maximum cool verging on freezing because the power is constantly going out at least once or twice a day for 5 to 10 minutes.

I just finished talking to customs about tools again for the 5th time and again answered questions like "what is this?, what is that?" The same man I have talked to for the past 3 weeks. Now he says I should have clearance for the tools in 2 days. Translation means, no tools will be released, only more delays. I told Zahid to just send the @#%&&!* tools back to USA and I will resend individually so at least some will make it through. Some of the tools did make it through before but not enough

Matua that looks like a Kumquat covered in long rubber thorns, this too you tear open and the inside tastes like candy. I think I will smuggle some of these exotic fruits back to Miami and try to grow them, the climate here is identical to Miami.

The next day Taher and I stopped at the nearby Pegasus resort for lunch. Afterwards we talked about things in general. Then came the question he was waiting to ask. "What do you think of George bush?" I told him. He said he did not like GB because the trouble in Iraq. I defended the USA by reviewing history telling him he would probably be speaking Japanese if it wasn't for the USA sacrifices, as Japan was not far away in WW2. I told him "The point is that America is always there to save countries whether they want to be saved or not, as in Iraq. Understand?" After we talked I found Taher to be understanding and not at all prejudice against the USA. He does not seem to hold an opinion against the USA; he says he loves going there. I see Taher as smart young man who does not let politics or propaganda rule his thinking. He was more intent on convincing me that not all Muslims are bad like Bin Laden, and that he apologizes for the actions, he disagrees strongly with the Suni as he is Shiite Muslim. Also Taher is wealthy living a life of privilege that is not to be confused with the jobless trouble makers in Europe who think the world owes them everything. Taher showed nothing but respect for all. He wishes he could go to college in the USA but there is too much hatred for the Muslims. He seemed to be worried that I may dislike Muslims (not me, remember the T shirt I was going to wear in Dubai) Taher asked my why all Americans hate Muslims. I answered it is because when talking politics Muslims say they do not like George Bush, so they are automatically identified with Bin Laden. This idea seemed to click with Taher. I advised him that when he is in USA and someone brings up George Bush, tells them you like George Bush, and avoid politics. He agreed. Later that day after Taher dropped me off, he went to meet his father, I assume to discuss what he thought of me and what my thoughts of doing business with them were. The next morning Taher and his father came to take me to Sam's house for lunch then a road trip to Negombo, only 25 miles away but seemed like a hundred with the bad roads. One of the first things Zahid said to me was that he liked George Bush, but then went on about the president's mistakes.

The last thing Zahid and Taher mentioned about George bush's faults was a recent statement he made. They quoted a speech he gave where GB said "...one problem we have in the US is that all our imports come from foreign countries". To this I had to agree was a mistake and let them have the last word. The topic of race and USA and Muslim relations was then officially closed. Politics have not been mentioned since. The Sri Lankan fishermen Love George Bush, they are mostly Buddhist.

I wanted to know about the rebels. I was assured they were not a threat to pedestrians. What is that supposed to mean? On the news with the last bombings they did not mention it as being a bomb, instead they said "If you were near Colombo and you heard what sounded like an explosion, it was in fact a sonic boom" I am serious, No mention of the bombings. I mentioned to Taher and Zahid that it was not a sonic boom but a suicide bomber targeting the air force personnel. They said No it was a sonic boom; they just want you to think it was a bomb. The military man who was killed by a suicide bomber they said died in an "unfortunate auto incident". Taher told me that both The USA and Japan are paying the Sri Lankan to settle their dispute.

Japan wants peace in Sri Lanka because Sri Lanka buys most of its imports from Japan and has many tourists annually who visit on business and vacation, as well as fishing for tuna in Sri Lanka territorial waters. The USA wants peace because there is a stretch of ocean on the rebel side of the island where USA nuclear submarines meet up and dock underwater. This area of Indian Ocean apparently has great strategic importance and the USA is attempting to lease the off shore area from the Sri Lankan Government. I think it has something to do with being within shooting range of Korea.

On my first visit 2005 after arriving at the Galle Face Hotel I finally got good nights sleep. I awoke at 5: am and opened the window to let in a nice breeze coming in off the sea. When suddenly a bat flew in and proceeded to fly in circles. If you come here do not open your window before the sun rises or a bat will fly in, I think to bats they think it is a high rise cave at tree top level, because they don't have this happen down stairs.

When I hit him with the broom he went smack against the wall, fell to the floor and began walking on his hind legs towards me then took off directly at me. OK this was enough, I took the broom and this time swatted him as hard as I could and he was knocked out the window.

Now in my apt when I go to sleep at night I don't come out of my bedroom until the sunrises, because there is something that scratches around the floor early in the morning before the sun comes up and I think it is probably bats, or worse. 2 blocks down I saw an old man poking a 6 foot monitor lizard with a stick trying to get the thing out of his yard. The monitor lizards are common here, this one climbed up a nearby tree to get away from the poking, and he was in no hurry. So in the morning I also remember there is a large tree with branches touching the open window in the kitchen and sometimes I do not remember if I closed it or not. The heck with the snakes, the lizards are enough to scare the crap out of anyone I know, they are black and have smooth scaly loose skin, and usually about 5 to 7 feet long. I asked about the many snakes I have heard about. "Oh yes" they say (OK right there when they said "Oh yes" I got worried) "Watch out there may be a cobra" I said "Where?" They say "Cobras everywhere" Great another reason to leave not the windows open (Here there is no such thing as a screen) or did I forget to mention I have no front door. The bedroom doors and all doors everywhere are cut really low to the ground to keep out any wandering cobras that might try to squeeze thru.

My apartment is a penthouse on top of a large Garment factory owned by Zahid, and this has caused some confusion. When they say government it sounds like Garment, so I never know if they are talking about the government workers or the garment workers. They sometimes complain that the garment workers are no good and lazy who start projects and never finish them. I said "Why don't you fire them if they are no good" and everyone laughs, I said "what's so funny? They say "But you cannot fire the Garment workers". Then they say "If you need anything just tell the one of the garment workers they are very helpful.

More about my apartment. It is on the entire 4th floor of Continental Garment factory that makes clothes for export to the USA. There are over 100

seamstresses and hundreds of sewing machines. Imagine me, surrounded by over a hundred really nice looking native girls with great figures. The factory runs 2 shifts until about 8:30pm, Sometimes I look down at the girls as they leave the main factory building, and sometimes they see me and laugh. I do not say anything to them because first of all they do not speak any English. These people seem to have a genuine childlike innocence, there is no such thing as a short skirt or shorts they all have long dresses, skirts or pants, and there is no such thing as cleavage... The factory runs like a fine tuned watch. Everybody smiles and seems happy while they work endlessly. They pay the best workers about 8000 Rupees a month (About \$80.00 USD). About every other day a container truck backs up to load up clothing for export. The latest production has been purple blouses. On the second floor is my office, which is also the board room, next to that is the factory canteen where the workers all have their meals. The complex is not one building, but 3 separate buildings with one staircase joining all together.

They said they did not know they were allowed to use the new system. The translator informed them that they were to use the new cutting system from now on. OK I thought, a misunderstanding, and they put the diamond disc back on. Later in the afternoon I went to see how they were getting along. Again the workers switched back to the old grinding wheel. Again I said stop and got the translator. I asked "what now", why they had changed it. The same workers responded, "They are bringing it", I said "but I just gave it to you." They said again they are bringing it and all workers in the area looked to the back of the shop as if to convince me someone was really back there. I left and got Percy the GM he went down with me to straighten this out once and for all. We found the diamond disc in the hardware department. I had Percy ask them why they do not use it. The workers say the grinding wheel lasts longer and costs less than the diamond disc. I asked how long the grinding wheel lasts, they said about 3 days and costs 50 cents. I explained right on the directions it says the diamond disc should last about 1 year with daily use, and costs \$4.00. I looked at their reaction and they did not believe me or the written product description. After a long discussion about the fact that the 100 grinding discs needed cost over 100 times what the one diamond disc costs per year they seemed to agree and again switched back to the diamond wheel. The next day I looked from around the corner at the workers to see they again switched back to the obsolete grinding wheel. I came around the corner and when they saw me they immediately proceeded to hide the entire cutting machine from me. I just said I give up, and then a worker showed me the new diamond cutting wheel to show me they have it, but put the Grinding wheel on because they were sanding now. I looked and saw they were cutting not sanding and said to Percy look they are not sanding they are cutting. I went back to management and told them the situation; they told me that they will have a talk with the workers. This circular ordeal took 4 days and ended back where it started with the workers using an obsolete grinding wheel to cut fiberglass creating huge clouds of irritating fiberglass dust.

the traditional way so if I ever forget to bring napkins again at least I will be more prepared. By the way if someone says "We do it the traditional way", that means it is done the stupid way.

7-20

This is the post card setting I remembered; especially at sunset there is nothing more gorgeous on earth. On the way we stopped for coconut water from one of the coconut and fruit stands, I had Mangoose, a delicious fruit looking like a cross between a plum and an apple with a skin twice as thick as an orange... You squeeze the fruit then peel the top half off when the skin breaks from squeezing. The inside looks like garlic cloves, but is soft like jelly. You pluck out the lobes and eat, they taste like candy. But the broken lobes look like a broken egg, not appetizing, but you forget that because it tastes so good. Then we had a fruit called Rambutan that looks like a Kumquat covered in long rubber thorns, this too you tear open and the inside tastes like candy. I think I will smuggle some of these exotic fruits back to Miami and try to grow them, the climate here is identical to Miami.

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Later that day their electrician finally got the electric motor running, after they put on the fan belts to the turbine they called me back down the stairs. I saw that they had hooked it up and it was ready to be tested. So the manager said turn it on. It took about 10 seconds for the motor to reach full RPM and spin the 200 lb fan turbine at full speed. Upon reaching full speed the entire blower housing began to shake like an unbalanced washing machine, and the noise I cannot describe except it sounded like standing next to a jet engine at full blast I quickly took cover behind a nearby boat as it looked and sounded like it would explode at any second. Just then the manager laughed at me, and against my warning to shut the monster off and get back he went right up next to it and held his hand near the mouth of the great roaring beast. I could not hear what he was yelling but his lips looked like they were saying "look it works". He motioned for me to come from behind the shield of the boat, I shook my head NO WAY was I getting near that mammoth contraption that probably never worked, and was on the verge of exploding at any moment.

The manager Percy finally shut it off as parts started to fly off it and dirt and junk was being spewed out from all the leaks and holes in the air ducts. Finally the

leviathan stopped turning and it was again seemingly safe to come out from behind the boats. As soon as it was quiet, I said you need a new one; this thing is a death trap and a pile of junk. Percy replied, "Not to worry, we will fix." "Right" I said, Again Percy insisted "Yes we will fix today, no problem" Ok I give up, go ahead. The next day they began to disassemble the blower housing and remove the huge turbine fan. It soon became obvious the housing had been rained on for 20 years as the bottom was rusted through and collapsed as soon as they tried to scrape the rust off. Again I heard, "No problem we fix". Then I turned to look at the fan turbine, which had been removed, it was completely rusted and banged up and looked suspiciously like it had flown out of the housing before. I pointed to the dents on the rim of the turbine as well as all the rust, but before I could say it is junk I heard, not to worry we will fix this too. I said how? Percy said we will sand it and use a wire brush. I said but how will you balance it, from then on he had no other answer except "not to worry we will fix it". That's it I give up I called the chairman and said they needed a new blower or let me spray in the wide open area with a few fans. The chairman who holds the purse strings told me that we must use the export room to spray and he will look into the blower matter, but he could definitely not afford the money for a new blower system.

The next morning I had a visit from one of the ventilation companies that install and service the air conditioning and ventilation systems in the other Garment factories. They told me they were sent by the chairman to resolve this once and for all. We spent hours designing new ducts and the new blower housing and motor, the design team at the factory drew up blue prints for the project. They said it would take a month to order the components and install the new system. Meanwhile I was thinking what am I supposed to do for the month? The next day they told me that I could go ahead and spray where I told them the best place would be to spray 4 days prior.

But I still needed fans to move the air mass of overspray. I called the chairman to expedite the matter. He told me to tell Sam what was needed and he will get it for me right away. Remember Sam? (Don't get me wrong Sam is probably the nicest most hospitable person and the best cook I have met here. He also grows his own vegetables and really knows how to prepare a delicious native meal) Sam is the one who nods his head but does not understand more than 3 words of English. I went to Sam and said I need fans to move the air when I spray gel coat. He replied "You are going to take your coat and move?" I said NO, I need fans to move the overspray out of the building. Sam replied "you are going to move out of the building now?" I got Percy to explain; at least Percy speaks a little English. Percy explained and Sam Finally said Oh, OK you need fans, I get for you right away. That was 3 days ago. I asked Sam "Where are the fans?" He understood but could not answer in English so we had to wait for Percy to come back from the boatyard. Percy then translated from Sam, "We cannot buy fans yet because we are waiting for payment from one of our customers and we have no money..." Percy nodded his head, and informed me that this is true he had not been paid in a month because they are waiting for a customer to pay them for a boat. Meanwhile the customer has many complaints about the boat, and has demanded a discount because of the imperfections on the boat they made for him.

But Sam says "Good news", I asked "What is the good news?" He said "the customs reduced their duty on your tools from down to \$900.00" I replied OK that is still expensive. Sam said "Yes that is still too much, I will not pay" He went on to say "In a few days they will lower the amount to \$700.00" I asked "Ok then you will get them?"

Sam replied "No, that is still too much I will not pay them more than \$300." Then he called up the customs office saying that I was to explain the tools are for making boats and we cannot start without them. I talked to someone who told me his hands were tied and there was nothing he could do. He explained that if I wanted to buy anything in Sri Lanka as a foreigner I had to pay 100% taxes. He made the comparison to me that if he were visiting the USA he would also have to pay 100% taxes on purchases because he would be a foreigner in the USA and then asked if I understood, I gave up and said yes I understand. Then he asked for Sam and I went back to my office. Later that day Sam told me they released the tools from customs for \$30.00

7-21

Yesterday I met with a very nice white hair and bearded Senior Norwegian man who builds very nice fiberglass boats he sells in Norway and Sweden. He had lived in Sri Lanka 30 years and told me the truth about what goes on here. Talking to him and getting the unvarnished truth was very refreshing. He took me for a tour of his factory in the Free Trade Zone. His factory was first rate all the way with the latest technology and equipment. He told me he has so many export boat orders he cannot keep up and his production is at full capacity. He says he makes one boat per day, but I only saw one boat being built. And none were being prepared for shipping. I had to say something to him after all I had seen and heard about this crazy place. I asked him or said to him. You must like something about Sri Lanka or you would not have stayed here 30 years. He just looked at me and said "When I came here everyone said I was stupid to go." Funny, that's exactly what I heard; when I said I was going.

AJ continued our fascinating discussion telling me how people spend a few years in the Sri Lankan Navy and then when they get out they call themselves Naval Architects, he laughed and went on to say, they are not Naval Architects at all, they were only in the Navy but if you come from the Sri Lankan navy you are allowed to call yourself a naval architect, the government recognizes you as such, and with the government backing with credentials, anyone who gets out of their Navy can call themselves a Naval Architect and join the international society of naval Architects. AJ described his first encounter with Sri Lankan Naval Architects when telling me how the Sri Lankan Navy asked him to design and build a Tuna boat when he first arrived in the seventies some 30 years back, they could not afford AJ so the Sri Lankan Naval Architects designed and Built one themselves. The tuna boat they built had handles in the front as part of the rub rail. He asked them what were they for, The Sri Lankan Naval Architect told him it was so they could pull the 50 foot tuna boat up onto the beach. He tried to tell them they need docks, you don't pull a 50 foot boat up onto the beach, but they don't listen, they think every boat should be pulled up on the beach when not using it, they do not have any docks to tie up at. AJ went on about how ridiculous the naval architects are. I told AJ about how I see the traditional boats turn over regularly in port when coming back loaded with fish. And how I had this on video on my first visit. AJ laughed and agreed, he told me their designs are inherently unstable. The Sri Lankan design is top heavy. AJ said he had also seen many boats tip over. I asked him why he hasn't built a boat for them to see the error. AJ told me he had but they would not use the new design, so he exported the boat to another customer. We both had a good laugh at the lack of logic in their designs. I looked over at Percy to see his reaction, as earlier that day he told me that he had spent many years in the Sri Lankan navy and is now a naval architect and had showed me his membership card to the International Society of Naval Architects. Percy had also reassured me days before the traditional fishing boat designs were stable despite me telling him when I first arrived they were not. Percy did not seem to even understand AJ's comments or he would have said something about the matter, or maybe he did understand and knew it was true.

I did not pursue the matter, if Percy wants to call himself a Naval Architect let him. Percy does know a little about managing personnel. Whenever Percy has an idea he tells me, and then follows up with "see...? I have a small brain!" Again do not get me wrong Percy is one of the only glimmers of hope in getting boats

built the correct way.

AJ showed me more of his operation where he made long line tuna rigs for Japan, he also makes fishing hooks and fishing gear he exports all over the world. Percy asked him why he doesn't sell any here locally to the fishermen in Sri Lanka

AJ answered "the locals cannot afford to pay for this quality" So Percy asked "Can't you make fishing gear with poor quality so we can afford to buy it?" AJ looked at me, rolled his eyes and told me I have a big job ahead. In A.J.'s office there was another Norwegian working on a project drawing, he waved but we had to go. I hope I can again visit A.J. which is short for Arnuff Sandvick. The A is for Arnuff the J is for Jafferjee. Next time I will call him Arnuff. Not AJ like others. Arnuff is friends with Sudath.

Sudath is the sales manager who before the tsunami was production manager and had been with ESM 20 years, a well groomed handsome Sri Lankan who always has a pleasant comment and a smile. He definitely has the cool gene in him. He spends his days at work reading the paper and answering the sales calls. He tells me that the Garment has paid for ESM to make 1000 fishing boats for the local fishermen in the traditional design. I knew better than to tell him the design is flawed and all they will do is tip over, and did not bother to mention. I was there to develop boats for the exports not for the local boats being paid for by the aid sent after the tsunami.

. 7/22 Saturday

Had dinner with the Seattle man, talked about his project, no check yet. Watched CNN talking about how 8,000 Americans have been evacuated from Lebanon, 15,000 French evacuated, all Germans, and Australians and out of the 94,000 Sri Lankan there so far they have evacuated 200.

By the way did you know Australians here are snobs? Yes it is true I met a couple of Australians who came to ESM and they barely acknowledged me, don't they know who I am? Anyway they were rude, but could not take their eyes off the state of the art fabrication booth ESM is building and my new fabrication equipment.

They said they were going to open a fiberglass factory for making 90,000 liter water tanks for fish farming and other stuff. If they do they will have to import and pay skilled fabricators a fortune to work here. Also get working visas for them /I am told by immigration that a work visa for 6 months is \$2000.00 and Sri Lanka will not allow anyone to work here without one. My visa is for consulting only. If it was as easy as the Australians say they would already have started. But like all the other few other foreign business men I have talked to say they are going to open a factory for fiberglass fabrication, I ask myself, where do they think they will get the skilled workers? engineers? I found out that nearly all graduates from Sri Lankan colleges as engineers or other professions immediately go to foreign countries to work and send money home to their family. And even if these business men could bring in qualified workers and spent the fortune to keep them here. How would the businessmen bring in machinery; unless you bribe someone you have to pay 100% taxes on any new equipment you import/ Real businessmen soon realize it is impractical and not economically feasible and too risky to invest in a factory.

That is why ESM is a good thing, because it is an inside job, already established owned and operated by natives. By the way my tools were finally released after the 7th meeting with the customs agent and resubmitting a form that the tools were of no value and were not futuristic hi tech ray guns to start warfare. They released the tools for \$900.00 that is 1/3 of what they cost. Cars cost 300% to import yet there are plenty of them. Here you cannot import without a lot of waiting and negotiation.

All over here (except the shanty towns and businesses) it looks like coconut grove, the way it was. All over you can pull in off the busy streets to a secluded cafe or restaurant surrounded by tropical trees and landscape. When I first looked around I only saw the facade on the busy streets, but down many side streets are these hammocks and small restaurants.

7-23 Sunday

I have 2 sometimes 3 channels on TV where it is in English. There were many USA programs on TV until the last 2 weeks. The reason is the Sri Lankan garment decided the local TV and movie producers were not getting enough viewers due to the viewers preferring to watch USA and European TV programs and movies. The Garment calls these "foreign productions". The Garment put a tax on foreign TV and movies. \$900.00 per every 1/2 hour for foreign programs. So now it is only CNN news 24/7. An intelligent person would not want to watch Sri Lankan programs because there are only 2 types. One type is a super simplistic talk show was the topic is the boy scouts, or how to make the most of a coconut or gardening. The only other type of programs are short movies where there are twenty or so dancers in long dresses dancing around singing or more like shrilling and the story lines are always the same with a man and a woman meeting, and getting together. Then 20 or more dancers appearing and everybody starts singing, these scenes are repeated over and over. But no kissing is allowed, no drama, no suspense. Only the wardrobes and faces change.

The singing all sounds the same. So no wonder intelligent TV watchers with an IQ over 3 want to see the programs offered by the USA and Europe. But the Garment says that is unfair, not enough are watching the locally produced programs, so now they heavily tax, and the only foreign programs except are news programs, therefore 24/7 CNN

Today I am going to the beach and will put up a movie of the beach

Went to the beach and to Pegasus resort that recently opened after rebuilding from tsunami damage. There I met Kingly, a tour guide who took me on a backwater tour to see monitor lizards. The lizards are 6 to 9 feet I took video but they are hard to see on video because they blend in, plus they hide in the shady roots of the mangroves. Also there are a lot of fish in the mangrove areas.

7-25 Tuesday

Went to the upscale Crest Cat Mall in down town Sri Lanka near Gall face on Galle road. Went to Embassy then to mall. Anyway I saw a DVD store and it had all the movies from the USA I picked out a couple of recent hit movies and asked how much? 250 rupees the clerk said, that is \$2.30 USD I and great and bought a few more hit movies, then I picked out the remake of the Poseidon Adventure that was recently released in theaters. I asked how much, the clerk said 200 rupees, I said great I'll take it. The clerk said to me "No, don't want this one the quality is not so good" I asked what he meant. He replied "this was made with a video camera while they were watching the movie in the theater" Then I realized these were all bootleg DVDs. I said to the clerk, Oh, so these are so cheap because they are all bootleg copies. The clerk replied "No they are not bootleg, my friend makes them for me, and they are good quality" I repeated, yes but they are bootleg and the copies are illegal, the clerk replied "No, they are not illegal, my friend makes them for me, for you to buy"

In other words they bootleg everything and do not know it is illegal. Just like a news show on an Asia news channel where a rep from Microsoft was on with a reporter and a rep from Sri Lanka. The subject was pirated software. The rep from Microsoft said. He did not understand something in Sri Lanka. He asked the Sri Lankan "Why is it that you have no issue to pay for PC hardware but you always pirate software" The rep from Sri Lanka answered "Ties is because it takes all of our savings to buy the PC and then we have no money left to buy the software"

7-28 FRIDAY

Modifying one of their stupid looking boats to resemble some sort of sanity to send to USA. One serious problem of Sri Lanka is that there are very poor whose children are mentioned. And grow up weak and prone to infirmities. William, my foot man who takes care of cleaning my floors, ironing and brings me tea at tea time and lunch is one of those very poor. He is quiet and very polite. I learned his son has died recently from kidney failure at 20 years of age. William has been very sad since my arrival from his loss. Lately he has taken an interest in my well being. He brings me large live Blue Crab for breakfast as he says are abundant for the taking at the edge of the mangroves nearby. He also makes sure I get my lunch on time and keeps me stocked with cold drinking water. This morning he brought me what looks like an egg roll, some of the local fried food found at any of the shacks in the neighborhood which I know is horrible, but I ate some of it anyway showing appreciation for the food. I hid what I could and gave it to a starving dog on the street that was eating trash, but the dog wouldn't eat it, just sniffed it and went back to eating trash. This told me something. The reason all the food here has so much curry and hot spices is that it keeps other animals from wanting to eat it.

My footman's name is William, he is about 60 or so year's old, other older men who are around have names like Henry, Carlton, and the average USA name. Then there are the younger men under 40 whose names are like Aruna, Asitha, Sudath, Samawath, Alander. This is because when the British influence was dominant here the names reflected English names, as the country went back to the native ways the names of the following generations reflected the native language. Some names describe where they came from, like the carpenter's name is spelled Alanda, as he is Islander. From one of the islands in the north.

I wore a red T-shirt today and could not figure out why I was not getting the usual smiles. it turns out as told to me by the security company rep that wearing red shows that you support the socialist party who are hated here, So here I am smiling at everyone as a socialist representative from the USA, and so I threw out my red T- Shirt. The best color they say to wear is blue for the people's party which has the same ideals as the socialists. They have 15 parties here. Unlike democrats and republicans the fifteen different parties are all the same, they only differ on one or 2 minor specific issues. By comparison you see democrats and republicans are the same also.

I see the Sri Lankan do not like discouraging remarks, insults, negative comments, they won't listen and turn the station, and In general they avoid any conversation or subject that deals with anything that is not pleasant or positive. There is no negative language spoken about anything. The worst gossip I have heard was that there was a spy who speaks to the previous owner about what I am doing. One time I got another weeks delay in my reimbursement of a shipment they received. I heard the bad news when Sudath handed me his cell phone while we were driving to Colombo. I said this is bullshit!, at that Sudat semi raised his voice saying "Don't speak this with me", followed by silence for about 2 minutes, then continued our pleasant conversation before the bad news.

I see that it is expected that you do favors for someone if they ask, even if it cost you a little money. They assume you are willing to spending money to buy something if it is needed. Then it takes a long time to get repaid, hoping you will forget, so you have to get every receipt and present it daily until repaid.

In return they spend what ever it has taken to ensure my comfort so I cannot complain. I just make sure I never carry any money or have any credit card. It's best to appear you have no money at any time here. Then they will take care of you, if they know you have money than they expect you to take care of them. Also NEVER tip if you tip they will always say it is not enough. So I learned to always have the exact amount to pay for something. The first week or so I would give a tip to anyone who provided a service like a Tuck Tuck ride or a meal delivered, and every time the service provider would say, that is not enough. Finally the guards explained to me that when you tip the natives think you are stupid and do not know the value of money. Last week I learned that when I was at the beach a tour guide came to me and said he would take me on a free tour of a lagoon where I could see exotic animals. I took the tour then as we parted I felt compelled to tip him something so I gave hi a dollar, he turned and said this is not enough, I paid him five dollars as it was well worth the tour and now I know someone who knows the area well

7-31

Zahid visits the factory once a week. He asks me how things are going, I say fine, he says, "Todd, we need sales, we need sales" I reply "You have to have an acceptable product to sell" Then he responds with "Todd. We need sales, we need sales" Again I say "you need a product to sell" We go round and round, he is just keeping pressure on, but he knows things are happening

Went to USA id Met a man that looks just like Dan at 40; I say to him we need aid. This plan of action fits into your mission statement. The man replies, "frankly that is difficult" I reply "we need aid and fit into your mission statement" he replies, "frankly that is difficult" Every time you want to do something here you get an argument, so I learned that you must repeat exactly your demands, and then they repeat their argument, it is a will of who has the better argument that can be repeated more. Anyway USAID says they will help in October and write a grant to help things at blue star.

The natives show they like me. Sudath, the sales manager who is cool, has a son he picks up from school and takes home to his wife whenever we go to Colombo. We go to Colombo 2 times a week. When I first met his son he was very shy and kept his face hidden. Now when we pick him up he hugs me and says I want to kiss you, and now he calls me Uncle Todd. The adult men show they like you by holding your hand or putting their arm around you when you are walking. At first I did not know how to react, but I did not pull away from having my hand held or arm around my shoulder when walking. It is their way of saying they like you. You see people together holding hands or have an arm around someone's shoulder commonly. I have also seen what I think is a fight but they do not throw punches or wrestle around on the ground. What they do is what I can only describe as what roosters do when intimidating another rooster. They go up and down waving their arms not yelling but talking loud. They flail around but always keep a distance they do not push. I witnessed one of these fights for a few minutes one day. Then when I saw it was just theatrics, I made my presence known, and said "if you are going to fight, then fight already!" Immediately the advisories halted their saber rattling and smiled and everybody laughed I just rolled my eyes and went.

I met with the Belgium Consulate and an Australian high tech boat builder.

3-August

Finally went for swim in the ocean, the sea if now getting calmer every day since monsoon season is ending. The beach is the best, the water is 78 degrees not warm, not cold perfect, the sand is not fine like Miami it is orange or black large grains. At the beach the natives witnessed a sight never seen, a giant whale came from the sea, walked on to the shore up to the buffet for some prawns.

We started using the air tools at ESM, and truly history is now being made never have air tools been used. All the workers were in amazement. Including the general manager. I know air tools are not used because no where on the island can you find air tools, they are not available anywhere, nor are the quick release couplings needed for air tools, or the round stick on sand paper for air sanders. Until now all refinishing was done by hand. The first project was to refinish a 43 foot mold for a fishing boat. They say it takes 8 men 6 days to refinish the traditional way. We did the same job with 2 men in 3 days. Everyone was again amazed at the advanced techniques. Who ever starts selling air tools here now will get rich as air tool use will explode onto the scene as the Belgium's and usaid help me to expand the training in the uses. Air tools are truly the most fantastic life changing event ever for the Sri Lankan workers at ESM. Now wouldn't you know it there is always someone who has something to say? Percy the CEO says to me "Oh yes, we had these air tools in 1983, and it is too expensive" That is pure B.S. Everybody always argues about everything. You say the sky is blue they says no it is not, always arguing. Last week we were designing a boat, Percy kept arguing, that it will cost too much, too much. Then Sudath suggested we modify a mold instead of starting from scratch. I said yes, good idea, then Percy immediately said, "this is what I have been telling you". Again pure BS, all he ever says is it is too much, too much. Meanwhile Zahid says for him to give me complete cooperation. Zahid came by today and gathered all the key workers, and told them they were to work with me directly and not thru Percy anymore. One thing that I knew Percy would do is skew the results of the new techniques and tool usage. Zahid asked for a comparison report on the new technology with the traditional stupid way.. I went to Percy and asked him to get the data from the lead workers on the 43 foot mold refinishing job. But before I did this I went to Acitha and asked him to do the same, but instructed Acitha not to give results to Percy but only to me. Sure enough even though I was present when the workers were interviewed by Percy and Acitha (Acitha is the draftsman and engineer, who is very serious all the time and rarely smiles, but friendly and goes out of his way to help) After the interview we went back to my office I asked Acitha to wait until Percy left the office, then come in as soon as he left. Since I do not speak Sinhalese I have to rely on the translator. Percy reported the job usually takes 8 men 6 days to do the job, but now takes 5 men 5 days. I was impressed, but took the report with a grain of salt, I knew it was wrong. Then Percy left and Acitha came in he reported from the same interview all three of us attended that yes, he agreed the traditional way took 8 men 6 days, but he told me now it takes only 2 men 3 days, even a better result which I know to be more accurate.

The reason I know Asitha's report is true and Percie's not is because I only had 2 sanders and witnessed the work being done Only 2 men could do the job because they only had 2 sanders, and the same men were there from the start or replaced by others who went to do other work. But no matter what, it was only possible for 2 men because there are only 2 machines. This is how everything is, you have to get 2 or 3 people giving information.

13 -August

Hey everybody! I have a free 7 days resort package available to you see the hotel you will stay at look for the sign, on the front of the building. Seriously there are a lot of "hotels", [click here](#) or you can rent any of these [waterfront condos](#) for just a few rupees

Been busy getting to the bottom of the chaos. Everything is a secret and only by talking to many individuals can you get something close to what is actually going on. After investigating practices I found evidence of kickbacks. I and Sudat went to get a quote for equipment; one item was a 25 cfm 600 liter compressor. The store keeper told me it was \$2500.00 and I did not think anything of it. Ever since I have been told the compressor is too expensive. I just took that as them being cheap. Then last week I saw a copy of the quotation submitted and instead of the \$2500.00 the quote read \$3,100.00 I immediately got Sudat and asked what was going on, his reply was that I was wrong, and there was nothing more about it. This and arguments are all I get and was damn tired of it. So

I went to the same supplier and had my truck go in and get a price and it was only \$1400.00. When it was delivered I had the driver hurry up and leave and promise not to tell anyone I was there or what I paid. Sure enough the store called me an hour later asking about what was paid. As soon as it was unloaded and the driver left all the executives came down stairs to see it I did not say anything but the word spread like fire that something new was delivered. It all became clear to me when the first thing I heard was from Sudat, he was wailing "this compressor is not good, it has no wheels...see it has a scratch, it is used and no good.... you take it to USA with you.... we can't use it" and on and on. I finally said OK I will send to USA, and that shut him up. Then Sam (Zahid's henchman as he is called) came down to compare the new compressor I bought to the quote. He saw clearly it was the same model he had a quote of \$3,100.00 for.

Everybody asked how much I paid, the machinist (Wassantha) who is a mechanical, welding, and electrical genius said fourteen hundred, I kept quiet, most others said two thousand to twenty five hundred to three thousand. I only told Zahid the price the next day. I met him in private to show him the kick backs and the waste. I could not believe the waste. In the back of the building there is an area about 600 sq ft like a small garage off to the side and you cannot see it unless you are looking for it and know it is there. About a week ago I went over to see what was in it. Stacked to the roof were stacks and good size pieces of fiberglass cloth. I could not believe it.

I asked Sudat what is all this cloth here for and why is it not being used. Percy who was nearby gave me the answer that it takes too much resin to use it (complete BS). This and the quotes began to paint a clear picture. What made everything make sense was while we were repairing the defects in the 43 mold that made the finish on the new hulls look like they were old and beaten, Sudat and the previous owner Dudley (whose son supplies the fiberglass cloth to ESM) had a fit saying I was ruining the molds and that I did not know what I was doing and costing the company a fortune because the molds could no longer be used now that I ruined them by sanding out the defects and polishing them. Well, yesterday they popped out the first 43 boat since the repairs were made, and guess what; the 43 hull actually looked new, shiny and very pretty. It looked like jewel and everybody gasped and examined the improvements closely. I general Zahid and everyone who was not a conspirator was very happy and morale increased. Except for Dudley and Sudat, Dudley said "anyone can make a mold shiny", and Sudat said "yes it looks good now but the boat will probably crack in half"

Then is when it dawned on me, Dudley tells the workers to throw out good cloth because he and his son sell it to ESM, Sudat was pissed when I uncovered his inflated quotes. I see that there are key people here who are here to either line their own pockets or even worse letting ESM put out a poor quality product and watching Zahid waste his money and letting ESM go downhill. After all if Dudley and Sudat, who claim to be experts, are so smart at boat building, why did not they make cosmetic repairs to the 43 molds, why did they let hulls with poor finishes leave the boatyard? It can only mean that they do not give a shit. Then there is Percy he knows well how to run the troops, but nothing of fiberglass as it was he who told me the scraps were not used because they take too much resin. I think he has good intentions and it is just that Dudley and Sudat fool him. He was one of the few who said "good job" when the compressor was bought. But Percy's father in law is a wealthy teak and mahogany lumber merchant selling all over, and all Percy talks about is how I should start a business with him selling teak in the USA, he really is bugging me. I finally said I would help him but I charge \$2000 for consultation services. So he paid me, now I have a friend in Miami who helps with boats who also sells doors from Colombia and we will add these doors to his display rooms so they can be hoisted up Ha, Ha, Hee...., Hee...) It is illegal in Miami, but new technology here.

I joined the Pegasus Reef Resort club now that it has opened finally after repairs are now complete from the Tsunami. The name comes from a reef about 400 yards off shore called the Pegasus Reef and is where you see fishermen. It is still a little rough now but they say in a few weeks when the seas get even calmer that you can dive the reef and see many fish and sea life, they say there are many spiny lobsters out there but no one knows how to get them. Well I got news for them I will clean out that reef of lobster with a typical kitchen cooking fork and a mop (the fork is used to stick them down, the mop is used to tangle up their feet and spine did do a little diving with a mask I borrowed and dove on the shore side of the reef and there are a lot of fish that look like snapper, schools of them. I asked if people spear fish, the natives had no idea what I was talking about, so I guess they do not have spear fishing. I could not find one store in all of Colombo that has any fishing gear. Pegasus is nice they have trainers that help me with work outs and the staff is very friendly they call me Mr. Dodd they cannot Pronounce T for some reason so everyone calls me Dodd or Mr. Dodd. The staff at Pegasus is friendly, but there are a lot of Europeans and Americans that come there and they are the rudest people I have ever seen. They do not even acknowledge you exist. I purposely stand in their way to see if they will say something or at least say excuse me, I cannot even stare them down as they do not look at you. I think I know why visitors are like this is. It is because when you walk in the markets or on the beach or anywhere the natives are constantly saying thing like "where are you going., what is your name" Or my favorite "excuse me sir, excuse me sir, excuse me sir, excuse me sir, excuse me sir, excuse me sir, excuse me sir, excuse me sir, excuse me sir, excuse me sir. If you even acknowledge them they begin to tell and show you how poor they are. Also littering the sidewalks are the cripple and those who lost limbs, and other filthy beggars. I go to a restaurant called the savanna, the same one that makes my lunch at ESM, so I walked there; it is on Nagambo rd about a kilometer from my apt. As soon as I got in there I felt very dizzy as if I were going to fall down I felt very weird until the waiter seated me, then I looked over and saw the large fish tank, it was out of level by quite a bit, the whole floor was on a 6 degree angle, but you don't notice it at first because everything on the wall and the counters are level, only by seeing the fish tanks do you realize that your not sea sick. It does not matter because for about \$3.00 you get all the food you can eat, and it is excellent if you know what to order. Don't order anything that says Indian because it tastes like shit.

14 August

Today 8-14 I went walking along Nagombo road. I wanted to go to the market I see that is off to the side behind a wall near another Catholic church. As soon as I walked thru the gate three or 4 filthy beggars began Excuse me sir, excuse me sir, excuse me sir...excuse me sir, excuse me sir....." I found I had to not look at anyone or they say "...excuse me sir, what is your name, where are you going.....?" I see why the foreigners are snobs, but I can see the difference between the natives and foreigners like me, I am sure they can, so why are they rude to me, another foreigner, maybe the way I dress, and no hair style? Maybe they think I will say to them "excuse me sir, excuse me sir, where are you going". Anyway back at the flea market. I thought now I get to see the real native crafts and woodwork. Guess what? No crafts, no artwork the markets here are nothing but acres and acres of dollar store merchandise. All the plastic dolls, spoons, cups, toy guns, cars under a dollar that you can imagine. Plus all the cheap aluminum pots, pans forks knives ever found in one place. Not to mention the plastic waste cans, plastic bottles, washtubs, brooms. What about the cheap baskets, plastic flowers and flower pos. All the markets around here are like that, a true dollar store heaven. A few days ago we went to the back country towards Kandy. As we got closer to Kandy there were real crafts and woodwork to see.

The furniture and wood shops have the most beautiful woodwork I have seen, all Mahogany, jack, Teak, or Horah (Percy told me it was Hora Hora. I did not know he was just repeating Hora to me because he did not think I heard him, so I call it Hora Hora) When we were at a master wood worker's shop I asked

him if he had any Hora Hora, he said what? I said do you have any Hora Hora, everyone laughed, I said what so funny do you have any Hora Hora is or don't you have any Hora Hora. Finally they told me it is just called Hora. Anyway they had it. Hora is as heavy as a brick and is nearly impossible to drive a nail into and costs about \$00.20 Per board foot, Unbelievably cheap. I asked them to get an order together for me, but they argued, they say you can only use this for rough jobs, not for good jobs. They say it will crack if not kiln dried and treated, I said ok kiln dry it and treat it, they say we do not have the necessary equipment. Even so, the way it is leaps and bounds superior in quality to the toothpick strength of the lumber at Home Depot, And the Plywood, OH MY GOD it is all the most beautiful paneling ever seen. In the USA it would be considered luxury> I finally had to go to a lumber yard without anyone except my tuk tuk driver in order to get an order of teak, Hora, and other hardwoods and plywood (even the plywood everyone who knows me will argue it is no good) Actually this makes sense because if anyone here had any brains they would have already capitalized on this market. My friend in Miami Luis sells hardwood from Columbia and is much excited about my findings as Columbia is stopping the export of hardwoods. In Sri Lank you can export hardwoods only if you have a permit.

Last week We went to the North to deliver 10 21 foot day fishing boats a little while north of Nagombo the army accompanied us and I figured it was because of the Tamil Tigers, then after about another 40 miles another military group replaced them who had different uniforms as well as other jeeps with machine guns. We drove more then finally came to a beach where the boats were unloaded. On the way back we were escorted again, then as we got closer to Nagombo the military switched again, the machine guns were the same just the uniforms were different. I asked what was that ? 2 different branches of the military. No Sudat said quite seriously, that was the tigers trained boats to and wanted to make sure we had no problems delivering them. I said what? The driver says yes the tigers are not bad if you are selling to them. Go figure I sure can't. I just asked not to go on any more trips like that. The driver said they thought I would like to see the north. An actually the north is the most beautiful part of Sri Links the waters are crystal clear blue like the Bahamas with small islands everywhere. It is only like that to the south of Colombo about 100 miles to the south, around Colombo the sea is usually too rough to enjoy, but the north and south have many barrier islands that keep the rough water out a few kilometers.

The garment says they do not want to control commerce, we just want to regulate.

17- August

Spray booth in full operation, the first of its kind in Sir Lanka. Last week a German man came by to order boats for the harbor patrol, later Dan a chainman came by and ordered 10 fishing boats for his fishing fleet business in Somalia, the next day a Norwegian came to get production started on 1000 snow mobile bodies, Sri lank Telephone company came by to order 10,000 telephone boxes, 2 Japanese guys came by and ordered 2 12 foot dinghies, The Australian came by to order. All these people from around the world came here for their production because they found out ESM has the only modern fabrication system in operation, so now big orders are flooding in. Strange but I am the only one here who knows how to use the spray booth. Even engineers here are stupid. I had the exhaust fan ducts going out made 17 inches by 17 inches square, the same as the fan ducts bringing in 17 inches X17 inches, both fan blade diameters are 17 inches. You would think it is simple logic that when I told them to install the 20 foot stack going up above the roof, I wanted them to make it the same size 17 inches by 17 inches square. You would think that this is a simple issue. But this is Sri Lanka, and you would be wrong. They built the vertical stack 11 inches X 11 inches square 20feet long up to the roof top. I went to Percy and asked him, what the hell is wrong with you idiots. Why did you make the upward stack 11 inches X 11 inches when all the other ducts are 17 by 17 inches? Percy answered; it is the way it should be. I said bull shit! And furthermore. Percy said we will call the man out here and it will be up to him. I said hurry up get that guy here now. the next day some kid showed up and put the guy on the phone, he said it is fine the way it is... went back to Percy and said BS fix it, he said OK we will fix, That was 2 weeks ago. Again I said get that guy here now, I don't care what he says, I want the up stack the same size as the rest or it will create back pressure and force the overspray out into the factory instead of up above the roof to be dissipated! OK, it will be up to the man. The man came out and I proved the smaller duct was causing backpressure to push air out of the spray booth thru all the leaks and into the factory where all the workers are. The..... so called engineer finally smiled and agreed, but said to take off the up stack because it is not needed. He said this instead of installing the right 5th size one... I gave up and said FINE you'll see!

The next day I sprayed a 24 foot boat with gel coat and the overspray caused everyone in the factory and even the homeowners next door to evacuate the are. The gel coat airborne specs got all over the cars parked in front. And everything else that was not covered. Everyone was very upset, I just said tell it to the man who said it was fine the way it is. That was 3 days ago, and guess what the hell; up stack has not been corrected, just excuses like the latest one, that I told the workers to not fix it. I asked who the told you I said that, I want to strangle them! But no one could remember who said I told them not to fix it.

They are having the South Asian Games here in rib Lanka. I was working out in the Gym at the Pegasus Resort when the Nepal Kick boxing team came in, so I left. I went down stairs and had some water by the pool. In the grass area in front of the pool sat the Singapore dace team. they sat in a ring and one would stand up and start doing karate moves with a Samurai sword, then he would sit and hand the sword to the next guy and he would stand and dance while swinging the sword around, then the women stood and did it . Last night they had fireworks for over an hour at about midnight in Colombo.

2 Days ago I walked out of ESM at 5 pm I did not say anything; the execs said you are going home now? I said yes I am going back to USA. Their jaws dropped, they asked "what is wrong" I told them in a quiet manner that I was sick and tired of arguing over each and every issue, that none of you.... morons listen to me, and this whole thing is a waste of time. They replied "what is moron?" I ignored them for a change and walked home. The next morning I went talk to Zahid about the BS at ESM but he had left town and was not due back until a week's time, so called him and said I was emailing him a report. In hat report I explained it was impossible to accomplish anything, I get no cooperation, stupid things are done regularly, that it was like the 3 stooges trying to build a space ship and I was Moe. I laid out the problems frankly, as at this point I was ready to go to the airport. I told him everyone at ESM were just a bunch of smiling morons, that I ask for men and I get monkeys, that I ask for a wrench, they hand me a pencil. For the first time I think I shook up Zahid as his reply was apologetic and full of spelling errors, you know the kind of mistakes you make when you are frantically writing an email to stop an explosion. The next day my driver Sudat showed up to get me, I said I quit I am going back to USA. I just said this to shake the morons up, After Sudat left I walked to ESM about 1 KM (I need the exercise.) When I got there everyone was silent as I walked in, I went to my office and sat down to watch a movie on my laptop, about 10 minutes later a faint knock came to my door, I said come in, It was the GM, I said what do you want. HE said tell us what to do and will do it. We then had a meeting where I sat in Zahid's chair, I began expressing my issues, as soon as I started I was interrupted, I slammed my hand down and said in a firm voice..... if anyone interrupts me again I am walking out" The execs were quiet, I started with issue 1, when I asked for a response they immediately all started talking at once saying

but you don't understand, and things like But, but, but, but..." I again said quiet in a loud voice I told them I was sick and tired of their excuses, Again they talked all at once saying "you do not understand. I again slammed my hand down and said in affirm loud voice God dam nit I don't give a shit about your excuses, if I hear one more I am leaving, you do what I tell you or I will go to the airport and split" They said OK, OK They asked what is split? I said "it means to leave to go away", at that they started to get up and leave, I cold not help but laugh and say no sit down.

At this point they did not know what was going on except there was a pissed off American that did not know whether they wanted them to stay or go. They looked at each other in Puzzlement. Finally we all settled down and I found out Zahid nearly had a heart attack from my message about leaving and giving up. Zahid told them they better shape up. That is when I realized the whole situation, and that is that when the cat is away the mice will play. meaning that when Zahid or Taher are in town they act sharp and do their job, but when the are away they slack off and take naps, joke around and don't show up for work. And one thing they do is purposely ignore me which is exactly what they do when ever Zahid is out of town. I look back and remember more than one occasion where I asked for something and they laughed I see now they laughed because they were playing me for a fool as they knew the boss was out of town. Like the day I left I needed to go to 3m for a special sanding disc that was only available at 3m which was also 40 miles away (by the way this is a good time to mention the roads suck, they are the worst maintained roads anywhere, and to add to the bumpy ride there is constant bumper to bumper traffic in all directions, with no air quality standards for vehicles and no mufflers on the trucks and busses) Anyway they told me I had to take a 3 wheel rickshaw witch is really just a crappie 3 wheel motorcycle with a canvas top, these 3 wheelers are every where and ad to the pollution and noise, plus they have no shock absorbers to counter the crappie pot hole riddled roads. Meanwhile the company car was parked out front with the driver polishing the hood ornament. I first said OK, but then thought about it and asked "how far is 3M" they gave an answer I did not like, they said it is nearby, I said show me in the map. I saw it was over 40 miles away, I then thought of how bad the drive would be in a regular car then thought about what it would be like in the 3 wheeler. I said NO.... way. Only then did they have the driver to take me in a regular vehicle. That taught me that they play lets screw the American whenever the boss is not there. Even the drive laughed when I told him they were going to send me in a 3 wheeler before I refused. Anyway I was accompanied by Thissa the purchasing agent as we were to buy new supplies. He is fat like me and we mentioned how we were the same build. On the way back we stopped at a Sri Lankan buffet at an upstairs restaurant. The waiter asked me what I wanted, I told him "Give me something that does not have flies on it" (everything is covered with flies, but you get used to it) So we made one trip to the Indian style spicy hot buffet. We both piled food on our plate. I was hungry and used to the hot spicy food so I knew what was edible. Soon we finished our first plate. He looked at me and I looked at him and we realized this is a first in history, 2 fat guys from opposite sides of the world at an all you can eat buffet. We proceeded to see who could eat the most. We ate and ate. I think he was surprised I could put that crap away like I did. I finally gave up and we went back on the road. On the way there was a billboard that read "for the first time in 15 years the Asian games have returned to Sri Lanka", then under it is reads "Don't miss the 10th annual Asian games" I thought it was a typo but no even on the news they say come to the 10th annual Asian games... back in Sri Lanka after 15 years. I call this place the land of the smiling morons.

Now when I call to a worker or exec I say "hey moron" When they ask what moron means I say it means very wise man. So now when they talk about someone they think is smart they say "I know a man who is a moron" Sudath I thought was cool but even though he is cool he is not helping matters. I think he gets kick backs and I told some there. He beds to shape up. He takes the company car and leaves for the whole day, then cannot account for his time. I say this behavior is BS and this guy is goofing off. So when Sudath and I are nearby he knows I am on to him and he acts nervous. I tell him "Don't worry Sudath, you're OK, I don't care what I said about you "

24-August

I lost it, I decided to walk to ESM this morning and left my computer and camera bag with the guards at my gate and told them to give it to Sudath who picks me up in the morning. When I got to ESM I went to the workers to see how production was going on. I did not go to my office for a few hours. When I went to my office my bag was not there, I asked where it was and finally it was located near the exit of the factory where anyone could have picked it up and taken it. Man was I pissed. It is expected that when someone has a bag or briefcase they are to take it to the person's office or give it to security where they will guard it, but this asshole just left it out knowing full well it could be stolen. Then when I started to spray gel coat I had a technical cliché and had to clean up some sprayed gel coat, and re spray. Setbacks are expected from time to time, and it is a fool who thinks they can do fabrication without setbacks. Sudath used this minor one hour set back to express his discus that he knew how to do it better than me and proceeded to tell me in front of all the execs "Do I have to tell you how to do it..."

That was the trigger, I said OK in a loud voice so everyone within 100 feet "Sudath will do the gel coat spraying" They tried to interrupt but I repeated, since Sudath was the expert he will do the spraying and I am going to Pegasus for a swim. "No, No they all said" including Sudath. So I replied in a loud voice "If you are not going to do it, then don't tell me how to do it!" So I did it and all was back on track. I felt good as not just me but other execs including Zahid think Sudath is an asshole. Anyway the next morning I realized this was a perfect opportunity to practice the AA program. So then next day I saw Sudath at his desk and went to him to say "Sudath, I was wrong to lose my temper with you yesterday" In the USA when you do this 10th step the response is usually ok, lets forget it. But no, we are in Sri Lanka, Sudath used that as an opening to go into a long winded story about his trip to Japan to visit a boat builder there, meanwhile Sam who does not understand English thought Sudath and I were going to go at it again, so Sam started talking like "Now we can argue and this is good but we must no fight...." at the same time Sudath was rambling on about Japan. I just turned and walked away down stairs to production I turned to see Sam and Sudath engaged in a discussion Sam about arguing and Sudath about Japan, but I don't think they understood each others English. Later that day I was talking with Percy who said in regard to yelling at Sudath (not the set back as he agrees that things happen and was very supportive and agreed it was a very minor setback not worthy of Sudath's comments) I was a "Buddimatha". I asked "What does that mean; Percy said it means you are a very wise man. I then realized he was on to me, and we laughed. I told Percy and Sam I need an intercom or speaker system here because to get someone you have to get a guard to search all over the 5 acre facility to find them. But Percy said "No" we cannot have this, because the workers will break it because the workers will not like to hear new orders coming"

28-August

I am setting up a meeting time with my buddy the minister in Matara. I talked briefly with him today and he was happy to hear from me. I said it is too bad that he lost the election and asked how it was to be a private citizen again. He told me that he is still the minister and nothing has changed. I told him I was confused, I thought his party had lost the election. He replied that yes that is true, but the same people are always in power anyway. He told me that if an elected official loses an election they simply switch parties to the one that won the election and they keep their seat in the government. So basically the people who run the government stay in power and keep their position indefinitely. He told me only the president really is changed, and then runs things his way and the rest of the members go along with him. VJ told me the new president and him were schoolmates and grew up together as friends, and he was glad his party lost. But boy was the lost election a blow to Sal (who is waiting outside with Heidi, and wants to marry Gordon) Sal was devastated by the lost election as he had told me his family had spent a fortune on the ministers party to win, and now Sal is shit out of luck, and the minister is still the minister.

Last night I wanted a three wheeler to take me back to my apt from Pegasus after a swim, but the army closed the road since they were tracking down a Tamil tiger. So I had to take the path through the jungle about a half a mile to the Dutch canal then get a villager to take me across so I could walk another half a mile to Hendala junction where I could get a 3 wheeler to take me to the Paliyawatta bridge so I could cross and get to my apt. For the first time I was in the REAL jungle, the sun had just gone down and there was a faint bit of twilight left so you could see what was flying above and what was near you. Well, What was flying over me in circles was not birds, they were bats, but these were BIG bats, Ok so they just flew around me, I picked up a stick to swat them if they came close and that was when I saw the 8 foot yellow and brown spotted snake lying in my way, and he did not want to move until I threw a couple rocks at him. he moved so I kept on but could not see the canal because it was around the bend, I thought this is cool, a few steps later I felt as if something was watching me and following me and as I slowed down, it came closer and I heard hisses, I could not see anything I said to myself, OH shit it is that snake I hit with the rock, Just as I turned I saw it was one of those ugly 6 foot black scaly monitor lizards, I stepped aside and let him pass as he had the right of way, he went off to the side of the path a few yards ahead and I kept going. Finally I got to the canal and the village, the children were catching shrimp from the canal by the handful and piling onshore. And at first I thought the villagers were going to eat me with their shrimp, but then they all broke into smiles and the elder one offered to take me across by gesturing me to see his pride and joy, a colorful painted very thin canoe carved from a tree.

I saw it as a leaky rotted wooden canoe which I thought would sink as soon as I got on and I should swim across instead, but I had to get to the other, and had a chance to do it staying dry, plus I did not want to offend anyone by refusing their courtesy (by the way these people are offended if you do not accept their gifts and hospitality, so if you are out in the middle of the jungle and they offer you a bowl of crap, you eat it and act like you enjoy it) So I got in and he took me to the other side. Then when I got up onto the road and made it to the junction, the 3 wheelers wanted three times what they usually charge because it was night. Finally I paid and made it to the bridge and thought great only a few more yards and I will be home. It was then I heard from the side of the road behind sandbags

"Excuse me sir, where are you going"

Great just what I need, a beggar, I ignored it and kept walking. Then 5 army personnel with ak7 rifles came out from behind the sandbags and repeated

"Excuse me sir, where are you going?"

OK, I stopped and told them I was an American going to my apt. They escorted me the rest of the way to my apt.

29-August

Finally things are running smoothly. I the problem with the thinking here is that the natives cannot put 2 and 2 together. They cannot take an idea and adapt it to a new concept. When machines break down, it stays broken if the machine is not vital to their immediate needs. There is no fore thought or planning ahead. They do not make the connection of consequences. I have to constantly repeat myself, and all they do is saying yes it is done when in fact they have not done anything I asked. Then when I confront them they smile and say "Oh, I did not know" Yesterday we went to spray a boat, I asked Suranga for the 10th time if he made sure there was no moisture in the compressor as I tell him 10 times every day and I usually have to check anyway. He said yes I checked for water. I said are you sure, he assured me he has checked. So we sprayed the boat and today I see there is moisture in the gel coat and it is not drying properly, I Asked if he was sure there was no water, again he said "no water" I went to the compressor and released the valve under it just like I instructed my helper to do 100 times and over a gallon of water came out. This was not one day moister, but one week's moisture. I turned to Suranga and said "What the..... is all this water doing in here?" His reply was that the valve was stuck. BS it was not stuck because I just opened it. Now imagine everything you try to do you have to do yourself. Well there are too many things to do and you would not get a minutes rest, plus it is only natural to forget one or 2 things when there is so much to do alone. So we had another meeting just like the 20 meetings before where I repeat what they have to do, and I need help. Again for the 20th time they agreed. At least now they are getting a little better. They actually remember stuff after you tell them 20 times and get mad at them 2 more times after that.

We went to Colombo to get some tools at Armour Street it is my favorite street here it is 2 kilometers of small hardware and tool shops loaded with stuff all crammed into little stores not more that 100 sq ft each. Then a few streets down there is the same type of specialty neighborhood where there are hundreds of small motorcycle and 3 wheeler repair shops.

Then other neighborhoods are other specialties. When you approach Colombo one road passes through what they call shanty town, and looks like the commercials you see for feed the children. When you go through there first it smells like dead fish, then garbage, then dead animals, then a potpourri of shit. All drivers beep their horn as a reflex. It is constant. Even when you listen to the music it sounds like beeping horns. I was sick of the.....beeping horns, and when my driver had beeped his horn for the 100 time in 10 minutes I said loudly. Quit beeping the.....HORN! We went the rest of the drive back without the driver beeping his horn after that, and we made it back fine. I said to him, "See you do not have to always beep your horn" He agreed and got into his car and as soon as he pulled up to the intersection he began beeping his horn again, joining the chorus..

Percy the retired Navy Capt. now has nothing to do, I am taking charge of production and he is on his way out, I do not think he is aware yet, but he has nothing to do. Today after lunch he took 30 minutes to deliver a speech to the workers. I asked some of the foreman's what the long winded speech was about, they told me he was telling them how important it is for them to change their underwear, and brush their teeth. Now that is a speech you give to military grunts not production workers. Then he got the machine shop to make his design of a trolley to carry the 46 foot boats from production and launch. He wanted to show the chairman he had engineering ideas just like Americans. Anyway finally his trolley was ready. It was a disaster waiting to happen. The wheels of the trolley were only 6 feet apart and it was only 9 feet long. This trolley he said was to launch boats that were 44 feet long and 15 feet wide. Anyone who tows a boat knows a trailer has to have the wheels at least as wide as the boat, not to note the other weight and balance issues. The day came to commission the new Sri Lankan technology. They put the 46 boat on it using twice the men and twice the time they use to launch it the traditional way,

But this is the NEW way the new Sri Lankan way doomed to disaster. I wanted to tell him his design was flawed but I did not. I let him (the self proclaimed naval architect) do it his way and I kept way out of the whole trolley business. When they finally got the boat on the trolley they wheeled it about ten feet towards the canal, as it went it swayed side to side

I could not look. They proceeded precariously towards the canal edge. This I could not watch as I saw only more disaster ahead. But I had to look like watching a horror film. As the trolley got closer to the ramp that went down into the canal they had to push the trolley up and over a little hill, the workers pushed and pushed yelling Allah! Allah! finally it made it over the bump but the momentum kept it moving quickly down the other side, the boat then swayed again and tipped over to one side as it scraped the sea wall on its way down into the canal. 20 or more workers immediately jumped into the canal and tipped the behemoth back upright. And the trolley ended sticking straight into the mud with half of it protruding up out of the canal.

A lot of diabetics here. Why? Because they put too much sugar in everything. There is a desert here they call Tarinda, it looks like brown sugar, but it is just a rock of pure sugar. If it doesn't have too much curry in it then it has too much sugar. And corn starch syrup in all cooking that is not Indian. By the way the corn on the cob here sucks; it is always on the verge of rotten and hard to chew. The only good vegetable or fruit is that which grows wild. The Sri Lankan are the worst farmers. The only good farmers are the ones who grow for friends and family. Like Sam, good, ole Sam, He is a farmer also and grows quite an assortment of vegetables that are totally unrecognizable to me, but they are great. Like one that looks like a cross between a star fruit and a cucumber, man! that thing needs no butter it has butter in it and is sweet and tender and tastes like an artichoke and potatoes at the same time.

The chairman called me today right after we removed the second export boat from the mold. He just said "thank you" I did not understand what the big deal was. Then later Sam had told me that the previous owner and other of the spies and saboteurs at ESM had told him repeatedly that I was wrong about everything, that they are better off the old way, that he should cut his losses before he goes bust and on and on, really negative BS. But the export customer who is a shrimp fisherman and his partners from Japan came and saw the 46 foot boat out of the mold and said it looked like a jewel and they were very happy. They invited me to dinner with them at a fancy Italian restaurant in Colombo. Everybody who worked on this export boat was thrilled at how nice it was compared to the previous 46 boats they made. All due to a simple sanding and polishing of the molds to get all the scratches removed. Before I came on scene the new boats made looked old and worn out needing a cleaning and a paint job. But nothing can be done to those boats because that was how they came out of the molds. The molds desperately needed repair. I thought the spies would come around when they saw the vastly improved finish. But instead I got more BS which made me mad.

The response from the previous owners and the spies was that "anyone can polish a mold" I used this statement to my advantage. I said to them all "If it is so easy, why didn't you polish them a long time ago? Instead you just sat by and let the chairman produce boats that were inferior, when you could have "EASILY" made nice looking boats. So now you tell me why you sat by and did nothing about the poor finish? I then walked out and refuse to talk to any of the henchmen and spies again. The spies and "henchmen" as they are called by the good guys at ESM. Always have the most stupid arguments. The week before I told Sudath off, I told him If he does not want to spray then don't tell me how to do it. I made amends that caught him off guard. Since then he has been avoiding eye contact and leaves whenever I am around. I thought it was resentment, and he did not like me. I said to Sam I don't think Sudath likes me, Sam said yes he likes you, but he is now afraid of you that you are a fighter and are twice his size. You must understand only one out of 100 people here are foot. Everyone else is 5 foot 6" or less. Another thing is very few men have an ass. Most have no ass, flat as a board. Few have an ass at all. Now I have a big ass which turns out to mean that I am strong. Now the women all have very nice figures and lack nothing in their attractive figure.

Every block there is a small 7-11 type small shop you go to the counter and tell them what you want. Everyone cuts in front of the line waving their money. I let 2 or three cut in front of me. Then I say "OK, that's enough, my turn" Then they clear away and laugh and let me get what I came for.

Tonight Sept 3,

Chairman threw a one year anniversary at the Garment factory. It started with the chairman and the managers lighting incense in the golden chicken lamp a brass fixture 6 feet tall with incense burning trays around. The golden chicken was lit, then chairman made a short speech, then the party began. The people have no rhythm. Picture 50 or more natives dancing like Elaine in the Seinfeld TV show. At about 11:00pm 4 pro dancers came out they were in purple dresses with gold headbands and belts. They danced traditional Sri Lankan dances, while a short man in a monkey suit came out and rolled around and acted like a monkey. The

party went on until the incense in the golden chicken was burned out and then they all sat at tables and ate before going home.

Fireworks go off about once a week for the slightest celebration, like once a month in the full moon they celebrate and take a day off.

Sept 4- My Birth Day.

Excuse me while I sing a song, "happy birth day to me, happy b day to me, happy b day to meeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee, happy b day to me"

This morning we had a blow out. The chairman came to see the work and was impressed with the improvements. As we toured the facility. However, Percy kept giving BS reasons for things he could not explain. One instance was when the chairman asked why the gel coat on the 43 boat was so uneven looking, thick in some areas and heavy in others. It is because the gel coat was applied with a brush and not sprayed. But Percy had the outright nerve to say it was because it was sprayed improperly. At that my hair stood up and my ears twitched as I was going to punch him, but good ole Sam held me back. Then we went to the new look of the 43 and Percy AGAIN had the nerve to say that the improvements are taking extra men to repair. Again I went for him and Sam held me back. Then Percy continued to show the chairman defects in the 43 mold. Well yeah stupid it still needs work done on it. I thought. Finally I could take no more I said to everyone present (3 of us all dressed in white shirt, black slacks) I said in a loud voice "excuse me, excuse me" After I got every ones attention I said "Percy I like you are a nice guy, but you do not know what the HELL YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT!!!!, You are telling the chairman a bunch of B.S." Only I used the actual words not the abbreviation. Then Percy really got mad and said "You are calling me enemy?!" Then the bickering began. I saw the chairman was enjoying the argument between us. He was all smiles as he watched Percy and I exchange zings back and fourth. Chairman and Sam looked like they were watching a tennis game their eyes following who volleyed the last remark then looking to the other side to see the comeback. I worked up Percy into a frenzy sort of like when I get Gordon all worked up sometimes. I waited for the peak of Percy's anger then said "Percy your right, I am sorry for saying you don't know what the hell you are talking about" Percy was flustered as he did not know how to respond. Game over, set, match.

I reached out and shook Percy's hand thereby diffusing the situation. After all I had thrown the skunk into the jury box, so why continue. Chairman knew what was going on. The spies and henchmen I have to deal with because as chairman says, "Todd could get on a plane and leave us if he wants to, but we have to stay".

5-September

I don't know how much blatant stupidity I can take. This morning Percy and I agreed to discuss and not argue matters. We discussed as civilized people issues for about 10 minutes until I told Percy he was wrong. The issue was regarding stabilizers. I had the drafting dept draw up plans for stabilizers in the fuel tanks so the tons of fuel will not sway from side to side there fore causing the famous tipsy fishing boats. I found that Percy had (behind my back) had told the draftsman to stop on my design that is not needed.

I asked the draftsman why he stopped and I was told. Then at the next meeting I asked Percy why he scrapped the logical design to stabilize fuel tanks. His response was that it is not needed because the water wedge was not sufficient to cause problems. I proved through logic and simple physics he was totally wrong. That in fact even if the tanks are 1/4 full that is still 1800 lbs. of fuel sloshing around side to side in the tanks and causes instability. He then began to get mad again. He told me he is a naval architect and knows, and showed me a book on naval architecture he pointed out the pages that showed stabilizers were unnecessary. Great I said. Since I studied college physics and got an A I could understand a little of the lingo. In truth the book only supported my claim of needing stabilizers. He evidently does not understand the written word. Once I proved him wrong again using his own ammunition he turned red. That is when he reverted back to insulting me. He said "We should ask Mr. Dudley about this" He was actually insulting me because Percy on several occasions as well as others regularly comment on what an idiot Mr. Dudley is (the previous owner who went bankrupt) So back to square one from now On I will ignore Percy as he is a real stubborn idiot. Yesterday when we were arguing he said in front of chairman and Sam "Why don't you try to discuss things why do you make me the enemy, we can discuss these things and come to agreement" I replied that I cannot get thought to him and he always takes things personally to the nth degree. a. In addition he is agreeable as long as you go along with his stupid theories that are really stupid, did I mention that his ways are stupid? So yesterday I backed down to diffuse his rage, and then he only repeated his childish behavior (Gordon knows about this) any way after today's insult I did not say anything I just made an excuse to leave the meeting. From now on I will ignore Percy as am has always told me and when he says "why do you not discuss things with me, am I not here? Why do you make me the enemy? Etc..." I will reply because you do not accept truth, you hold on to ideas that are wrong, I cannot get thought to you, am sick and tired of arguing and I will not stand by and allow you to insult my intelligence, and so on and so on until I wear him down. I mean it; did I mention he is stupid?

Today my main worker finally spoke his first sentence in clear English. language or get an interpreter. But today he surprised me.

For months now we communicate by sign entirely on his own after we both knew the boats leaving for shipment were not finished, but Percy insisted because he is _____. Any way both me and Theesa my main worker who is very skilled and smart said clearly "I don't care" WOW what a break through. Up until then he had not spoken 2 words of English. I wonder where he picked up that phrase. Now Aruna on the other hand does not know more than 5 words of English so like a parrot he repeats every single little thing you say to him. So for fun I say things to him like "man Percy sucks", "Boy is that guy an idiot, I would like to tell him to eat shit" So right away Aruna repeats "Percy Sucks, an Idiot, eat shit" If I say Aruna I need a wrench he says wrench, So I say No I NEED a wrench NOW, he says "wrench now" I say "you know what a wrench is, well I need you to get me one so I can fix this" He says "wrench, fix this" and stands just stands there looking at me.

Then a pair of pliers were missing and I was pissed I yelled at the workers who seemingly work in chaos, but are actually well organized. I yelled where are my.....pliers? They answered me in gibberish I could not understand. One of them left, and I said where is he going, no one leaves here till I get my

pliers back, now who took them. A minute later my worker came back out of breath and gave them to me. I said who had them? Again they talked gibberish I could not understand. They got my arch enemy to explain to me. He said the pliers were in my office, that I had taken them there the day before. Then I remembered they were right, so we all laughed. It was then I realized that most of the workers there carefully are watching every thing I do. I thought they were not paying attention to me unless I spoke to them.

6-September

Percy asked me "How's it going?" "I told him I was not happy he compared me to Mr. Dudley. He made excuses why I took it the wrong way. This was as close to an apology I could expect. Besides I got my way and they are going to start putting in fuel stabilizers. These improvements only happen after chairman lays down the law. I realize now this situation is truly 3 completely different cultures colliding. Here you have a Christian American slob, a Buddhist Sri Lankan moron, and a Shiite London educated billionaire running ESM. Even though I now get my way Percy always twists things around so he can claim it was his idea. Like the grounds of the factory as an example. I grabbed 10 men for a few minutes to move some junk and clean the boat yard since the chairman was coming the next day. Percy told his men to stop helping me clean and move stuff. When I told them to get back to helping me they said Percy said no. I went to Sam, I said ".....!" Then next morning chairman came and there was Percy watching over the cleaning crew sweeping the area after he had them show up early to move the remaining junk I had them moving the day before. As chairman walked by the now clean and neat boat yard Percy said right in front of me "See how nice this looks now, I had the men clean it" What nerve. Then we went to show him the new jewel finish of the boats made from the repaired molds. I asked chairman "You like?" I could tell he did. Then Percy began rambling about utter nonsense saying that the new finished look makes more work and now the boats cost more. TOTAL B.S.! The case is just the opposite.

I saw I was going to have to tell him he is full of baloney again, when this time the chairman held me back and defended me saying he has eyes and can see it is a much better finish and I have in fact saved man hours. I have proved there are better ways of building boats. Sam came to me after chairman left and told me that when chairman has an issue with the boats he says to ask me. I said so what? Sam told me that before, and for the first month I was here chairman would tell Sam to ask Mr. Dudley (the previous owner). He added do you see that Mr. Dudley does not come here anymore? Well come to think of it, I have not seen shit head here since the new boats came out. I let Percy say what he wants. We are friends again as long as he is allowed to be right no matter how his ideas fly in the face of logic. I got an email today from chairman to attend a meeting tomorrow.

ESM was founded by Dudley Fernando in 1979 after he split up from his brother where together building boats at their company Neil Marine. The next part is conjecture from viewing old photo albums and examining old unused equipment piled in the back. About this time Europeans and Americans were scouting for a location to build huge hovercraft for the navy. The huge hovercrafts that are jet powered and carry soldiers, tanks and support onto the beaches for deployment. These were made at ESM during the eighties as well as a few sport boats with American design features. Then in the mid nineties the foreign builders left. Maybe due to the civil war at that time being very nasty, worse than now. Or maybe the foreigners died, No one knows and no one will tell certainly not Dudley. He claims he was the one who built the high tech Navy hovercraft. When I did speak to him he told me that at one time ESM had all the state of the art equipment and tools. I believe him because they are all in the back rusting. From what I see he does not have anywhere near the experience needed to run the ancient equipment or does he know engineering behind it. Dudley says "hand painting and spraying gel coat is the same, there is o difference" This is plain stupid. If this is true then why does every single boat builder in the USA spray? If they had the equipment then why did they let it fall apart? Why did they stop building nice looking boats? After all it is easier and saves money to use the equipment. Why did they stop using tools and equipment that get the job done faster and cheaper?. The previous management is so stupid that they had the workers cut fiberglass cloth with a razor knife, and one of those flimsy kinds just for paper. It tears a rough edge and dulls with each use. Really stupid. So today I brought the fiberglass cutting crew a pair of heavy duty shear scissors. They were astounded, amazed. It was magic to them as it cut the cloth straight, even, no tears, very easy and fast. Even this tiny bit of technology was beyond the comprehension of the previous owner. I got the scissors out of the pile of antiquated rusted equipment in the back. All I did was cleaned it, oiled and sharpened it. Now the cutting crew guards the shears as if they were gold.

So how could this moron have made high tech jet powered hovercraft? I say he didn't. But like Allmand Boats, any of us in the Almand family can make up any story we want and who is there to say different. I think this previous owner made up a story once the foreigners left. Then after they left he tried as long as he could to BS his way forward. Even in the nineties there were some impressive boats they built, but I seriously doubt he had any hand in getting the job done.

7-September

Chairman had a meeting with me and Sam. It lasted 3 hours. Not that we talked for three hours, we actually only talked for about one half hour, the rest of the time the chairman was continually being interrupted by calls visits. At one point he had a phone up to each ear talking to 2 different people at the same time greeting a foreigner who came to get samples of his hats and caps. When he did talk, I said he should take it easy. He just looked at me and said he could lie down and wait for death but he would rather work. Then Sam repeated what I said. And the chairman looked at me again and before he could say anything I said "Sam, he doesn't want to hear it" Chairman nodded in agreement. Chairman easily agrees to my terms of percentage of sales. I thought this would be a real bargaining challenge, but he said what ever percentage I want is fine with him. WOW that was easy. Then he said tell Sam what you need and he will get it. Then I talked about what an asshole stupid moron Percy is and how he causes problems with every little thing. I could tell chairman could care less what I said about Percy. I could also see that chairman gave me free reign. He said it was up to me to figure it out. Then he told me if I make sales I will be put on a pedestal. It appears that sales within Sri Lanka are not important. It is what is sold as export is what counts. I see now that making a silk purse from a sow's ear was a waste of time. Meaning that even though I made the new 43 fishing boats shine, it did not matter because the Sri Lankan will buy boats even if they look like crap. The reason is that the boats are freely given due to the billions given to the government and them finally spending it on new boats for anyone who had one before the Tsunami. So it doesn't matter what they look like they are free. The government doesn't care; they are skimming off the top anyway and will not say anything that might slow the money down, so they say the boats are fine even though they looked like crap.

ESM is on the Dutch canal and they have a dinghy they use to ferry people across. The Dutch Canal floes with the tide as also do the garbage and sea lily pads.

When you push the dinghy across you have to have a paddle and push it upstream or you end up on the rocks. I was looking out the gate and they had just pushed off and one guy forgot the paddle and they went downstream into the rocks. Once they pushed off the rocks, one guy pushed the one who forgot the paddle overboard. He got to shore wet and mad, then picked up a large rock and acted as if he was going to throw it at the one guy still in the boat. But he didn't he waited for someone to come up and hold him back from throwing it.

There is a very pretty girl her probably 22 years old that always stares at me when I leave the factory in the morning or come back from ESM. She is a seamstress at the garment factory. Yesterday I walked home from ESM and many people along the way say hello, but from behind I heard loudly in a girl's voice "HELLO" I turned and saw it was her the same one from the garment factory. I said Hi back then looked at her. I yelled back "Come on out here" as she was in her doorway of her parents house behind a wall. She pranced out from behind the wall and out to the street where I was. I asked her name. "Fatima" she replied. I said "I'm Todd" She said "Yes I know Mr. Dod" I motioned for her to come with me swimming at Pegasus. All I think she understood was Pegasus. She went back for her bathing suit and we grabbed a 3 wheeler and headed out. Before we left she turned to her parents who just nodded in approval for their child to go off with an old man from the USA. When we got to the pool I changed into my swim shorts and she into her bathing suit. Well it left everything to the imagination. It was a bathing suit like the ones they wore in the twenties that covered everything. I saw then that my work was cut out for me to corrupt this sweet little thing. We splashed around and had fun tossing a beach ball until it got dark at which time she said "I go home now" I asked her if we could do this again, and she seemed eager. So in a couple days we are going to Colombo and hang around.

8-September

Chairman signed contract with me today to give me 20% of net profits of all sales of the products I develop at ESM. Now I am very happy and know what my course of action here will be in addition to improving the boats made. This is my birthday present. I knew I would get something great in addition to the blessings I already have. I went down stairs to celebrate by buying a cigarette from the street vendor during lunch. I smoked it in front of ESM where most of the non English speaking workers hang out. They all stared at me as I lit up so I said "What's the matter, you never saw a guy smoking a cigarette before?" and we all laughed, they have no idea what I say. I feel pretty good now, and that is when the shit usually hits the fan for me.

Names:

Walking home from ESM I talked with a nice girl. Her name was Samantha ... I didn't care what her name was she was pretty. She works at another garment factory owned by chairman that is on the top floor of ESM. As we walked towards the foot bridge she asked my name and I told her "Bond, James Bond" She introduced me to her friends. Nobody understands me and I cannot communicate so I make up names for people. One worker is named Sanarish, so I call him "Sandwich" Another is Dushana, I call Dutchman. Hosanna is Hoser. Tarindu I call whitey because he always wears black shirts and black pants. Suresh I call Slash because one day Good ole Sam, Asitha, Aruna and I were impatiently waiting for chairman to come downstairs. He was late so we waited in anticipation for him at the bottom of the stairs looking at the lower flight waiting and watching for him to appear. As we waited the driver came up as well as the guards who open the gate. We all focused on the stairs when we saw a figure coming down. First his shoes, then pants, same as chairman wears, then a T-Shirt that said Slasher, a rock band. It was Suresh not the chairman. Suresh was puzzled why every one was staring at him, and said "Why, Why?" Sam said "You not chairman". Instead of saying what? Everyone says "Why, Why?"

13-September

There are signs saying Drug Possession carries the death penalty. Some are doing drugs and laugh when I say they could get the death penalty as the sign says. They smoke weed and do coke. Not many though. The drunks living in the shacks on the beach make campfires with marijuana bushes and the smell of marijuana permeates the neighborhood.

ESM is building a lot of the stupid looking 19 foot boats they have hundreds of orders. You would think they would be using the new technology I brought and demonstrated that it cuts work time in half. You would think that and you would be wrong. Despite the small fortune spent by chairman to build a state of the art spray booth, paying over \$10,000 in other new equipment, keeping me here in comfort the asshole management team does things the old stupid way. I used to tell chairman when management was being stupid and not doing things the right way and he would immediately get things going the right direction. But I am worn out from all the arguments and don't bother anymore.

I am also sick of hearing about initiatives the government says it should take to help develop business to develop more export products. They are nuts. Here I am building boats for export, and they are taxing \$700.00 for each motor installed on the export boats.

You constantly hear on the local news and read in the news papers about initiatives they should start and how they want to help local business, but it is all a bunch of BS, and the locals eat it up and really believe the propaganda garbage.

ESM made several of the 19 foot boats for the navy and made the paddles and life rings out of fiberglass. 10 paddles per boat, each paddle weighs 20lbs and

sinks if dropped in the water. The life rings are hard as a rock and barely float. If someone was in the water and needed a life ring thrown to them, they would regret it because if these life rings hit you they would knock you out.

The previous owner came by secretly this week. I know because my workers told me he was snooping around my projects. My projects are Top Secret and my workers are instructed to answer all questions saying "don't know what it is, Mr. Dodd tells us what to do and we do it" The secret projects are engine brackets, core material and other marine products. Mr. Dudley the previous owner also toured the entire ESM factory and saw how nice the boats look since I repaired the molds. Also he saw the workers using air tools like palm sanders in refinishing all the molds here. When the molds are done they are used in production again and produce a higher quality finish than before. It is not even possible for them to achieve this quality finish without the tools and training. It would take them 1 year to do by hand the refinishing done in the past 2 months. Anyway Mr Dudley saw how nice the boats looked, and the new designed boats I am making. Until this week he has not been seen here. Now he is here every day. When our paths crossed I said good morning and he nodded. Later that day a refrigeration company came to a meeting with chairman, Mr. Dudley and all the execs. When the refrigeration salesman began his power point presentation Mr. Dudley said "Come Todd you sit here next to me" WOW, what a turn around from me being a waste of time and money to now being my buddy is quite amazing. I just keep my mouth shut. During the meeting we exchanged ideas and Mr. Dudley and I actually agreed on everything which pleased the chairman greatly, as before we were both telling chairman the other was full of shit. I keep silent as I know all to well these execs will turn on you and use anything you say against you if it makes them look good.

Sudath and I are friends again. He offers me half his sandwich at lunch, even if he has already ate most of it. It is the thought that he wants to be friends that impresses me. So now we get along as team members. I just have to remember the rule here DO NOT TALK ABOUT ANYTHING BUT THE WETHER. I do think I have brought a little change in thinking. When I first arrived I noticed the execs only did things if it made them look good, otherwise they ignore you. Now I see them doing things that should be done even if done anonymously. Partly because when they ignored me about needing something or someone to do something, I always ended up doing it myself. I was constantly busy doing everything as they selectively understood English

so rather than play their stupid game of explaining every damn little thing, I would do it myself. Now I see they are taking small bits of initiative instead of sitting on their ass complaining. Even Percy who says I am wasting material and manpower I gave up being aggravated at after all he has got these pills that make you feel fantastic. I do not know what they are but I want me some. he gives them to me whenever I appear tired from lack of sleep. Lack of sleep is often due to either the old air conditioner making so much noise I have to turn it off and sleep in the heat, like when I was a boy at the farm before AC. Or the spiders that bite me in the middle of the night. There are cracks and openings to the crawl space of the roof where I know there are a lot of unwanted critters. I told the manager of the garment factory and his moronic response was to tell me they have no bugs. What an asshole, there are bugs everywhere what kind of stupid thing is that to say, "There are no bugs here", when clearly there are. Does he think I made the bug bites on my arm and leg. Some times you feel like you just want to punch these idiots for being so stupid.

At few big shots here have said they were going to have me over for dinner, not one has really had me over for dinner, yet they talk about it at least 2 to 3 times a week.

I went snorkeling the day before last when the water was calm in the morning. My guide took me about 300 yards off shore from Pegasus. The water was still murky but I could see there were hundreds of lobsters in the reef. I cannot wraith till the waters remain calm. I had Wasantha the machinist make me a spear. Would you believe there is not one spear to be found here unless you make one? No one dives because the water is so murky most of the time unless you go down south, which is where I am headed at the end of the month to oversee repairs to a couple of barges in Baticola .

16-September

Went to Colombo today and boy was the army out in full force. There were several checkpoints and machine guns. You haven't lived until you survive a checkpoint arrest. NOTE: Mother you should not read this part.

Before we could get on the bridge that is the short cut to Colombo, we had to go through a heavily fortified check point. We could have taken Nagombo Road, but I see htis check point very day and thought I might save this poor driver the time of going the long way on Nagombo Road (by the way, they spell Nagombo several ways like Negambo, Nagambo, or Negombo. I don't think they care how you spell it as long as it tells the driver where to go. After all there is only one town north for the next 100 kilometers and that is Nagombo, Negambo...whatever). The driver asked if he could take the short cut through shanty town and I said OK. No sooner had we approached the checkpoint to pass over the bridge when the rifles pointed in our direction. OH SHEEEEEIT, what now?! 4 or 5 army soldiers with AK 47 drawn in our direction shouted "BlaBla,Bla, Gobledeegook" I did not know what they were shouting, but everyone in the near vicinity was getting down on the ground. I had to think twice as it is hard for us fat guys to get back up again. My driver grabbed my hand and pulled me down, so I went down. I figured he knew what was going on. Then the soldiers came our way. I lifted my video camera to get this on film but one of the soldiers said "Carmera" and was looking at me, so I put it down. OK, this is Bullshit!!!! . As they walked towards us I was 2 feet from soldiers and their rifles ready to kill. I couldn't look; I could see the papers now. Fat American Shot in Sri Lanka. But they walked passed us to the car behind us. They ordered the passengers to get out with their hands above their heads, they complied. They took them away in a military truck. As quickly as the tension escalated it had dissipated when the prisoners were taken away. It turns out one of the passengers was a Tamil Tiger and the army had inside info that he was coming their way, and the army was waiting. As I let out a sigh of relief that I was not dead, I heard laughing. The soldiers were happy they nabbed a bad guy.

Wattala is a city like Hialeah. It is industrial manufacturing, and those are the people living here. The only others are shopkeepers, restaurant owners and 3 wheel drivers. It does not seam like anyone goes out of Wattala unless they live elsewhere and commute. Some of the workers ive inKandy in the hillcountry inland about 5 hours by car, or 1 hour if the roads were not so horrible. Some of the workers travel 90 Kilometers to work. They get on the overcrowded busses and ride for hour upon hour over really rough and loud roads. The ones that live in Wattala do not go outside the city. I know because several times I have hired a driver from Wattala and I know how to get around Colombo better than they do. Some do not know even how to park in a parking garage. These drivers are afraid and I have to tell them it will be OK, just go through the gate, and get the ticket and park. The only way these drivers know how to park is by riding up onto the sidewalks and changing locations when they are told to move on.

On the way back near my apt I told the driver to stop to see these children I always see diving in the water and catching fish. It appears as if they dive into the canal, swim to the bottom then appear with some small fish or crabs. It is usually the same group of boys doing this. Sometimes a tourist will stop and the kids say

"Give me money, I get fish". The unsuspecting tourist says OK and the boys dive into the murky soup and pop up every time with a small fish or small crab. They make a few dollars a day doing this. Then I realized what they were really doing. The 30 foot fishing boats come in and clean their catch, they throw overboard the fish and crabs that are too small. When the boats come in the boys swim to it while it is running and cling to it with one hand on the rudder and the other outreached for the small fry catch. It is a wonder they don't get their legs cut off from the propeller, or that the boat captain don't even slow down or tell them to get off. The kids gather the loot and stash it on the bottom of the canal, which is about 4 to 5 feet deep. Then when they see a potential target coming their way they dive into the pea soup, go down and come up with a dead fish they wiggle around to make it look as if it is alive. It sure got y attention many times. They had a cigar box full of Rupees to show for the half days play. So I said get me a live fish and this is the video. I had to go so I wadded up a fifty Rupee bill and got their attention by showing it to all the boys then throwing it to the center of the canal. In a shot they all dove in to get it. This was my chance for my getaway. Quick let's get out of here before they come back for more money. We drove off in the 3 wheeler and did not get 30 feet when one of the boys ran along side the rickshaw and jumped on the running board. 3 wheelers have no running board, so I don't know what he was holding on to. He stuck out his hand "Money, money, money" I said to the driver "Step on it" I know now why the boat drivers don't slow down. It is because these little buggers will overtake you in a second if you slow down. I still was amused by their mischievous antics. After we were clear the driver told me those were the bad boys of the neighborhood, that their fathers were always being visited by the police.

CHAPTER 80 SHOULD BE ADDED HERE

21-September

The Sri Lankan forces have really been hammering the tigers. I talked with the US embassy who mentioned that the US has advisors here to assist in ridding Sri Lanka of the Tigers once and for all. The people say the war has gone on too long and now it is time to end it. The Sri Lankan President is in the USA meeting with the defense Dept. in Washington. The local news is full of articles and news stories of demolishing rebel strongholds, destroying ships carrying ammunitions, ammunition depots and general kicking ass on the tigers. The reason they give is that they are tired of the Tigers affecting tourism and want to attract more visitors and business. They (everyone) say the only way to get Sri Lanka as nice as it should be is to rid the Island nation of the rebels once and for all. I have seen first hand the arrest of a tiger and there are heavily machine gun guarded checkpoints everywhere you go. Thank God they are finally doing something about the rebels. And thank God the USA is finally involved as part of the war on terrorism. Hooray!

For the past 8 weeks living here, doing business, communicating, entertainment, every day living here was like being terminally constipated. For the last week I have come to relax and truly enjoy Sri Lanka. I found a Groovy place to hang out that has good food.

It is the Pan Restaurant in Wattala. See the Groovy Coconut Grove place. It is down a dirt road from the insane traffic and pedestrian jam packed streets.

MAN the music stations here ROCK! I bought an Mp3 player here for \$100.00 that sells for \$300 in the US. All the electronics here are dirt cheap. Be Warned if you're a shopaholic do not go to the Crestcat Mall across from the Galle Face Hotel. Especially avoid the Unity Plaza; Unity plaza has UNBELIEVABLE electronic prices. Every time I go there I spend hundreds for new gadgets that cost many times more in the states. I walk in for a battery charger for my new digital camera I could not pass up because it was fantastic deal 5.2 megabytes with video recorder for \$60.00. I went in to buy more rechargeable batteries, they are \$10.00 for both AA and AAA two of each and that includes a fast excellent charger that plugs into your computer. I went for more batteries and ended up buying this Mp3 player which has 16 hours music recording time and data storage 512 mb. I turn it on and quickly found MOST EXCELLENT OUTRAGEOUS music stations. All European rock, disco, country, mellow all mixed depending on the day and time. At night they play disco mix, in the morning, classic country. And all different. They must pay someone to search every record ever recorded to put up the variety of good stuff. Unlike Miami where you get Cuban or classic rock that plays the same old crap. Or the hip hop rap music stations. I cannot tell you what a pleasure it is to not here any of the rap garbage. They don't play it. They do have some native rap music, but it is cool. Even the TV commercial music is cool. I have discovered one of the jewels here, and it is the music. There is the traditional La,La, La high pitched traditional B.S. But this new generation here writes some very excellent tunes that should be played in the USA.

Excuse me I am being called to a management meeting, back in an hour.

..... that SOB Percy. Chairman was not there. Percy had staged the meeting as an offensive to attack me with bald faced lies, yelling at me finger pointing in my face and total contradictions. All designed to demonstrate he was in charge of ESM in front of dear Sam, Asitha, Sudath (who is cool and is my friend), Abbey (who is the accountant and is also cool, I tell him he is my friend because he is the one that makes sure I get paid, followed up by saying "Your my friend even if you don't get me my pay") Percy called me in to set me straight with finger pointing, shouting at me like he was a drill instructor and I was a criminal. His point was to prove to all execs who is the boss and who is in charge of everything (why does he care all he does is surf the net and take naps when not giving B.S. speeches to the workers about them brushing their teeth and changing their underwear). I sat there taking it for about 10 minutes then said.... get your..... finger out of my face....Don't raise your voice to me.....Speak English, I am right here....What the..... are you talking about.....I don't need this.....GO TO MISERABLE PIECE OF

I slammed my hand down on the table, and then threw my chair and the door off its hinges as I opened it. Was Percy's plan successful? You know how I get when I am mad. Now imagine me at 260 lbs and now strong from climbing stairs all day, walking 2 miles a day, lifting all kinds of heavy stuff the natives cannot lift. I was in rare form as I shouted..... this I am getting my stuff and taking the next flight to London. I gathered my bag from my office and headed to Elakanda Junction for a 3 wheeler to take me to the airport about 6 miles away. I knew there were several flights to Europe, Australia, China, Japan anywhere but here, and the money they owed me had been transferred to my account the night before so I had nothing to lose. I got close to the gate and dear Sam came running after me saying "Todd, Todd Please do not leave...Captain is wrong, I am very upset at this and don't listen to him please..." He reached for my bag and

I let it go. He took it to my office. Sam told me to relax and everything will be the way I want it, and I can do whatever I want as far as developments, designing and building new boats. I calmed down and walked to the very farthest corner of the boatyard and looked at a boat 2 guys were repairing. I stood there about 5 minutes when like a serpent, guess who came slithering up?

That's right, Percy with a shit eating grin on his face, and eat shit he did. He gently put his hand on my shoulder in a non threatening manner and expressed that I was important to ESM and to please calm down and come back. He said we all have to work together, was very friendly like a serpent. On the walk back to the office he even said to me "If it makes you feel better you can hit me" I said OK, hold still. We both laughed and the situation was diffused. What had triggered his offensive was a report I gave to Sam ordering the practice of giving long winded speeches lasting 15 to 25 minutes to the workers after lunch. These speeches I think I wrote about before. These speeches keep my export workers from getting back to my export work and I sit there and wait for Captain Percy to run out of B.S. Besides the worker's teeth are white as white and their hygiene is fine. The opposite of the speech content spewed daily to a captive crowd. Percy exploded that I had defied

his practice of imposing his demand for confirmation of authority. Now my workers are exempt from attending speeches.

Later that day it dawned on me that I had been taken for a fool and had in fact been acting in the role of Percy's henchman for the past three months. He was the only one I talked to for the first months until he rubbed me the wrong way. It was Percy who convinced me the previous owner Dudley was out to ruin ESM and Carleton was one of his "henchman" or "spy" and Sudath was a rogue who did not do any job at ESM in Sales and just took the company car every day to go to the beach or shopping. Percy really had me fooled, and no one said anything. Instead I went around talking trash about these people without knowing the truth, believing Percy was my friend. Let that be a lesson. Do not get caught off guard and be manipulated when going to new surroundings and contacts.

22-September

Since Percy and our falling out 3 weeks ago I again became Sudath's friend again., Dudley, the previous owner (who is worthy of nothing but respect because he is the one who started ESM in the mid seventies and ran it until he went bust in 2004 who better to know about going bust than me, There I was faulting him for something a do regularly) His boats made at ESM are as famous here, India and in the Maldives as my dad's boats are in the USA. I felt like a real jerk, I was truly played like a violin. But another jewel here is forgiveness. All the people who I talked trash about knew it, and forgave me without me asking, instead seeing the look on me I had while opening my eyes to the truth of being manipulated. Everyone saying it's ok don't let it bother you, let's forget it. Dudley in the past few weeks has given me complete courtesy and is very pleased to see me when he comes by. He even has told everyone he wants to have me over for dinner (he probably won't but it is the thought that counts) He offers me a ride to work when he sees me walking. I see now he only wants the best for ESM and is only cautious when someone new comes around changing things because others before me have come by changing things and ended up making things worse. He sees the much improved boats and the much improved technology and enjoys it. By the way, before Dudley saw the new finished 43 hulls he was upset that I had sanded down the molds and kept them out of production for two weeks, but after he saw how nice the repaired molds produce boats now he smiles and puts his hands on the boats. Percy on the other hand stands there and says we'll see, we'll see. What do you mean "we'll see"? Open your eyes you..... idiot". Carleton who is supposed to be a spy is really a wise elderly statesman. Very well articulates in English and has good advice. I began listening to him. The other day he said to me that I was learning to enjoy Sri Lanka the hard way, but that I am learning. Today he told me about yesterdays freak out (these people are armatures when it comes to freaking out) Carleton said something profound saying the hand has 5 fingers, each finger is different, and even though they are all different the hand needs them all to function, and said now that you have made things out in the open those who you forgive will forgive you those you do not forgive will not be forgiven. It took me quite a while to figure out what that meant. What he meant is that I am in charge not Percy. He also told me about other groovy grove like places nearby.

My export worker Thissa is turning out to be a character. He reminds me of a combination of Tom Wargo and Dean Jones.

He has also learned more English and USA work ethics. Today another worker came into export and talked to Suranga. Suranga is a Buddhist who is a bundle of nerves. I need to tell him from time to time "Don't worry, everything will be alright, you are doing fine." He really gets nervous when I ask him to do something because he is not sure if he heard me right. Another worker from another department came into export and talked to Suranga, I waited about 2 minutes and then said "Hey, why are you talking to my man, can't you see he is doing something?" The worker immediately left to stand quietly by the entrance to export. Carleton was walking by so I asked him what the worker wanted. Carleton told me the worker had let Suranga borrow his Jigsaw to make a cut for me and had asked Suranga if he could have it back. I laughed, so everyone laughed. I smiled at the worker and said "come on in, sorry for getting mad at you, please, here is your saw and thanks for letting us borrow it." I knew the worker or anyone else understand no more than 2 words I say, but it is better to talk to someone who does not understand you but acts like they do than to speak to some idiots who do understand.

A few hours later the worker came back to give Suranga the jig saw to use again, I looked up and no sooner than I did Thissa said "Thank you, now get out of here" We all laughed. The latest word Thissa has learned is Beeaaaach, you know, slang for bitch. Now when anyone comes into export Thissa says "What do you want, get out" and we all laugh, and I say "the Dutchman can stay" By the way I mentioned about how I remember names by associating these Sri Lankan names with common English words. There is another name that is new with guys whose name is Asoka. Guess what I call them? Wrong, you have a nasty mind. I call them Asoka. I have a new friend whose name is Asoka he is my waiter at the Groovy (exclusive) Pan restaurant (exclusive cause you have to travel 12,000 miles to get to it). He knows when I want to shoot the breeze and when I want to be left alone. If I need a cigarette and don't have any, he runs to the nearest shop, buys me 2 then gives one to me with a light before I finish looking in my pockets to see if I have any. He tells me how young I look. He doesn't ask me those stupid questions like where are you from, where are you going, excuse me sir etc... I am reminded of the other day about a typical moronic event. I was walking home from ESM and passed a filthy beggar. He put his hands out with a pitiful face and said, please sir, Excuse me sir... I had a few Rupees in my pocket so I gave them to him. As I walked away he followed me and said, "This isn't enough, I need more" I just laughed and told him to give me back my rupees (about 5 cents in USD) suddenly he forgot English, could not understand me and he went away.

I am not a dirty old man, yet, but I liked it when the young women flirted with me until I realized the customs here. If you are rich and a man you sew your seeds until your 40s, then settle down and marry an always young woman half your age. If you are poor you get married before turning 20, this way you have a

partner to help with surviving. However, the women do not wear wedding rings unless they are over 30 because they are poor they cannot afford one. I see couples stay together for life. These young women who flirt were all married, and I thought they were single, but now I do not even look at them. Even though they all look at me. The other day one young woman who always stares at me lustfully, or why would she follow me with her eyes (unless maybe she was on her guard) not able to take her eyes off of me I discovered she was married. She is always looking deep into my eyes trying to communicate, smiles and says hi every time we cross paths. So naturally I am game, but the other day she walked into the factory with a 90 pound scrawny guy. She walked by intensely gazing at me and I naturally looked back with agreement and mutual lust (after all us fat guys now how women cannot resist us). Two minutes later I saw behind me leaning against the wall the guy she came in with and another shrimp. As I turned back around I heard one of them making sounds like a goat. I got the message "I am an old goat" I turned back to see them and they were laughing. By now I was already pissed from the on going stupidity, and thought "Why the..... is that girl eying me if she is married" I went up to the punks and told them "If I ever heard any more smart ass remarks from them I was going to rip off their heads and shit down their throat." They stood there frozen until I walked away. The next morning I saw the girl and her husband again on the way to walking to ESM I did not look at either one of them, but they both said "good morning sir" On occasion you see an older woman with a scar between her eyes where there used to be a red dot signifying she was married and not available. This blemish is from having the red dot tattoo removed because of divorce or infidelity. Those women are more like American women.

I have been getting up at 4:00 am lately. I get up and walk down the path to Pegasus for a morning swim. It is neat, the bats are still flying, but some are playing, they sound like squirrels in a tree and roll around on the branches sometimes falling to the ground. One fell in front of me, hobbled a few steps and flew back up to the huge Banyan tree to wrestle with his buddy some more. Of course there are the occasional lumbering 6 to 8 foot monitor lizards on the path. The snakes I do not see in the dark and early dawn. As the sun rises and I pass a large monitor I say ello, ello, ello how are you this morning. They usually look in my direction and stick out their 2 foot tongue like a snake to taste the air around me.

23-September

Guess who came crawling to export with his tail between his legs asking permission to enter export just to say hello? Correct. He stood there at the doors for a while because I did not see him or hear him as I had my Mp3 player on with my new headphones with the volume up listening to some jamming French Rock and roll.

Some jolly fat fishermen came from Maldives today and ordered a 30 foot day fisher. They were very happy to meet me, and I happy to meet them. The molds to make the 30 footer had been in storage for the past 10 years, they were filthy, damaged and need of some major repair. The fishermen were happy to see me but no one at ESM said anything to me about being in charge of the major project. I just said "good for Aruna who made the sale". He has finally taken control of smiling constantly and now needs to learn about authority and getting workers to do what they are asked in a nice way. For a while every time he issued an order he would snap his fingers. I had to correct him several times saying "Don't start out in your new position as an asshole. Don't go snapping your fingers every time you want someone to do something." Since he is young, about 20 he can learn and is learning to be a leader. Same with Slash whose real name is Tarandu. Tarandu is a long haired skinny equivalent to a hipster young man about 20. The other day I heard a loud slam of a door and furniture being shoved. I did not hear loud voices as when I freak out so I did not think there was a fight so I did not bother to look outside my office to see what the commotion was. Later Tarsndu told me that he and Wasantha, a genius machinist who can make precision metal tooling with just a hacksaw, file, lathe, and an arc welder. Last week I bought the machine shop a chop miter saw with a metal cutting blade. Prior to this for the past years they have been cutting all tubular steel forrailings and pipes with a hacksaw. They wore the 13 inch blade down in 4 days which told me how much they have been using it to cut metal where as before they cut by hand. I asked Tarandu what the fight was about, he told me that some others were making fun at wassantha so he joined in and that set Wassantha off. After he told me the first thing I told Tatandu is that he needs to apologize to Wasantha for his own good. Tarasndu said that Wassantha was the one that started it and why should he. I took the opp to relay the 10th step to him. I said it did not matter what Wassantha does it only matters what Tarandu does. A few days later Tarandu apologized. I really don't care if he apologized or not, but Wassantha was right in the middle of a tooling project for me and I did not want any delays. Usually when people fight at ESM one or both of the fighters are absent from work, sometimes for days and I could not afford any more delays. In the end I got my tooling on time and both Tarandu and Wassantha are on good terms again.

Sudath dropped me off at the Groovey Pan restaurant after work today which was a half day as all Saturdays are. When he took me there he did not know how to get there, I had to give him directions even though it is only 1 kilometer from ESM and 3 from his house. Like many other locals. None know where anything is in town except the market. Strange. After lunch I walked into tailors shop who is now custom making me several cotton shorts for \$5.00 each and several casual slacks at \$8.00 each. Wild isn't it. If you ever come here do not bring any clothes, you can get a new custom fitted wardrobe for a hundred bucks.

Back to the 30 foot order from Maldives. Guess what it is an export boat and that means logically it is the export department's job to repair the molds and build the boat to export quality. The traditional way this order would have been handled is to produce a good boat, but would look like shit because no way do these people know how to repair molds. If the mold is crappy the boat looks crappy no matter how you try to dress it up. However no one has said anything to me about this job, and I am export. All the execs will have to crawl to me on their hands and knees pleading me to do the job the USA way. Then I will look at them and say "I don't know it depends how I feel". But seriously folks this is great, the execs will realize they need me, or build the boat themselves and let it be shipped out and delivered looking like crap.

I used to tell chairman when there were issues like this to straighten the execs out on procedure, but now I will give them all the rope they need to hang themselves. If they make to 30 foot export boat themselves to show they don't need me the boat will go looking terrible and the Maldives fishermen will stop being Jolly and complain about the crappy look. Then chairman will find out and go thru the roof because they did not ask me to do the job the right way. I used to go to chairman to straighten things out, but chairman just tells me to do whatever I want, just get us some sales, sales, sales!!!

I spent all day with chairman on the computer cashing in his Marriott rewards points to pay for a Manahattan Hotel Suite for his business peoples stay while attending a Ney York Garment Trade Show. I also used my computer phone to talk with USA businesses for him and he was amazed it did not cost anything and

the voice was so clear. I see now I am doing things for chairman in the USA like I did for Taher. Taher is a carbon copy of his dad. They know how to get things done in Sri Lanka but not a clue how to do anything in the USA. After I booked the hotel suites for chairman using his points, his accountant cancelled the bank draft of over \$3000.00 for the stay. Chairman was very pleased and told everyone who called him that "Todd and I are here eating pizza, Todd is using his brain and my travel points to get hotel suites in Manhattan."

25-September

Sam told chairman of the fight at ESM when I told Percy.....Off! I am glad he did because it is below me and would rather go home than keep playing this stupid game.

I just sent chairman an email now that I know he has heard about what anPercy is. I wrote "Dear Chairman, Thank you for the new AC unit (I got a new AC unit yesterday). Now please get rid of Percy. The cancer needs to be cut out." I have been dancing around this with chairman for week now. Now I say it. Now it is out in the open, no more discussions or meetings about dealing with him. When chairman said that we should meet with Percy and discuss this I said no way. I said ESM should have a set of Miranda rights given to anyone who comes here trying to improve production. ESM Miranda Rights: You have the right to remain silent while the CEO who does not know his ass from his elbow spews contradictions and demoralizes the workers; you have the right to go to Sam who is powerless to stop the CEO who bullies the chairman. Anything you say will definitely be used against you in a barrage of bald faced lies from the CEO.

I have been buying a few of electronic gadgets, so the local news announced a big increase in electronic purchases. The poor here cannot afford anything except a cell phone.

There are 2 types of people here. One type is friendly and ready for improvements. Then there are the others; stubborn, stupid, idiotic, childish, egotistical morons. The first type may appear to be in the class of the second, however once you demonstrate the new is better than the old, they will get on board. The second type argues to the end defending the retarded thinking in the face of clear simple logic. Unfortunately the later type reminds me of hard line Republicans. Nazis, Like the latest interview with Clinton. The news and nearly everyone else here agrees that he had been wrongly picked on by the republicans for not going after Bin laden. The right wing news fires back with the kinds of stupid remarks made here in the face of honest efforts. Instead of addressing the issue they say things like "Someone should have told him to pull his socks up" "He was purple faced" "Chris Wallace should have poked him back" Here in Asia (which is what this area of the world is called) they like Clinton and think the USA is like a spoiled child, no respect for what is important.

Today my close personal friend Dudley Fernando the previous owner invited me to his home. He talked to me for several minutes telling me not to take idiots so seriously. He says for me to take it easy. A very nice man. However I am prepared to pull a knife from my back if we disagree like when I first came here. Dudley is different; you can tell he is a politician by the way he talks. He will talk to you until something more important gets his attention, and then he drops the conversation. To go off in some other direction. He went out of his way to assure me that I will not have any more problems. Chairman is happy and relieved since I told him yesterday that I liked Dudley. Super rich people rely only on those who have a public track record. If it wasn't for Dad I wouldn't be here getting my way. It is only because Allmand boats is plastered all over the internet with collectors, clubs, dealers and other Allmand boat web sites that I am here. With Dudley he is famous here as one of only 2 boatyards building boats. The other boatyard is Neil Marine and is owned by Dudley's brother. They have not talked in 25 years and hate each other, so there is a natural rivalry between ESM and Neil Marine. Now that Dudley and I are friends, Sam does not seem to like it. Percy told me in the start that Sam has his own agenda. Sam had worked and still works in the Garment factory for 15 years. Carleton Kern Just came in to tell me something about we should work together. He said remember the hand has five fingers. I said "yes, but when a finger gets gang green or has cancer you cut it off." He replied, "but then the hand is the loser" I said "Yes but if the finger was left on it would infect the rest of the hand and the hand would die" He said "but first I would go to the doctor and do everything before I would cut it off" I said "If the finger is gang green and it is cut off life goes on" I see Carleton is a nice gentleman so I said to him "You know Carlton, the first two months I was here Percy called you Dudley's henchman and that you and Dudley were out to ruin ESM so chairman would have to sell it to someone else, then Dudley could sell more fiberglass to the new owners." This raised Carleton's eyebrows. He then told me the story of ESM. He said Dudley and Carleton and Carleton's wife started ESM in 1979 when Dudley was working with his brother at Neil Marine. Dudley left Neil and Carleton and Carlton's wife came along and started ESM in a palm frond roof thatched hut in the jungle. In 1980 a Japanese company funded them to start FRP services a fiberglass manufacturer. Carleton and Dudley have been together for 35 years Carleton told me. Carleton's wife still works with Dudley at FRP services in Colombo, the same place I visited on my last visit. "So he thinks I am a henchman does he?" Carleton asked. I told him that what he had me believing until I caught him talking trash about me. I then showed Carleton the ESM Miranda rights and he got a kick out of it.

Today I met my counterpart Sipiliwataj a multi millionaire from Australia. Actually he is not my counterpart. My counterpart is James who handles Sip's boat imports from ESM to Australia. James talked to me for a while and we both have similar jobs, only he gets to live in Australia and I have to live here with the morons. Then I met Sip He is super rich and explained he wanted me to build him new molds for 3 different boats and then build him 250 of the new boats. I said to him "I don't know it depends how I feel" We both laughed and the ice was broken. I see that super rich people don't want to know the details; they just want to like the person they do business with.

When the rich people talk to you, you know they like you because they hold your hand. I don't mean shake your hand. I mean hold your hand and rub the top of your hand with their thumb. It is how they tell you they like you and for you to relax. Then when the one hand starts to get hot and a little sweaty, they change their hand to hold your other hand. Before you know it they are holding both your hands while talking to you trying to see if you understand what they are saying. Today when I was talking with the super rich Indian and with Dudley it looked like it might have been a gay wedding. No they were taking me into their confidence. People hold hands here all the time men put their arm around their friend's shoulder while walking and women hold hands.

27-September

I want you to know that even in my last video and pictures I still look fat, but you don't understand everyone here is under 5'5" and skinny as a rail, so it just looks like I am still fat. The workers and people who see me regularly call me iron man because I am twice as big and twice as strong as anyone. Plus I work very hard pouring sweat.

At the Groovy Pan restaurant I was having lunch when 3 men came in well dress and groomed in the traditional clothing. They were driving a luxury SUV made in India called TATA. Except for the being well dressed and groomed and all wearing the same black traditional cloths, you would not think anything. However, they were armed to the teeth with pistols, gun belts, and an AK 47 over their shoulder. They passed me and sat down in a table that had a partition around it. I could not help but peek through the corner when one of them saw me and gave me the look of death. I turned back and did not look again. I waited 10 minutes to leave after they did. I did not want to bump into them again.

I asked my favorite waiter Asoka who they were and he pretended not to hear. I asked again and he nervously said I don't know. He knew. I bet they were hit men. The army officers and other military personnel drive beat up army trucks and you can see the army logo. These guys had no identifying badges or anything.

Well I finally pissed off the chairman. Yesterday I had a sign made for my door that read "Export Director" I did it because nobody at ESM really knows why I am there except Sam, and I think this is why Percy is such a pain. I think Percy thinks I am there to take his job. And Sudath has no idea why am there and neither does Carleton or Acitha. So I put up a sign because after all chairman has said that export is my department and is separate from regular production and to ignore pissants that complain I am rocking the boat (pun) So I put up the sign. Immediately Sudat, Carleton, Percy smiled and said OHHHH! That's what you are here for to be in charge of exports. Everyone seemed to be relieved that I had put a label on my purpose there. Naturally I submitted the 450 rupee bill for the sign since chairman pays for my lunch, and anything I want. At 5:00 pm I asked Abbey the accountant for my 450 he said you must see Mr. Sam so I did. Sam said "Chairman very upset with your board (meaning my sign) and he not approve the cost, he very upset" I said why? Every time I tell chairman one of my schemes to make sales he says go ahead whatever you think will help sales, we need sales. One reason I put up the sign was due to several people coming from Australia, and India wanting to buy a custom boat end up wandering around the boatyard not knowing who to talk to. Dudley explained that white people want to talk to white people about buying a boat not a dark skin like we are. I figured the sign would also help when foreigners are wandering they might see the sign and say "Great, a white man, lets talk to him about buying a boat" Dudley is right every time a foreigner comes in they end up with me anyway and if Percy steals them away before they see me the foreigners always look to me with their eyes saying HELP! But Percy or some other bugger always tries to steal the foreigners away so I look back at them when they give me the "You are who I want to talk to look" and I look back with the sorry I can't help look. Then the foreigners leave still looking over their shoulder at me and I just wave. Why don't I do anything? Simple I am tired of the B.S. and if chairman cannot figure it out than I am not going to tell him. Besides he doesn't care even though he says he does. Now I know why most people don't care about doing a great job at work. It is because the real boss does not really care he is so rich he could live his life in luxury without the business. The short of it is, I put up the sign, then Sam said I will not get reimbursed and chairman is very upset. Why I asked. It turns out that in Sri Lanka being on the board of directors means you are rich and own the company. In the USA it can mean that but mostly I have seen it to mean the person is in charge. Like Athletic Director, I did not think for a moment he would be very upset. What does he care what I call myself. I am the only one in charge of the export division.

I thought it was strange when after I put up the sign people from all over the factory were coming up to shake my hand and congratulate me. They say "that's great" I said so what it is just a sign to tell people what I am doing. Sudath said "Yes but director, that is great"

Buy for a person who tells me to take it easy don't let the ways bother you... don't take everything so seriously, he sure got upset. Boy was his timing off. Just then the super rich guy from India and my counterpart James from Australia came by to make a down payment on a 200 export boat order, the kind of boat that needs all the new molds because the boats will not get financing from a bank if they are made the way they are now. It is a fact that most new boats are financed just like cars. The rich guy and James know this. The rich guy owns a bank and needs the boats made perfect because he is the one who plans on making money by financing them. The rich guy and James were together this time and in front of Sam they asked how I felt, as I had broke the ice the day before by commenting I have to feel good to do the project. They asked me this to lessen the tension after all they are spending millions at ESM. I replied "I really don't feel that good, you know Sam?" Sam immediately took me aside and said "chairman very happy with you". At that I said "I suddenly feel great again." After they left Sam said good we have big order now and you stay for a year. I said "hold on there Sam" I can talk frankly with Sam he is a true friend" I said "hold on Sam, if I am going to make new molds you tell chairman that I want to be a director, AND I want all travel expenses paid, AND 50,000.00 for the first year half paid up front, AND another air conditioner, AND I want travel expenses for some friend of mine to visit me, AND I want lunch transportation to the Pan restaurant every day (I have been paying 200 Rupees for transportation to and from lunch at the PAN), ANDI don't know yet I have to think about it " Sam said "Yes I will arrange with chairman" I told Sam the chairman will not go for it. Sam said that he would. Sam also reminded me that my visa is up in December and I have to go back to USA. He added "And you must come back OK?" I said "Sure if you pay me and meet my terms. Sam I came here on the clear understanding that I only came to show the workers how to do a better job in building boats, and I have done that, am I right or wrong?" Sam replied "Yes you very experience, you show good ways, the boats look much better now" Sam agreed with me and he will talk to chairman. We agreed that I am going back in December with the engine brackets, the core materials and the King fisher boats I designed. And that is it. Sam knows I fulfilled my end and agrees saying. "You must make the new boats, and for this you must be paid, I tell chairman" Well if I know anything about chairman he will hit the roof and say "Where are the sales, the sales" At that I will say That is not what we agreed on, at the same time have all y stuff packed and ready to go. After all we did not agree I would work here for a small salary. I agreed only to help them with the technology and training to join the rest of the world, not do it for them. In the USA someone in this capacity would get paid over \$100,000 I know because Jack who used to work at Raleigh's shop bought a new Porch and lived like a king while doing a similar job for a guy in Homestead who wanted to start a boatyard.

Chairman has sent me many emails about directions in Manhattan. He has me doing research on all the restaurants, tour guides, locations, walking and driving directions all over NY City. I finally emailed hi back and suggested he might save a lot of aggravation if he just sent me along as their guide in the USA. He replied saying "Thank you for the expensive solution."

28-September

First thing this morning I dressed in the traditional uniform of black pants, white shirt. Everybody commented on how nice it was to see me dressed nicely. Prior

I wore only rags, work clothes, stained and wrinkled. I did so due to my hands on work in fiberglass. And heavy sweating as there is no AC in the factory and fans are at a premium. My first destination was Percy's office where I made amends to him for being extremely demanding and going over his head to the chairman in every instance of disagreement. I came to realize the situation. I am an American wrench being thrown into a well oiled Sri Lankan machine. Maybe the Sri Lankan machine needed the oil changed but I can only suggest it. I now give Percy the credit he is due. He has mastered the gangs of workers who may not be criminals but will slouch and slack off if they can get away with it. They may work inefficiently but they are used to it. Like if you grow up using only a handsaw and an ax to cut trees, you would never miss not having a chainsaw. Unless you show someone how to use one they won't believe you. Then if they do use it and it breaks they will not bother fixing it because you did not tell them how to fix it, just how to use it. So they will go back to the hand tools. The next time a stranger appears telling that person they should use a chainsaw they will resist because they know it won't help in the long run. Eventually it breaks down and left in disrepair. Here one must show the workers how to use the tools but more important they need to be instructed and become familiar with repair and maintenance otherwise they will go back to the traditional way and have even more resistance in future attempts from foreigners to tell them to use modern tools.

Here factories those have all men working who are not educated and in their 20s require an unpleasant labor chief so the workers will fear him and not be his friend as in the USA when I had a job the top supervisor was friendly as long as you did your job. At Marshals when I sold shoes (which, by the way was the best job I ever had until they cut my hours because the upper management disapproved of my revolutionary back saver automatic shoe picker upper because first, all the 20,000 employees wanted an automatic picker upper for garments and merchandise that was left on the floor by customers. Second they said it could be used as a weapon)

This is a completely different culture and work ethic. I will take more time and consideration to bring changes about. When I met with resistance every step in the future I will not argue. Instead I will be silent. I realized the only way to be successful in implementing real change in manufacturing is to have a separate facility with separate employees.

Percy agreed telling me the Sri Lankan ways are what is keeping it from joining the rest of the civilized world. Interesting how he can have the correct insight and at the same time cater to the status quo. After I finished my amends he said to me "Don't worry about me, I have nothing in my heart against you, you are a visitor and I should be nice to you"

I had to correct him "Percy," I said "I am not making this amends for you, I am doing it for myself, it is unhealthy for me to harbor resentment no matter what the justification. This is the American way to not let resentments build up so they affect your mental health" He replied "OK, thank you for coming to tell me this" Next I went to Sam and gave him a letter for Zahid where I made amends with Percy, that Percy had his hands full in his job of managing the workers and I had been stepping on a lot of toes. That I was sent here with no clearly defined objectives. The sign showed me that no one knew what I was doing here. Percy thought I was here to take over his job. So no wonder he was making trouble for me. The better way to have handled my part at ESM was to define my authority over what department and gain acceptance and clarify any misunderstandings as well as outline my boundaries. For the last three months I have been raising hell at ESM. Now the water is calm here at ESM and like water off a ducks back is my response from now on when the stupidity arises. It took decades for Sri Lanka to develop its own identity after the British left in 1948. I am not going to change things in 6 months.

Letter to chairman:

Dear Chairman,

I made amends to Percy this morning. I am an American wrench thrown into a well oiled Sri Lankan machine. Work ethics here are different than the USA. The workers need a dictator or they slack off. In USA workers have rights, and a lot of other BS that runs up the cost of manufacturing. I gave Percy the credit he deserves. I will not impose my will on ESM any more. The only way to achieve the USA and EU standards is to have separate facility. Until then I told him I will not interfere in any improvements unless he is onboard, I don't need any more friction. To be honest I was thrown in here with no clearly defined objectives. No one knew why I was here. Percy probably thought I was here to take over his job. No wonder I had no cooperation. Many here still do not know why I am here. Maybe it seems unimportant, but running a boatyard is different than a garment factory. The human factor must be considered. Going in like a bull in a china shop like I have been simply causes friction. By the way I now see everyone here is doing a fine job. ESM has been building boats the traditional way for decades it is error to think I could change it in 6 months. As I said in the beginning this is a long term project. Years I think I said in our first emails. I tried in 3 months and have begun, but it will take a long time and an ongoing commitment. There will be set backs, and delays in mixing the USA ways with the Sri Lankan ways. The only alternative is to have a completely separate facility. Until then I do not think it is a good idea for me to push as hard as I have been.

Sincerely,

Todd.

You see the good thing about making amends is that you can set on a campaign of persecution towards someone, getting out in the open all the objections and insults. Then make amends. That way everyone knows about what a moron someone is, then by making amends to that person you are no longer the enemy, animosity dissolves but the people around find out the guy is a jerk and why. That information can not be erased.

I see more and more this whole adventure is not about boats, it being time for me to accept the people around me for whom they are, for me to understand them, not for them to understand me. Ok I know what your thinking, "There he goes again Todd is always talking about himself, its his favorite topic", but I say I have to live in this skin, I am the one 12000 miles in the wilderness, it is my task to deal with the insanity and these stupid people and bring change and who Whoops there I go again imposing my will, demanding to be understood. This place is a great place to incorporate the 12 steps. In the USA you can hide from interaction with society. But here you cannot. Sooner or later you will have to deal with the Sri Lankan ways. Fight it all you want, it will just cause nightmares and poor health. Accept it, play your role and you will have peace. Now if my Engines I have waited 3 months for are not delivered today as promised every day for the past two weeks; someone is going to get an earful of USA rage!

Chairman bought Sam a new station wagon and hired him a driver. Sam really doesn't care he is at ease riding a 3 wheeler. He is one of the very few you see here like me wearing a white shirt and black pants riding a 3 wheeler. Normally this dress is seen only in cars. Also today chairman bought me a new truck to use at ESM AND for my personal use on the weekends or any other 2 days a week, with a driver. It is red and a full size truck. A brand that is made in India called "TATA" A lot of cars are TATA made in India most trucks and busses are TATA. The only difference is the steering is on the right. That reminds me of driving here I used to be scared when in a car or 3 wheeler. They are supposed to drive on the left side of the road like England but they drive on any side of the

road that is convenient and park on the nearest side walk. There are constant near misses. When they go to pass a vehicle in front they beep their horn and go, not even looking to see if something is coming. If something is coming one or the other swerves out of the way at the last instant. I had to close my eyes a few times, but now I do not worry as much. Why? Because after being here a while you see that the roads are so bad, there are so many turns, and so many cars on the road that the maximum top speed you can expect is 20 Mph. Vehicles stop on a dime, not due to good brakes it is due to the slow maximum speed. Only in the early morning hours can you hope to get speeds to 35 or 40 Mph. on the straight roads here and there. Now I ride in style fewer 3 wheeler rides. I only take 3 wheeler rides when I do not want anybody to know where I am going. With a company vehicle and driver they log every destination and time.

Did I mention the USA Embassy invited all US citizens to a party and speeches Sat the 30th? They will be discussing plans for Sri Lanka in the future.

30-September

I Went to the American Embassy party today. Now that I accepted the Sri Lankan ways I naturally arrived one and a half hours late, which by Sri Lankan time is considered getting there early. It was a party and a meeting about the plans America has for Sri Lanka. There seems to be only about 50 Americans here. I had to keep my self from laughing at some of them. Several Of the Americans were dressed in the jungle outfits you see worn by the jungle explorers of the old Tarzan movies, Pith helmets and all. Others dresses like a 1950's night club singer, or like the 1950's Elvis. There were also the standard pink faced fat strawberry blond middle aged tourist women and their white haired bearded shorts wearing tourist hubbies. There were only a few normal looking people. Ambassador Blake was tall and very thin. I was an hour and a half late and the event was winding down, yet I still got there in time to gorge myself with tiny sandwiches, pigs in a blanket and coke. "Where are you going with that?" I exclaimed as the servants tried to leave my immediate vicinity with the ordee oh verz. I got to the ambassador just as he was leaving. I stood there waiting to talk to him as some stupid moron Sri Lankan; the stupid idiot went on about his business in Sri Lanka and how he needed investments from the USA. Who let this native in here anyway, the invite said only those with USA passports can enter, this guy I doubt had a USA passport. In a way I was glad to hear the ambassadors response to him as it would be an indication how he would answer me. He told the moron, "The USA has millions of dollars to invest here and is very interested in starting businesses for export products..." So far sounds good, just want I want to hear. I listened intently until I heard the usual crap that comes out of every one "...but the USA is not going to just give out money Willy Nilly, you have a civil war going on here, you have defaults on loans, you have bribes..." at that I stopped listening and turned my head to gaze upon a movie beautiful blond in an evening gown, I think I saw here some where before? Oh yes, she was on the beach. Finally the Ambassador blew off the moron and I got my chance to talk to him. I got 4 or 5 sentences in when he said "I hope you are getting paid for this" Great the same old B.S. I get from everyone in power who could help. What is that supposed to mean anyway. Did it mean I will get assistance, or does it mean I am wasting my time? I think it means I am wasting my time since that is what all the other remarks have meant so far.

I had to tell my driver how to get there and to the other places I wanted to go. I had the air conditioned van for 5 hours and used every minute of it. I am glad I used the time to go around Colombo to buy more \$2.00 DVDs and electronics. I bought a digital video camera that does not use a video tape. It is cool, in the USA it cost \$500.00, here it cost \$150.00 so you see I had to buy it, it would have been foolish not to. Then I went to KFC here which has a nice ocean view. They have ketchup here and naturally it has curry and chili peppers in it, it is good and I put it on everything until I realized why it is so good. Just like every other thing here that tastes good, it is because it is overloaded with sugar. I am glad I missed the American meeting; I see it would have been a waste of time. It was really just an occasion for the Americans to say "hey look at me I am on a Sri Lankan adventure" I had to tell the driver how to go everywhere like I have to tell all my drivers, I even told him "I know how to get around here better than you do and I am a tourist" He laughed and had to pull over again to get directions to the Micron Building where I had to go to pick up my fourth and newest camera. Everyone needs 4 digital cameras, and 20 rechargeable batteries right? What if a battery went dead, you would want to have at least 10 extra on hand wouldn't you? Not because you need them, but because they are cool and only cost \$1.00. You never know when you might see an elephant walking the street and you would want to take a picture. Except I have to figure out how to keep the blasted shoulder straps from getting into a tangled mess which prevents me from taking photos or movies on the fly. Mostly it is nice to see the cameras all shiny and in a row on my desk, and when the lights are turned off the room looks like a space ship with red and green lights on or blinking depending on the mode they are switched to, cool.

A historic event occurred at ESM this week. For the first time in history Sri Lanka will send to the USA 2 boats made by Sri Lanka to fill a 2 boat order I received. This is big news, before this no fiberglass boats had been exported beyond India and Maldives. This is truly a first. Chairman is very pleased. I see now the potential here is possible. Ever since I began working I did not really think things would work out for ESM. I figured I am just here for the ride. Everyone should be very happy. The goal set has been achieved. Maldives is a small chain of islands like the Bahamas about 300 miles out in the middle of nowhere.

I found out there are many Tamils living where I am near the canal. Asoka my waiter told me. I asked him if they were all Tamil Tigers or if they supported the Tigers he said no they do not like the Tigers. Tamils are very dark skinned. At checkpoints I usually go through with no stopping unless I have a Tamil driver who is dark skinned. So here if you are dark skinned the cops' hassle you just like the blacks say in the states. Even Sam who you cannot tell is dark skinned or light skinned says, you get the women, is she light skin or dark skin, this you tell me? Why he asked this I have no idea.

Oct 2,

I met with Joel this morning who is the boat advisor for James who is my counterpart who has the super rich guy. I had a hard time talking to James as we were followed everywhere by the execs who did not want us to talk alone. Finally James told them "Hey, I want to talk to Todd alone" James told me that James who spends the rich guys money is the one with the millions to get Blue Star up to par. That if James tells chairman to jump chairman says how high? Great, I took the pop to tell Joel my requirements. He seemed relieved to hear about the plans I had (A major part of the plan was for me to get gobs of cash up front) Joel went on to tell me they had orders for three 33 foot commercial fishing boats to be made by June. This made my mouth water as I knew ESM was incapable of this job without me. James looked at me every time the execs talked to him, then said we are having dinner tonight and looked at me for a sign I understood that James, Joel were having dinner to discuss matters. I nodded and he nodded. At that I did what George did in a Seinfeld episode, which was to leave on a high note. After Percy rudely interrupted the conversation I took that as my queue to exit before I might say something that would reveal my greedy motives.

Just got back from lunch it has been two hours since I left Joel. Poor guy he is still stuck with the idiots who don't know shit from Sinhalese. As if what the

idiots say is worth hearing. The whole reason I am here is to get the Australian export boats made to acceptable standards. Percy is sticking his nose in it, and I don't care. Let him. In fact let ESM do everything. I have my engine bracket and king fisher to bring back to the USA anyway. I guarantee James and Joel will just be throwing good money after bad. Sooner or later ESM will have to cave in to me, but so far only Joel and James talk to me ESM is ignoring me and rudely interrupting me. They think that just because I am here is enough to convince the Australians that ESM is qualified to do the redesign job. HA! Again. Then about the export order to the USA for ESM boats? I will probably forget about it and get them through my regular supplier. ESM is dragging feet as usual and are telling me they are going to give me a price. HA! Bet you a dollar the price will be grossly inflated. When I get it and it is inflated I will say the customer changed his mind. They are always telling me that when Sri Lankan see an American they charge double, and that is exactly what I am expecting from them. I am not going for it.

OK they gave me an inflated stupid price so I told them they will sell it to me for what I am willing to pay or forget it. They agreed. I just found out from Sam that Percy is on his way out. ESM is letting him go in 2 to 3 months because "he is a bad man" and because the tsunami money is running out and they are going to go with the export boats. I said "No don't let Percy go we need him" Sam laughed. I also found out why they all were ignoring me when James was here. Sam told me it is because James was telling them what they had to do in order for him to finish paying for the boats he already ordered that are sitting in export collecting dust. ESM asked me to repair them to be acceptable. I said "give me a stick of dynamite and I will take care of the crappy looking export boats" So James was telling them what to do and they knew I had nothing to do with the expensive disaster, and want nothing to do with them. And here I am thinking they were just being plain rude. Still don't have a date to go to his house. I guess he forgot, but it is the thought anyway. Dudley goes in whatever direction the wind blows. He has good ideas. One thing I have noticed here and in the USA and that is that real hardcore boat builders are never married. Dudley is not, James is not, I am not, Dudley is not, Raleigh is not, Dad wasn't, Farmer Jack wasn't and not only that all hardcore boat builders here are fat, I am fat, James is fat, Dudley is fat,

03-October

Joel is still going over corrections needed for the export that were made before I arrived. The Sri Lankan are extremely to the point of obsession in keeping written records of every single thing. Including everything said, receipt for every toothpick or nail. I saw the garbage collection method today. I always saw piles of garbage but never very big so I knew somehow it was picked up. I saw today they do not pick up the garbage. Instead they have a guy with a flame thrower. He gets close to the piles of garbage and fires them up. So if the garbage man comes around you can expect fires all along the side of the road and clouds of smoke.

The army came by to confirm order of 100 boats. India also confirmed an order for 100 boats. James is here to order three 33 foot boats and to make new molds of the export boats all James's boat are going to Australia. It is very strange but I would have thought ESM would be talking to me about making these boats with the new spray equipment, and other modern techniques. So far not a word. It would appear they are not going to use me or the new technology. Boy what a giant leap backwards. I think they are going to do all the new boats without me. Just as well. I have my little million dollar products I am making and no one here knows what the heck they are. Things like engine brackets, core material, leaning consoles and more plus the 19 foot kingfisher, which is a mutation on the traditional crocodile boat. I have my time well spent. Maybe they are not using me because I made it clear to chairman and everyone else that if they want me to do this work I want \$50K per year, plus my apt plus travel expenses to and from the USA twice a year, plus my own fulltime crew. Fine with me. The chairman always says "Todd is not here for his health" This morning he said this and I replied "Well, yes I am here for my health" Instead of bargaining with me to do the work, they just forget it. I know for certain the Australians will have nothing but problems and will not get a quality product worth the price. The Indians and the army probably do not expect what a better product. I see now that even though the new technology is a vast improvement in quality, saves time and labor, is more efficient with raw materials, it is like Percy said "It is too complicated and too much trouble, we should go back to the old ways" There you go.

Sam told me that while I was at lunch that James wanted to talk to me but I was at the groovy Pan restaurant. Yet no calls to arrange a meeting, and now I overheard Joel going over design changes to the next export boats. Design changes ESM is incapable of. It is hard for me to restrain myself. It is like a bad dream where everyone around is oblivious to the stupidity.

It will take me the next two and a half months to finish my work and I am going back to USA, hopefully my bed is still available. I can go to the pharmacy school I have been accepted to. But Sam said again to me "When you go to USA, you must return for export job" Maybe Sam is bullshitting me and they have no intention of bringing me back. I said nothing. Maybe they have accepted my requirements to return and it is not a big deal, sometimes I think something is a big deal here and it isn't, we'll see by tomorrow James and Joel say they are going to have a serious meeting to resolve the new export order of 100 to 200 new boats for Australia. I am acting like Jack in the USA. Jack Martinez is a master boat builder as well as an expert composite engineer. When someone wants Jack to do a job he has only two answers "You better have a lot of cash" and "I want \$50,000 a year plus expenses". Poor old Jack had a stroke last year. I saw him a few weeks afterwards and he looked fine and said he was fine, but just before I came here someone who knows him said he has to be hand fed. Jack smoked a lot. I don't think Jack would have spent one day putting up with the crap. For me it is natural. I am a very difficult person so I fit right in.

4-October

The billionaire Australian came today and told me what his plans were. Even though he was friendly I did not know what my role was until I found out today, and it is just Sal all over again. After the Australian told me how much money he has to invest, how many factories he owned in Sri Lanka, how chairman is his employee he then sprung a Sa; on me. He said We have half a million dollars to spend on this project, good so far I thought, then Sal came out. He went on to say "We want you as a partner, we are going to offer you the once in a lifetime opportunity to invest with us" The bottom dropped and all my expectations of any success here vanished. I had heard so much about the Australians, and had waited weeks to hear their plans for me and they tell me this B.S. I said to the aussies "you must have some Sri Lankan blood in you" "my salary is 50k per year plus all traveling expenses, plus" I stopped and just got up and left to go to the groovy Pan restaurant for lunch, and I did not go back to work, instead I went to my apt and had a nap. The phone here rang, someone from ESM was trying to find me but luckily the connection was bad so we could not understand each other. I took that as my queue to go for a swim at the Pegasus resort. I just got back. I give up on this place. Without your own set up it is a complete waste of time. Even the boats I sold to the USA were a disaster. The simple skiff type boats sell anywhere for \$3000.00 I get them from China and Argentina. But not at ESM it took them a week to come up with a final price of \$4200.00. And this was their way of saying they were going to cooperate. They always say not to buy anything here because the natives will raise the price because of the color of my skin. Guess what is the guiltiest of trying this B.S. on me. That's right the very people at ESM who told me this in the first place. The last thing the Assize said was that he will send his fiberglass repair man here to do the work. That they want me to do it, but I am too expensive, and will not invest. I am not talking to anybody anymore, I am ordering my boats from china, I am finishing my little projects then going home, this place and everyone in it. If that cheap Assizes wants to talk to me again my salary just went up to \$80k plus expenses.

I finally hit a nerve with the USA offices here. I thought it would be a good idea to build some high speed boats and give them to the navy because now they only have row boats and a few ancient 50 foot patrol boats. They need river assault craft, high speed intervention boats like the DEA has. I thought the USA would like the idea because Sri Lanka is one of a handful of countries that like the USA. Instead I got a message from the USA office here that the outside world would see it as the Sri Lankan government was being supplied military equipment by the USA. I wrote back and asked "Is it illegal?, I think it is a good idea, I thought the USA wanted to fight terrorism." Even If I abandoned the idea, the Sri Lankan government has already told me they will use the technology to build faster better boats to fight the Tigers. So now what do I do. As I see it, I think I should stretch the envelope until someone here from the USA helps me.

5-October

Doing business here means you must either break through one barrier after another. Not barriers that are real, but barriers that are stupidity. Either break through or give up. I noticed that has been the pattern. I run into stupidity, and then try to reason with it, but get nothing but ignorant resistance. Then I get frustrated, then I freak out and tell everyone to..... Off, vows to leave for good, then I get my way then the morons accept the new ways. I have to balance what is important to change and what does not really matter in the long run.

Yesterday was such a day of breakthrough. I told the assize I was sick of listening to his B.S. Every time he opened his mouth in my direction I would say "Money talks, bullshit walks" followed by "If you want to talk to me pay me a non refundable \$100.00" The assize made the mistake of showing me his wallet where I saw a C note. So now every time he opens his mouth I don't say anything, I just put out my palm and rub thumb and finger together signifying PAY ME. If he continues to try to talk to me> I again rub my thumb and finger signifying this represented the worlds smallest violin playing his sob song.

Chairman had a meeting with everyone and the assize was in attendance. We resolved the issue of the USA boat order and I got my way. The assize opened hi Sal mouth and said "Chairman will you ask Todd to help us?" Chairman looked at me for a reply I said "One condition on me remaining here is that I have nothing to do with the Australian business" At that the assize said "I thought we were friends, but I guess I was wrong." I replied "We are friends, don't take it personally" The super rich assize James I only met a few times and only to shake hands to introduce myself, or to say hi passing in the hall. I purposely avoided talking with him about his project until I knew their motives. Joel showed me the motives.

The last thing Joel the cheap bull shit assize told me was that James wanted to have a sit down meeting with me. I ignored him after I again put out my palm for the \$100.00 listening fee. A few moments later the super rich assize came downstairs to find me to have a sit down meeting. I purposely don't answer calls to go to them. When security tells me to go to the office because they want me I say "I am busy" When they call on the export extension and ask me to come to the office I say "I no peeked panish" and put the phone on the table then go back to my projects. So the super rich assize came downstairs looking for me, which was quite a feat for him since he is a heavy drinker, you know the ones with the red nose and tiny red veins, pale as a ghost. He approached me out of breath and opened his mouth, before he could say anything I interrupted with "We have nothing to talk about" I then turned back to my work and turned on an electric sanding machine, the large compressor, and every other power tool we had. This made a lot of noise; he still tried to talk to me. I simply put my hand around my ear and said "I can't hear you, what was that?" He repeated what I did not hear, I then had Suranga cut some fiberglass that shot fiberglass dust in the assize direction as well as making a very high pitched shrill. Finally he left exports, coughing and sprinkled with fiberglass dust. This technique is not my original idea, I learned it from Raleigh. Whenever Raleigh realized he was talking to someone trying to convince him he would continue talking with the person as if they were getting somewhere with him. He would walk to an area in the factory where the grinding and cutting of fiberglass was going on. He would say to the person "Oh yes I see" while at the same time turn on the loudest machine in the area an either himself or have Luis aim the fiberglass dust from cutting or grinding in the direction of the asshole. Eventually the asshole would see he should come back later, and then leave never to return. Only by phone would the asshole talk to Raleigh, where Raleigh would say, "Not interested" and hang up.

Had quite an adventure today. Went to Bopitya to retrieve some boat molds from the jungle. First we drove several kilometers north on canal road towards Negombo. Then took a right at the cement factory. We proceeded another several kilometers down a jungle thick winding road in a northeasterly direction until the canopy opened to reveal a village and a large Catholic school. There we took another right. We drove east for several more kilometers. As we drove the countryside turned to the hill country with thick jungle brush, palm trees and reeds where there were swamps. As we drove the pavement became more and more narrow until was barely a car width wide. The pavement then stopped as an orange dirt road took over. The jungle was getting very thick on both sides of the Lorry (that is what they call a truck). Finally we reached the property. All the molds were covered with vines and overgrowth. In the distance a few scattered houses and a warehouse. It was a remote area hard to get to; even so, they still had electricity.

The workers cut the molds loose from the growth and struggled getting the molds onto the lorry. During this I heard 70's music in the distance. The Rock and Roll music was loud, the type of music at the volume we used to listen to when we used to smoke pot and drink beer. I saw it was a house on top of a hill a few hundred yards away. I walked a little closer and thought I saw hippies mulling around. I also smelled a strong marijuana odor. I was tempted to go over and party with the hippies, but those days are behind me. Beside who knows what kind of freaks one might run into out in the Sri Lankan wilderness. We loaded up the molds and headed back. While we were there it felt like I was in a movie the area was just like Tarzan's home. Tall palm trees everywhere, huge banyan trees, thick underbrush you had to carve your way through under a tropical sun burning through a blue background white wisped sky. As I stood there on the Banyan roots is the shade first I shook a 2 foot snake off my shoe. After that a 6 inch millipede had to be plucked from my pant leg, followed by a shake of my hair to evict a large spider atop my head. I had to keep moving to keep the bugs off me. As soon as you stood still they would begin to cover you. Not like they were attacking, just that you are in their way and they were just passing through. No cobras, although I expected to see one any moment since we were turning over everything that had not been moved in 25 years.

08-October

Attended a meeting with chairman with the rest of the execs. Chairman was firm that making a USA sale is a milestone and everyone is to give me complete assistance. We discussed the matter and costs then adjourned. After the meeting all execs came to me to thank me for the USA sales and added they were looking forward to working together to make it happen. This is while I was sitting in Sam's office relaxing going over details. Everyone was excited about USA sales, except guess who? He said nothing in the meeting other than how it would be too difficult and ESM could not afford it then went into a litany of excuses until chairman interrupted to say JUST GET IT DONE THE WAY TODD WANTS OK!?!?! Percy nodded. While I was in Sam's office surrounded by happy execs, Percy stuck his head in the door with a stupid smile and talked in Sinhalese. I asked Sam what Percy said. Sam told me that Percy said he just sold, in the past two minutes, five 65 foot boats to the Sri Lankan Navy. We all said to Percy "That's great!" When Percy left Sam said "He no sell to navy, he just talk" The fact that chairman obviously makes me top dog just burns Percy up. He is extremely childish and his announcement was a figment of his imagination to grab some glory. In other words, more B.S. from the CEO. What is remarkable about Percy is that one hand he is like a spoiled 2 year old, then on the other hand he greets you with smiles and is very friendly after he is straightened out by chairman.

I tried to start new businesses here, but had to give both up. The first was a 3 wheeler Tuck-Tuck service. I sat in my 3 wheeler and hung out at the junctions waiting for fares. I put up an American flag and a sign reading "American Driver" At first I got a lot of takers, but they soon became dissatisfied with the service because I couldn't understand their directions, or anything they said, plus I don't know where anything is except the groovy Pan restaurant, ESM, Continental, Cargill's, Armour Street, Crest Cat mall, Galle Face Hotel, Unity Plaza, Majestic City, Il Ponte, Colombo Marriot, Bentota and Pegasus. After all there is nowhere else worth going. By the second month my client base had diminished. I then started another business. Everyone here loves America so I started selling American Bananas. There is a stand at the Hendala junction that always has over 10 big Banana bunches hanging around the vegetable displays. He has green, ripe and over ripe bananas in abundance. I call him banana man. He sells one kilo for \$.20 rupees. I would buy a bunch, about 15 kilos and stand at the junctions around Wattala shouting like a paper boy "bananas, get your American bananas" Mostly I just got puzzled stares, but once in a while I would get a customer. They ask "How much?" I say "One American banana \$100.00 rupees". But the customers say "Too much, why so much?" I tell them "These are USA American bananas \$100 rupees please" I ended up having to eat the entire 15 kilo bunch of bananas before they rotted, no one was buying my American bananas.

The federated union of Wattala Tuk-Tuk 3 wheel drivers has voted to not give me rides. However there are always scabs happy to give me a lift. The reason for the "No ride for Mr. Todd" is because I know what they charge. There are 10 junctions (intersections) in Wattala where 4 to 10 three wheelers hang out waiting to be hired to take the rider to the next junction. When I first arrived I paid \$1.50 for a ride from Hendala Junction to Paliya Watta junction, last month I got it down to \$1.00 for the same ride. Now I only pay \$.50 for the same ride. I use a trick they played on me. Before when I got in for my ride the driver would say "one hundred rupees." "Ok" then get in and go to ESM, Cargill's (Sri Lanka Publix), the groovy Pan Restaurant or where ever. Then a block before getting there the drivers would say, "OK, too much traffic, \$1.50 rupees." What are the alternatives pay the extra \$.50 or get let out in the middle of God awful traffic and jammed sidewalks only to have to walk another 1 or more blocks.

Last month I always made clear what the fare was so no more stupid con man surprises. Now I play it like a game. I go to a junction (where the truth is the drivers will fight over you for a fare if you play it right). I point to each one, then rub my chin and wait for them to shout to me, "I take you"; "no me he is drunk"; "I will take you"; "No me I have sick wife"; "No me he has no brakes" etc... finally I choose one and go to him and say "Ok \$50 rupees to Continental." They always reply "\$1.50 rupees" "I act like I do not understand them and say "OK, \$50 rupees" Then they say "No, \$150 rupees" I reply "OK, 100 rupees" "No, \$150 rupees" "OK \$50 rupees" "No, \$150 rupees" After volleying back and fourth three or four times I say "Which is it 100 rupees, or 50 rupees?" They say "\$150 rupees" "Ok \$100 rupees" "No, \$150 rupees" "OK, \$50 rupees, lets go" By then the other drivers have been watching and listening, before the next volley one says "OK, I take you for \$50 rupees" I head towards him, then the driver I volleyed with says "No, I take you" So I ask "How much" "\$50 rupees" No doubts as to the fare. I go with that one cause he earned it. Sometimes I go the drivers and one after the other says "No." Not even interested in a fare because they know they won't get rich off me. But someone always comes through. The ones that do, always give me a better deal are happy to do so and are friendly. Unfortunately after dark is not a good time to try to get a ride for a couple of reasons. One is that by the time it gets dark, most of the drivers are toasted, and sit in their vehicles just to hang out and drink. Most say no to a fare, so they can keep drinking, others say "OK," Don't ask for rupees or where you are going, they just start off in the most convenient direction, even if that is not the way you want to go. At night sober drivers are hard to find. You can call one but you have to wait an hour for them to arrive, even though they say they are only a block away.

Today I had a worker to help repair a mold we got from the jungle. At 8:00 am we cranked up the compressor and electric machines. This makes a lot of loud mechanical noise. You don't notice it on the weekdays because there are a lot of other loud noises going on. But it was Sunday, and we were the only loud machines. The work was done under the third floor of supply stores where some ESM workers live in ghetto like apartments (The USA does not know what a ghetto is, they ought to send some of those who say they live in a ghetto over here. They would return grateful to get back home). The apartments are on the ESM grounds and the workers just get dressed and come down stairs to start work. It was Sunday at 8:00 am I was in no mood for any crap; luckily I had a good worker to do the nasty job. Unlike one of my workers, who I noticed had an attitude problem Saturday about one hour before quitting time, I asked her to clean up. This worker is a woman and her job is to keep export clean. It was getting to be quitting time so I told her to sweep up and clean. 15 minutes later I saw her standing there with the broom not doing anything. I said "Please start sweeping" She looked at me but said nothing. 10 minutes later there she was again standing there. I said "Sweep. What is the problem?" She gestured with her hand that she had a cough. I said "Then clock out now and go home. What do you think you are going to do, just stand there, wait for the clock to run out then leave this place a mess? No, sweep up or go home now" She did not understand a word I said but at least I felt good and handled the situation well.

I told Suranga to tell her to sweep up, but even though Suranga told her she ignored him too. Just then Sam walked by where she could see him. I said "Sam, please tell this worker to go home" Before I turned around she was sweeping up a storm. Sam just asked "Why? Why?" (Translated means what? What? Remember Sam only understands one out of every four words I say) "Never mind" I replied.

Back to the work we were doing at 8:00 am Sunday. We started the loud machines under the workers apartments. It wasn't long until a few of them came down in their towels and not smiling as they usually do. I could tell they were not happy with the noise early in the morning on their only day off. I just gave them a mean look right back. I wasn't happy to be working either. A few moments later, someone from upstairs threw a rock at the mold worker who was sanding. At that I turned off the machines and yelled so everyone could hear me for as mile around "OK, WHO THREW THAT.....ing ROCK??" Silence. Again I yelled "WHO THREW THAT ROCK, GET DOWN HERE NOW YOU CHICKEN SHIT" (Side note: the workers now know many American words like shit, god damn it, son of a bitch and other fine English demonstratives) No one took credit for the rock throwing. I lifted up a 14 foot boat mold over my head and threw it against the wall so they could see I will break them in half if I want to. Immediately the area around the work area that just a few moments before looked like they were ganging up now was deserted. We went back to work uninterrupted. At noon we needed compressor oil so I took my worker with me to get it. Guess what? Even though they sell engine oil everywhere, I had to have my own particular oil that is only sold, coincidently, next door to the groovy Pan Restaurant (sad isn't it, my only highpoint of the day is going to the groovy Pan restaurant)

I paid for lunch for the worker. I don't think the worker had ever been to a sit down restaurant of the exquisite caliber of the groovy Pan Restaurant, nor had he had as much food to eat at one sitting. It turned out that the worker was quite the Tom Sawyer type. He knew the pretty girl at the groovy pan Restaurant who speaks no English. He also knew most of the people on the street. He also got us a ride back to ESM for \$.50 rupees less than I usually get because he knew the driver. He would say "He is my friend" and whoever it was becoming very accommodating.

Back at ESM while we were working there were times I had to go to my office or the machine shop. When I would return there was always someone else doing the sanding, some did not even work for ESM. One time I came back to find the security guard doing the sanding. I stood in the background and watched. A crowd of a few off duty workers and security guards formed around the work and each person took turns sanding for the worker. This went on for about a half hour. I finally walked up. When the worker saw me he wasn't sure if I would be mad that he had everyone involved in doing his work. I smiled and said "good", with a thumb up. Thumbs up means good. Instead of slapping five like "give me five" the Sri Lankan hold a thumb up then touch thumb to thumb.

11-October

I am fitting in nicely with the natives. They are bringing me into their society as a friend and not a visitor. Sudath came in this morning to tell me his wife had a baby girl. Padeep, who is a long haired Sri Lankan hippie, is my connection for whatever I want, girls, gambling, and reefer: if I wanted any (which I do not). I don't take advantage of my new connections in the community. Has fate would have it people are coming out of the woodwork to offer me their friendship, not because they are scheming for money but because they seem genuinely interested in my welfare.

I said before all the workers at ESM watch everything I do and keep track of my work. Not because they are nosy, but that is the way. This is also true of the people of Wattala. They see me daily walking about the shops, and junctions, they too look out for my welfare. Unlike Perrine, where if you drop a dollar bill someone grabs it before you can pick it up, then says they were the one who dropped it. If it appears I need a ride someone will come over and call me a 3 wheeler, they tell me who is good and who are the cons. These people in the community are strangers to me, but they know me and know I work at ESM. By the way the federated union of 3 wheeler tuk-tuk drivers and I have entered into negotiations about giving me rides. Now it seems it is OK for me, a foreigner to get the regular prices for a ride.

They also knew I was not married and had no one here. They Who I do not know, but some in the community took care of this for me. One day while at the Pan restaurant having lunch. A Very attractive young woman came up to my table. The Asoka my waiter came over and talked to her in Sinhalese. He then turned to me and said "This is Atima" "She wants to know if you need her for anything" I said "What?" Asoka repeated "do you need her? She is looking for a new job; she worked at the book store and has several references. She saw you and wants to work for you" "OK, why not" I said rubbing my hands together and licking my lips. I told Asoka she needs to know a few things about her duties first before she decides if she really wants anything to do with me. Asoka said "OK, what should I tell her" I thought hard and figured it best to get the dirt out instead of shocking her later and possibly getting in trouble. I told Asoka to tell her that "One, she needs to learn English fast, two, I am not married, three can she cook, I want her to cook me dinner at my apt sometimes. Four, I like to go out to the Pegasus, Colombo, the shops, and beach, and she will accompany me, five, I am going to buy her some American style clothes, six, when I go swimming I want her to swim with me and I will buy here a swim suite, and seven (the least important) she will keep records for me at ESM. I made sure Asoka understood everything so he could translate. After a few moments went by as Asoka translated. When he finished I looked at her. She turned her big eyes (the ones like Holly Robinson) to me and then to Asoka. Guess what she said? Now if this was in the USA the sexual harassment enforcement lawyers would already be preparing a case against me. Here they don't care as long as the woman is single. Besides it is not sexual harassment if you state your motives first. As Atima turned to Asoka a serious look turned into a smile and she nodded in agreement, and then turned to me to see if I smiled. At first I didn't, I tried to look mean and scary so she would realize she was making a mistake and change her mind. Instead her big eyes and young pretty face melted my serious look into a smile and we both smiled.

I turned to Asoka and asked "Are you sure you told her everything?" He nodded and repeated to me what he told her. Atima then asked Asoka to ask me

about meals. I told him to tell her that there is a canteen and a cafeteria upstairs where everyone, even the execs have breakfast and lunch. He told her, then she turned to me with a sad look, then spoke to Asoka. Asoka told me that Atima will not work in a canteen cafeteria. I said "No she is with me, and if she wants her meals she can get food at the factory cafeteria if she gets hungry" After the translation the smile returned to her. As she left she said she would be at ESM at about 10; 00 am (in English). I turned to Asoka and said "Tell Atima she has a lot of courage". He said then said to her in English "Mr. Todd says you have a lot of courage" Her smile grew as she departed. Turns out she is from a broken home. Her father passed away from kidney failure a common means of death around here. She is 22 and rarely sees any of them and lives with here grandmother, sister and brother (sounds familiar). The only thing missing is that she is not an alcoholic. I asked Carleton the elderly statesman what he thought I could get away with as far as Atima is concerned. So far she still cannot communicate well enough to hold a conversation. Carleton said to take her to a resort. I said "Two separate rooms, right?" He said "That will be too expensive" I said "One room?" he replied "Sure why not? See what happens, you won't know unless you try." WOW! After lunch Abbey came to tell me that I have a very beautiful secretary. There are 7 secretaries at ESM but none very pretty or shapely; one is thin as spaghetti, the others roly-poly. One of them dresses nicely and is well groomed, but JEEZ, you better watch out, sometimes she doesn't bath for a week and the smell will knock you out. The first time I was stunned by the odiferous emanations I said "PEW, someone needs a bath?" The others in the office did not seem to mind. I mean how hard it to bathe is, fresh water is everywhere. How could someone dress nicely and be well groomed and then not think that stinking of BO is not a good thing.

Percy has been unusually friendly and cooperative with me. Behind the scenes he still complains, but now Sam tells him to shut up, and quit complaining (another fine phrase I introduced).

We'll see, and then we saw.

I don't know if I mentioned that I fought with Percy 2 months ago for men to repair the 46 foot mold. Finally I got the men and we repaired it in 2 weeks. The mold had not been used in 10 years and was in extremely poor condition, on top of being all scratched up from bad use. After we repaired the 46 mold Lunch man (The Multi day boat casting crew) cast the first 46 boat in it. This job has taken 2 months before they could take the boat out of the mold due to other jobs preventing them from full time casting the 46. During this time I have endured Percy's constant harassment that I am wasting men and materials, while everyone else agrees the improvements are great and new for Sri Lanka. But not.....hole for two months whenever I say do it my way cause it is better, just look at the 43 boats coming out now (ten 43' boats have been made since the repairs. All of them looking like a jewel, right out of the mold). But Percy has been telling everyone "We'll see, the 46' will not be good and you will know I am right, Todd is wasting men and materials" Well guess what?

This morning I saw Percy standing at the 46' mold for an hour. He never stands in one place that long. A little later he was still there. I wondered why. Soon it became apparent. Several men gathered around the 46' mold and began the process of releasing it from the mold. Lunchman was there. As our eues met we both put our hands together in prayer and looked up for a second. Then the men began the release work. How they do it is by tying a rope to the boat cross member near the front then lift it the boat and mold off the ground, the weight of the mold pulls the mold away from the boat and falls one foot to the ground. They lifted the boat and mold about one foot off the ground and the mold and boat stuck together for 1 minute, but that is all it took for Percy to say to someone "See I told you, now the boat is stuck and we have pay a lot of money for repairs." Just as he finished the word "repairs" he was interrupted by a loud crash. It was the mammoth 46 mold separating from the boat and the boat sprung upwards when the weight of the mold was released. I turned to see Percy's reaction. There was none, he simply turned from his audience and walked away.

The 46' came out very easily with no effort and looking like a jewel. But that wasn't good enough for Percy. He had the NERVER to tell Sam the boat needs repairs and there are defects. I felt like going up to Percy and saying &..... Youhole you are full of..... You miserable piece of..... son of a!. It is clearly obvious to everyone the boat is the best they have ever made, and it could only be possible with the tools I brought. I had to fight the urge to defend my work. Instead I keep quiet and let the 46' boat speak for me. Only from Percy's mouth will you hear any complaints. Like the ESM Miranda rights "everything you say and do will be used against you in a barrage of bald faced lies" I should not have been surprised. But since I made amends at least now I can ignore him and pretend to like him. I have never seen anything like it. It is like the worst person on earth winning the lottery. What the heck chairman keeps him is beyond me and Sam's comprehension. By the way whenever Sam is not happy with anyone or if I am not happy with someone Sam says "That bloody man" referring to the person who is causing difficulties. Yesterday I had a cab service take me to the embassy (which by the way was helpful, but they told me in certain ways it is not their job to tell me how to get grants). The cab driver is great he speaks fluent English and understands. WARNING THE FOLLOWING IS BAD AND DO NOT READ IT.

We talked about prostitutes and how much they are in the USA and in Sri Lanka. He was amazed to hear you can get a prostitute in west Perrine for \$2.00 (A toothless crack head). He told me here they are young beautiful and \$20.00 for two hours. But for foreigners they charge \$200. So he got me two for \$40.00 and delivered them to my apt. First of all no way am I going out looking for prostitutes. But when they would be delivered while the driver waited at the bakery (you remember the bakery), I thought why not. When they saw me they said \$400.00 I said forget it and started to shut my door, one said no, OK \$50.00. Turns out prostitution here is semi legal and is controlled quietly by the government don't ask don't tell policy. The whores (lets call them what they are) have to go by certain rules which makes it safer. There is little if any VD or HIV here. They want to keep it that way.

Full Circle

Today Monday Oct 15 I met with VJ the Member of Parliament who I stayed with on my first visit in 2005. It was good. He added another 3 story mini mansion to his house, which is already a 4 story mini mansion. We talked about ESM and tuna long liner boats. We'll see what happens. I saw that at his house and other houses they have gutters on the edge of the roof like in the USA but the difference is they do not have downspouts. Instead they have a few chains hanging from the opening. When it rains the water cascades down the chains and is cool. The same people were there like the body guard with the Gluck, the servants, and his sons. They all remembered me.

I was to meet him at 10:00 am he was anxious to get together to talk tuna boats. I have developed my style to meeting important people and getting them to pay attention. Instead of playing second fiddle, which is how they used to treat me at meetings, now they pay attention. Before when big shots would call me for a

meeting I would spend a lot of time waiting for them. Then when the meeting would start, they always had a phone call that interrupted the meeting. All in all most of the meetings I spent waiting for an appearance or a distraction like a phone call. I developed my method to object to this B.S. in a subtle way. I am always on time when a big shot calls me to a meeting. If I have to wait more than 5 minutes I get up and tell the secretary or whoever else is there waiting that I did not have anything to eat and am going to the store across the street for a banana. Then I would take my time getting back. By the time I got back from getting my banana the person was there and the time they had for a meeting was over. They would say what happened to you, you were here a minute ago? I would tell them I had not had any breakfast so I went out for a banana while I was waiting. I do the same thing if they get a call that interrupts me. I say "I have had no breakfast, I am going for a banana" By the time I got back the meeting time allocated was over. In bargaining with big shots I think they purposely make you wait. It has something to do with strategy and having the upper hand. So I don't wait. I show up on time then if they make me wait, or take calls that interrupt me I go get a banana, then they are the ones waiting. Their strategy works to my advantage because I get there on time and they are the ones waiting. The other day chairman called me for a meeting. It wasn't long until his cell phone rang; he put his finger up to mean one minute. I got up and said "I haven't had any breakfast so I am going to get a banana." He immediately hung up the phone and said "No more bananas" and the meeting was conducted with complete attention. This was what I did with VJ. For VJ I waited 15 minutes before going for a banana because he is my buddy. I took my time and as I rounded the corner to his street he had all his servants and body guards looking for me. They rushed me into his office. He knew the game. He knew I did not like waiting. I did not have to say anything about bananas. He then gave me his full attention. We had a nice conversation. He asked me how it is to do business with ESM because chairman has offered to sell him a 51% stake so he can build tuna boats, which is what VJ wants to do. Sri Lanka and VJ have millions from economic development for the development of the tuna industry for the Sri Lankan. I said before that the Japanese catch all the tuna and Sri Lanka only acts as a port to send the catch off to the western markets. VJ introduced me to the agriculture minister who was joining him for a ride to Parliament. After he asked me how was ESM business VJ got up and walked behind me to get something. So I told the agricultural minister what I thought. I said simply "The chairman is very smart and does what is best for ESM as well as most of the execs, but ESM needs to change management or it will be a disaster in my opinion" You know who I am referring to when I say management.

After our meeting I went back to my office at ESM to find Fatima had learned some more English. She now can greet me in the morning, and she can understand a little more each day. Most women outside of the city wear either a long loose fitting dress or a long loose fitting skirt. I sent her out to get her a uniform; a Black skirt, and white blouse. I knew she would only get a long skirt, so I told her "It is important that you get a very tight fitting skirt" She looked at me not fully understanding. I went on to say "Yes, you need to wear a tight fitting skirt because there is a lot of machinery and dangerous work going on downstairs and a loose fitting skirt might get caught up in some machine, or get resin on it." She bought it after it was translated.

I made my fiberglass core tooling and began making samples to send out. I also finished my engine bracket mold as well as finished my King Fisher boat made to look better than the traditional crocodile design. It is called a crocodile boat because it looks like it has a mouth in the bow. My crocodile boat I adapted to the western design is half traditional Sri Lankan design and half modern USA pleasure boat design so I call it the half breed.

Chairman came by and wanted to see what I had accomplished in the past months. I showed him all the developments I just mentioned. Sam was with him. They both said "What is it?" "I don't understand it" The developments like core material and engine brackets are completely unknown here. So I tell them it is fiberglass gold.

Sri Lankan like rock and roll. I got a set of powerful speakers and amplifier so I can play Pink Floyd, Lynerd Skinerd, Jimmy Hendrix at full volume downstairs in export. We be jamming at ESM. The workers like it, laugh and have a good time. Export is the place to hang

I had to let my secretary go because she needs to take too much time off. This morning she said she needed to go to Kandy to see her father and would be back in two weeks. I told her she cannot take that much time off, she just stated last week. She also says she needs to get here later because the bus is always late. I had to tell her ESM starts at 8:00am and everyone needs to be here every work day, unless sick. Then there is the communication issue. She is not learning as fast as she could. In all it wasn't working out. There are other women who want the job and speak better English and understand about being at work on time every day comes first. I should have known better than to hire a 22 year old with no skills and just looked pretty. With my luck my next secretary will probably be ugly, and fat but smart and mature, which is better anyway.

I give up for real.

I gave up for real. I did not have an argument (I quit proving I am right, it takes too much effort). I saw things are going too slow. I will be 100 years old before things are going smoothly. The decision was made for me by 2 customers I have they both bought 20 foot boats with trailers. I tried to get ESM to do the job and they say they will like they say they will do everything. They say they will do something, and then never do it. When reminded they promised to do something, they agree and say they will do it today (everything they say will be done today) but it never happens today turns to tomorrow, tomorrow turns into next week and so on. Mean while my customers are asking for the boats they ordered weeks ago. Yet at ESM even though they agreed to do the job, nothing has been done. I ended up ordering them from my regular supplier who sent them out this week. I have not told anyone yet. I don't think I will. I think I will leave at the end of this month. Percy for some reason I cannot comprehend has some kind of control over chairman. He always takes the men who are working on my projects and has them sweep the floors or pick up little pieces of paper around the boat yard. I am tired of the struggle. I see nothing will get done here. All the while I miss my grandchildren, and have a pharmacy school waiting for me to enroll.

Even if I wanted to do things on my own the garment requires big tax fee for foreign businesses to start here. Then they Tax the living crap out of foreign business here, which is why there are none here. Then they tax everything you import, like my technology, it cost \$1000.00 in taxes and the equipment only cost \$2700.00. Then the 40hp outboard engine I imported cost \$900.00 to import. They wonder why they cannot attract foreign investments. Then there are the taxes on employees, taxes on top of taxes. If I stay at ESM all I can expect is more arguing and not getting anything done, even though they say they will, they never do. Then there is shit head, OK I said it, SH I will call him has pulled the wool over chairman's eyes. Chairman only relies on those who have titles and college degrees. This is why Percy has been there and not been fired long ago. He has convinced chairman he is a naval architect. He is not. I asked chairman if he ever saw Percy's credentials. He said "I must have, but I don't remember" I said "you don't remember because you did not see them, because he does not

have a diploma or anything from a university. He only has a membership card to a non accredited bunch of idiots who call themselves architects. Ask him to see his university diplomas." Chairman did not like me saying that and replied with a loud "Bull Shit" I said "No you're the one who has been bull shitted on, I have been truthful" I remember what Arnuff said Everyone who has been in the Sri Lankan navy is allowed to call themselves a naval architect. But that it is meaningless." When I asked Percy if he could show me his diploma or some accredited credentials he said "Being in the navy is enough" Chairman is mad at me now in addition to my giving up because I told him someone was fooling him. This just nails the coffin shut on any hope for ESM to join the rest of the world. If that was not enough, today I showed chairman the new fantastic engine bracket that sells very well in the USA, as well as the super strong fiberglass core material that is one inch thick fiberglass, but only two pounds. Chairman looked at both and said "What is it? I do not understand" Then it's back to what he always says "Sales, Sales, Sales, we need sales" I used to say "You have to be able to make something people will buy before you can sell something" But this time I just said "OK" All in all very depressing. One good thing came of this. I know now my design for engine brackets will work as well as my design for fiberglass core material. Another reason I made chairman mad was when I refuse to work on the Australian project because I called the project "The Australian Abortion". Today and for the past month ESM has been pouring resources into appeasing the Australian cheapskates who have been dangling a carrot on a stick to chairman that if he just made these small improvements listed on 100 pages that he would for sure sell 300 boats a year. I pointed out the major flaws in the design and craftsmanship. The boats look good as long as you are at least 50 feet away. Once you get close enough to touch them you soon realise the boats were made by a complete idiot. Today I showed him the glaring defects. All Percy could say is "We can take care of that" Well they have been working on the same boats for a year now and they only get worse with every attempted improvement. The Joel the aussie is a complete con man which does not help anyone except Joel. but you cannot tell chairman because he is being manipulated and fooled by so many people. I think if he woke up and saw the truth he would shut the place down for good. It is only the lies and false statements that make it appear ESM is going to make it.

I called a meeting with Sam and Carleton and explained the situation of ordering boats elsewhere because things are too slow and difficult. They understood. I guess the ones I will miss will be my export workers. They are finally getting the hang of it. Later Chairman heard from Sam I could not wait anymore and ordered boats from Argentina. I told Sam to tell him because. All chairman says "Is we need sales, sales, sales! How do you tell someone lie that they they are unable to. Then Chairman told me he is hiring a local native who is a fiberglass expert. I said "No way is he an expert" When chairman asked why, I told him it is because I brought the technology to Sri Lanka. Technology that no one knew anything about, and I mean none of the other boat companies knew anything of the Binks 2000 GW. Chairman's answer to that was that the "expert had worked in the middle east for several years" First of all most of the workers at ESM have the same experience. The only country in the middle east that knows how to build boats correctly is Israel. So I asked if this man worked as a boat builder in Israel. The answer was no. That means this guy is nothing for the export market. You may ask how do I know the middle east builds boats like Sri Lanka. It is because I have bought boats from the middle east, and when they arrive they say "product of Korea" or "Product of China" The only boat they build in the middle east outside of Israel are crappy fishing boats and barges. All the boats they offer that look nice come from Asia. This is how I know this is just another idiot. If he had worked in Israel and if he truly had the expertise, he sure as hell would not come to this place expecting to make money. Sam told me that he expressed to chairman that he should not hire this new man. When chairman told me this I said "I think it best I just go back to USA" At that chairman offered me to stay in the apt free of charge but would not pay me any more money. Just another nail in the coffin. I think this coffin has more nails than any other. Since chairman is now suddenly being cheap with me I am not going to spend any more time here than I need to. The next thing I will hear is "I have to start charging you to rent the apt"

Someone, I think the Australians really put the pinch on chairman because of what I said before about refusing to work for free for one year so the Australians can get rich.

Today th 19, I walked to the foot bridge as I usually do to get a 3 wheeler to take me to the groovy Pan restaurant. As I got near the bridge a man walked up to me and said "come with me, I want you to buy my land" Weird I thought, but since I experienced my second coming I always go when someone asks me to go. Of course I do not mean I go with someone who is a criminal or looks like it. This man was a gentle elderly man. We walked down a long dirt road that started at the canal bank and went back to his land about a football field back from the canal road. We got to the house and he said "You buy my house now, only 30 lex". Lex means thousands in USD. I said "OK, but I don't have the money" He said "You buy my house, here is the deed" as he showed me a thick worn folder with many official documents. I repeated "I do not have the money, now please excuse me I am walking to go to lunch" At that he smiled and waved goodbye. As I left and proceeded along the canal road to the bridge. I looked up at the sky and asked what was that supposed to mean. I asked because for months I have been looking for a house near the canal and near ESM for that price range. But now there is no point. So I asked god "what was that supposed to mean? How am I to interpret that" Just then gobs of bird droppings fell from overhead and splat very close to where I was walking. I soon figured out that what god was telling me was that "It Don't Mean Shit". After lunch I returned to the foot bridge where the man from earlier was waiting for me. He said "Come I want you to meet my family" As usual I said "OK" We walked to his house and this time met his wife and son and he showed me pictures of his older son who is in the army. I sat for a minute or two, then said "OK, if I get the money I will come back and buy your house" the man seemed please. When I left I thought that was very strange. I looked up again to ask god what that was all about. But first I looked up to see if more bird shit was coming. No bird shit, so I asked god "What was that about?" Funny I was looking and could not find anything, then the day after quitting and making plans to go, what I was looking for is found. There is a message there somewhere, I just hope it doesn't mean more bird shit falling from the sky near me.

T about 3:00 pm I met Dudley Fernando who had come for an emergency meeting with chairman and execs at ESM. He was glad to see me and very friendly. Then chairman walked by and I did not let him go by without acknowledging me. I said "Hello chairman, Hello Chairman can you hear me?" He turned for a moment and said "How are you doing" That was my pre-designed opening, so I took it by saying "...wellllll, I don't know, I guess I will be ok if...." he turned back and continued on I knew he would I just wanted to be a pain in the ass. Chairman was in no mood for jokes like he usually is. I knew that when he said "How are you" instead of the usual "Hi Todd" That is what I was hoping to hear. I did not attend the meeting I hid down in export working on the King Fisher, which by the way is turning out to be a fantastic looking project. At 5:00 pm I went upstairs to get my bag and go home. Way before I got upstairs I heard loud yelling from ^&#\$*hole and everyone else. I walked by the board room under the window so as not to be a target. As I passed Sam came out with a big smile on his face saying "Todd yeah" with a thumbs up. I said what's going on in the meeting? Sam said "I fighting with Dudley" Sam got some files from his office and went back in, but not before I asked him if they were talking about me, Sam just gave me the thumbs up. At this time the sky became dark, very dark like it was night. I thought "Great, another sign of something" Then it became completely dark like night. It always gets dark at 7:15 pm never earlier, never later because Sri Lanka is very close to the equator. So what was going on? I had no idea until the sky opened up and buckets of rainwater came crashing down. This was not rain it was bucket loads that hurt if you stood in it. It had been raining every day a lot lately and the Dutch canal was flowing over the bank. During this rain you could not tell where the canal stopped and the road started. OH Shoot, how can I get home now. Just then Dudley Fernando, my close personal friend and founder of ESM asked if I wanted a lift. Sam said "You go with Sudat" Dudley said "No, he goes with me" On the ride home I was amazed the driver stayed on the road and did not go in the canal. I think he used the treeline to guide him, because no way could you see the road. On the way Dudley said to me that ESM needs new management badly. I could not have agreed more but kept my mouth shut. I told him that the trip was over ESM cannot get things done, chairman is mad at me and I am going home. Dudley said "No, your not going home, chairman is just mad the way things are going he just says things he does not mean it, you should stay" I said OK, but I need to get paid and chairman says he cannot pay since I had the boats ordered elsewhere. Dudley replied "You have to realize, he does

not mean it, you will see, he just needs new management so things can get done. The way it is now no one here knows anything about the business. Just wait. By the way you must be getting bored" He turned to Carleton who has been with him for 25 years and said "I told you to bring Todd to my house for dinner" Carleton started to say something but Dudley interrupted him saying "Just bring him to my house don't talk about it" We finally made it through the torrential rains to my apt where they dropped me off in the factory garage and I stayed relatively dry. Now I know what a monsoon is. Turns out there it is always monsoon season, even though the tour guides say it is over today. Last month they said it is over today. A tour guide who wants to take me fishing and diving comes to ESM every other week to say the monsoon season is over and the water is now clear and calm and we should go out in his boat in the morning. The next morning I go to the shore to see the 3 to 6 foot chop and the grey brown murky surf pounding Pegasus reef offshore. Only to the south at Bentota will you find calm seas and clear water. Here in Wattala it is always rough, no matter how many times the tour guides tell you it is calm.

Fight with Chairman

I could not sleep last night. At least that is what I told chairman this morning Sat the 20th. I called because I was pissed off and depressed that ESM was too messed up to build the USA boats on order. I called to tell him to come see the new engine bracket, so he could see the difference between stupid traditional mold making and USA mold making. He did not let me get two words in before he said he was pissed off at me. I fired back,

"You're pissed off at me? I am pissed off at the whole..... situation here"

Then I said to hear me out. I explained the failure of ESM to perform with their first export boats to the USA. He replied,

"Forget it I want you to stay as long as you want but please try to generate sales to pay yourself after December, I have already got you another 6 months visa, and I promise to kick ass on the management to move faster, and don't worry about the lost order, ESM will build the boats anyway and then you can sell them when they are ready, OK?"

I said "OK" He then went on to say "But that is not why I am mad at you" I asked "why then?" He said "I told you in confidence that I was hiring a native fiberglass expert and told you to keep it between us, and instead you broadcast it to the management" I told him "It was a mistake to hire someone new, he had all the qualified people in place, it will just cause more friction" He said "Yes, but that's not the point, I told you not to tell anyone." At that all I could say was "I told you earlier, you know I have a big mouth and cannot keep a secret". His response was to say "You know what your problem is Todd..." I interrupted him because in the USA when someone says that to me I already know I am in for some real BS. Chairman said again "Let me tell you what your problem is" "OK" I said "What is my problem?" He said "Your problem is you need a good screw!" I laughed and said "What?" "Yes, you need a good screw for a few days; I have contacts in Bangkok where I will send you. That is where I go when I need a good screw" chairman answered. What else could I say but "Sounds good" (Sorry mother, but it wasn't my idea) so now I am headed to Bangkok next week.

Dear Todd

As you are bigger than me I cannot beat you up for talking about something that I told you in confidence. If you do not shut up I will arrange to have you thrown into the Canal or you will be made to eat a plate of hot chilies – so stop talking about what was said to you in confidence!! And instead focus on how to make money or buy 50% of the company!!

Regards
Zahid

Later that day...

Carleton came to my office and asked what my evening plans were. I said "Go to Pegasus and swim, or go to the Pan and hang out" Carleton suggested he pick me up and go to meet Dudley Fernando and some friends for a night out at the disco. Boy did I have fun I danced, Dudley danced almost everybody danced. They tried to get me to drink, but I told them I have an allergic reaction to alcohol. Sometimes it is best to lie. The truth would have been that if I drink I will get drunk and probably get into a bar fight and try to stab someone with my butter knife, hit someone over the head with a chair, get a tooth knocked out, tell everyone how stupid Sri Lanka is and an display an assortment of other memorable spectacles, either way probably ending up in a Sri Lankan jail.

We had a great time. I already said that but it is worth repeating because up till now I have been isolated on my own to figure out where to go, which is nowhere unless you like shopping for electronics, power tools, mahogany doors and DVDs. We went to a three story mall called Millennium Park. It is great. There is a video game room where you can play others any game made on the best video set ups. You can play laser tag, like paint ball but with lasers. You can go bowling in the bowler disco which is a bowling alley like nothing I have ever seen. It is a bowling alley but the lanes are not as long as in the states, the bowling balls are solid colors like pink, green and glow in the dark, a disco ball hanged over head, and those runway lights down the sides of all the lanes flash in sync down the lanes in colors of purple, red pink, green red, yellow, orange. The bowling alley is dark like a bar, how they see enough to bowl is beyond my understanding. Most bowlers get either a strike or at least a spare, probably because the lanes are only about 25 feet long. They have a pool hall; they have a 4D Theater. What is a 4D Theater? It is a theater where you wear 3D glasses to see the movie in 3D, and the seats move like the rides that make you sea sick at Universal Studios. We met Carleton's son in law who is the manager of the mall and he gave us the grand tour. They even have a full time billiard coach to help you play better if you ask. They have a kiddies park with rides. All this on a piece of land as big as a half an acre. They build up instead of out. We sat down at the disco, bar, restaurant and met the band who were friends with Dudley. Dudley is quite the playboy. He owns a night club himself which is well known. When the band started playing no one would dance but the young woman who came with her brother was bouncing around like she wanted to dance, so I asked her to dance. She seemed afraid of the "American" but I stood up and waved her to come on the dance floor. After we danced she looked over to me and gave me the thumbs up, which means approval here. She was dressed how the dress in the USA nightclubs. All the women in the club were dressed sexy and sophisticated. Completely different from Wattala just 10 miles away where you will not see blue jeans, only long loose skirts to the ankle or long dresses. The women in Wattala are pretty and do not need any make up. The women in the Colombo night club at Millennium Park were already naturally pretty, but their make up and dress made them all very beautiful. It was dark in the club, and the women who do not need to shave their legs because they do not get hairy legs, only light baby fuzz you cannot even see, have semi dark skin. Kind of like a deep rich tan. You cannot see them until they smile and then their white teeth arte like a beacon in the darkness. Their eyes are shadowed in natural long eyelashes. So when you look you don't see them unless they smile, which is often. One there, one over there, two over there. We had a six course meal that did not start until 11:00 pm; we did not finish eating until 1:00 am. Next Saturday I am going to Millennium Park. From now on I am taking an air-conditioned cab service. They charge only \$.25 cents per mile and the driver will wait for you at no extra charge, just buy him a coke or some curry. You can take a cab all over Colombo from 11:00am to 6:00pm for about \$14.00 USD No tip, they do not expect a tip and if you do tip they will not accept more than a 5% tip. They think a big tip is some kind of a trap and they don't want your money, they think there is something funny going on if you tip big. I brought up the cheap cab service because before I was paying a 3 wheeler \$10.00 for the same trip. Believe me a 3 wheeler is NOT like a car it has no doors, windows, or safety protection. They are low to the ground, bumpy, noisy, and the trucks cars and bus all have their exhaust pipes right at you

nose level. All in all I had a great time. If it looks like I am out of place, and separate it is because I don't know anyone there except Carleton, and Dudley is the kind of person who everybody knows and wants to talk to. He likes to ask you questions, but does not care for an answer. .

98 NIGHT OUT MISSING

Go figure,

The Sri Lankan ethics and culture is beyond my understanding. It is unlike any relationship I have experienced at home. In USA if one gets red up they quit and that is it. There is very rarely any attempt to change some ones mind. Especially if they are a new guy. Here every time I get fed up they tell me what I need to hear to calm down, then do nothing to change. I then get fed up with the same situation again, then again they say what I need or want to hear. All the while I have the freedom to do whatever I want as long as it is separate from the local market. Traditional methods are too ingrained for them to accept. Mainly due to the fact there is no money in selling to the locals, so there is no room or reason for investment of resources. The locals take the crappy boats they get because that is what they are used to and the crappy boats are cheap to make. With export I have the freedom to experiment and make new designs. But I cannot depend on anyone except my 4 full time and one part time export workers. It is slow progress.

Lately I have been really nagging chairman about the BS that is keeping ESM from exporting boats. I set up several designs but only two are near completion. The rest are in limbo because I don't have the manpower to do enough. What makes it hard is I have to stand over every task to make sure it is done right. If I turn my head for a minute the workers mess up and we have to go back, repair the errors, and then repeat the task again. Meanwhile there are 4 other tasks going on, so it is 2 steps forward and 1 step back. Anyway I have been really nagging, not because of the slow progress, but because of the stupid management. All they do is fight and point fingers. I can't blame them because someone we know is the one who always starts the finger pointing. It is only natural to defend ones self when verbally attacked with a pack of lies. So all they do is argue back and fourth. This is not my opinion only. Dudley came to tell me this before. Dudley told me he tried to have a progressive meeting with the management without chairman for the sole reason to get some kind of team work going. When chairman is at the meetings, all anyone wants to do is to be the one who is right, even if they are wrong as usual. Dudley told me he had this informal meeting, but as soon as it started the in fighting began. He tried for 5 hours in the meeting to get the execs to work together. No such luck he told me so he gave up. He also tells me often that he tells chairman that certain management needs to go and is holding back the company. See it is not just me who sees the incompetence.

Today I met the "fiberglass expert" chairman hired to head up the Australian abortion project. Why did he hire him instead of the Aussies and chairman paying me? Simple, see if you can guess. I will give you a hint. I require \$50k yr plus expenses. The new guy gets paid \$80.00 per month with no paid expenses. Only the promise that if he does a good job building the Aussies new molds him will get a little raise. Turns out this new guy "Surat" was a crew chief before they went bust in 2003. Surat it a nice guy, but he does not know about mold making in order to make a marketable product that will achieve a high value with the lenders, which is vital to sales because 99 out of 100 boat sales are financed. Without a high value from a lender the financing is high interest and big down payment.

I took Surat aside to have a chat and asked him how he would build a new mold. He said most of what it takes, but left out crucial parts. After I finished I asked if he uses "Formica" Formica is easy to make molds with, but only if it is thick and rigid, the paper thin kind always leaves warps and is pointless to use. Guess what? That is the only kind they will use here. Surat said he did not use formica. Wrong answer, you always do, but only the right kind, not the stupid kind they use here. So he said he did not use formica. So next I showed him the inner liner plug I was making that is complete ready to cast a mold from. The sides are smooth even and shine like a mirror. I asked Surat "What do you think of this way?" He replied "Good but you need to put formica on top" OH MY GOD! Went through my head "I guess I won't be training him, he knows it all" I thought. I have stopped training. Only one export worker is smart enough to learn, and he has a good understanding that is Thissa. I took Thissa aside and told him, "Don't help this guy, he says he is an expert, so let him fail, to bail him out will only be using you so he can get the glory" Thissa understood and agreed. I know Thissa knew what I was talking about when he replied "If he asks me for answer, I say I don't know, I must learn." As far as pay goes I did not know how cheap they are until I talked to the "expert they hired" He said they are only paying him \$80.00 per month. He went on to tell me that he asked for \$150.00 but ESM turned him down. All I can say is GOOD LUCK PAL.

Getting back to me nagging and wining to chairman as well as telling most of the execs to off. Earlier I mentioned why chairman was mad at me it was not due to my bitching and raising hell which I thought. I saw him this morning and all he said was, "Have you got your bitching out of your system? When you went out Saturday did you have fun with the girl we sent?" "I asked what girl?" he said "That girl you danced with and had dinner with, did she take care of you?" I had no idea that was why she was there. She did not seem to know anyone, and I wondered why she was there. She seemed very friendly to me and smiled and gave me the thumbs up at times when we danced. The plan was for me to leave with her, but I did not figure it out cause no one told me. That is why we stayed there until 3:00 am. Everyone was waiting for me to make my move and go, so they could go home. I wondered why everyone was staying there so late until they all started to doze off. Only this morning was it explained to me after chairman left and I asked "What girl is he talking about?" Carleton told me "We told you she was an actress that means she was there to act for you" I thought they meant a real actress like you see on TV or the theater. I thought it was strange though, usually when someone tells you they are an actress they usually tell you what shows they do, or what commercials they have done or mention something about their roles. I remember a few other times when being introduce to a girl at my apt, ESM or at a restaurant they were always alone and were actresses. Again to get back to my nagging. I tried to talk to chairman, but he interrupted saying "I cannot talk to you now Todd" I took that as a bad sign as he was hiring "So called experts" to do the work instead of me. But instead his memo today is read "Be sure to get Todd his extended Visa and airline tickets round trip to Miami" I saw this memo when one was looking so I don't think it was staged. This just goes to show that no matter how hard I try to be difficult and a pain in the ass, I am treated with nothing but kindness, and thoughtfulness. I purposely pushed the envelope to see what my boundaries were. I tried to be impossible to deal with, but all they do is try to get me to relax. The more difficult I get the more they surprised me with the opposite reaction than what I am used to expecting. I gave up being difficult and now go with the flow which is to let things happen in their own time. I finally relaxed and felt at home. But tonight I made Wasantha mad. I brought my lady friend to my apartment. I had never brought her there before because when I see her we usually meet at the groovy Pan restaurant or at Pegasus. I like her because she is the only one in Sri Lanka who cooks dinner for me. The few times I had a home cooked meal was at her house across from the beach. I met her a few weeks ago when I was walking around the hood looking for an umbrella. She was nice enough to share her umbrella with me and show

me where I could buy one. A big one cost me \$2.30 we talked and I mentioned I had not had a home cooked meal for months, so she invites me for dinner once in a while if she sees me around Wattala. The reason I mention how I know her is because of the pissed off look I got from Wasantha as I escorted her out the gate to a 3 wheeler. This Wasantha is not the machinist at ESM this Wasantha is the manager at the Garment factory. So what the hell gives him the right to object to me bringing a female to my apartment, what law did I break? Screw him, he is now a member of the axis of evil, along with someone else who you know, but you could never tell by the way we greet each other at ESM. You would think we were close friends. I learned that here. He is what started my list of who is in the axis of evil. And besides while she was visiting the power went out, and I don't mean the power at the factory or the circuit breaker. I mean someone deliberately turned the power off only in my apartment for about ten minutes. Obviously an objection, one that I ignored. In fact as I walked back upstairs I ran into Wasantha again. I asked him who turned the power off in my apartment. He denied any knowledge, but revealed his hand when he asked "is that why she left?" I replied "No, that is when the fun started. I wanted to thank the person who did it, it was perfect timing." How did I know someone deliberately turned the power off only in my apartment? Easy, every single light was on in every single part of the factory except in my apartment. Here is a quick look at Shamalee is a very nice girl with 2 boys who are 6 and 8, hell raisers like some USA boys I know. Her husband died of liver failure. There is a lot of that. Not because of drugs, but I think it is because of mal nutrition and poverty at a young age starts them off in life in poor health.

Williams son also died of Liver failure. Speaking of William, I see there are several generations and each has a station. When you are young you work, when mid life you still work, but are a supervisor, when you are older, say in your 60's, 70's you work as a man servant. This older generation still works. Then there are the old timers who still kick around town they are in their 90's their job is to mostly stay out of site and to keep the flowers that float in the Buda sanctuary bird bath fresh as well as keep the Buda sanctuaries neat and clean. Buda sanctuaries are everywhere. They are small buildings with a dome shaped like a bell. Inside there is always a bigger than life statue of Buda sitting. The buildings are walled with glass so you can see Buda sitting inside as well as the bird bath with fresh flowers floating on the top of the water.

Gloating

As usual the so called "Naval Architect" strikes again. This time I had him. I told chairman and anyone else who would listen that I wanted nothing to do with the Australian abortion. I said this even though they stopped asking me to help long ago. I just want to remind them how stupid the project is. For weeks I have been nagging and complaining the Australian abortion will open ESM to lawsuits due to negligence. No one paid any attention to me. The "Naval Architect" heading the project should know how to design boating safety into every export boat. But no, the "Naval Architect" only takes it personally when told he should change the design. Everything is taken personally by this person so I gave up and just say..... it. I bothered this time because I felt compelled to head off future lawsuits as a result of negligent safety design that could potentially lead to explosions, fire and death. Maybe it would save someone's life. It is not common to research the boating safety regulations of countries you are exporting because that is the "Naval Architect's" job. The company relies on this expertise to avoid such negligence and to ensure the export boats clear customs and are not turned back after an inspection for safety is made by customs. Even if the export boat gets through customs the Naval architects job is to ensure the end user many years of safe use. You would think that but you would be wrong in this case. True Naval Architects design safety in boats, but I refer to the real life Naval Architects who have the credentials to prove they have completed the decade of education and training in the field. I do not refer to some guy who was in the navy in Sri Lanka, then calls himself a "Naval Architect" That is what is happening at ESM. I sat back and watched one flawed design after another incorporated into the Aussie's boats. Why did I sit back and let them spend resources to make a bad situation worse? It is because the Aussies are the cheapest SOBs I have ever encountered they are right up there with Sal (who by the way says he still wants to marry Gordon as long as Heidi is the maid of honor). They do not want to pay me one thin dime for helping in their project. Instead they offer to pay me \$200,000 in two years after they sell 300 boats. I had to laugh. Why are such morons allowed to exist on this planet? They offer a carrot on a stick only the carrot is rotten and the stick is so long so you can't see the carrot. On the Sri Lankan side it is like a horse asking you to take him to lead him to water and then when you get there the horse won't drink and instead says something stupid even for a horse. I think Sri Lanka is where they got that saying "you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make it drink"

Getting back to what I was saying. When I saw a lawsuit on the horizon for ESM. I went to chairman and asked "You say you want sales, sales, sales, and you want money, money, money. Please tell me what is it worth for me to show you how to not get sued for a million dollars and instead you get to keep the million dollars?" Chairman said "It is worth a million dollars" "Perfect I just made you a million dollars" I replied, then handed him the ISO, Japanese and USCG rules and regulations on gasoline fuel tank regulations and requirements for manufacturers and importers. These are universal rules that every Naval Architect learns the first semester. In addition these are specs that customs look for when boats are imported from a foreign manufacturer. But no, the ESM "Naval Architect wants to build boats according to the traditional stupid ways and expect civilized nations to honor him by willy nilly ignoring safety like he does. The issue is very simple even Jonathon(a boy of five year old) can figure it out, but not you know who, instead it was argument after argument, until I said

Then today I was looking up outboard regulations and badda bing badda boom there was, my vindication. Right there in black and white in the ISO, USCG, Japanese fuel tank specification regulations for onboard gasoline fuel tanks was the very point I have been trying to convince these morons to adapt. There were several prohibited design defects they used, but one was particularly simple. Is that with any gasoline fuel tank the supply from the tank must be made so it enters only through a fitting on the TOP of the tank, as well as no fittings can be made of ferrous materials. The reason to require all fill and output hoses be on top of the tank is to ensure there are no openings in the tank below the fuel level which may leak and therefore leak explosive gasoline into the hull of the boat. The requirement for non ferrous fittings is to prevent leaks caused by corrosion. The fuel tanks were designed and made in the export division by the morons (not my workers, my workers are smart) as I stood by gritting my teeth telling deaf ears that the design is wrong and is dangerous.

Like being in a bad dream where everyone is walking into doom and you try to stop them but they keep going any way. Today when I ran across the regulations I immediately printed it out lest the online connection is lost due to one of the regular daily power outages, and I would not be so lucky to find the text file again. I printed it out and had Carleton, Sudath, Acihta, Aruna read it and they agreed that they should re-design and build new gasoline fuel tanks. I did not give a copy to everyone in the Aussie project, because it would have been a waste of a good blank sheet of paper. As soon as the others had read it, they all went down stairs to inspect the tanks. I could recognize the voice of each one who had read. They talked calmly and discussed the matter. Then another voice I cringe to whenever I hear it came into the conversation. You see I am in the export area to, but I get to hide all my work and workers in the spray booth where we can do our work uninterrupted and listen in on what is being said outside the spray booth. The added voice was one I was familiar with. I think the level of this voice went from calm to demoralizing in 3 words or less. The next minutes in export were filled with the very loud argumentative demanding voice telling the ones who read the data something in Sinhalese. Then they all left export. I peeked from behind the spray booth door to see the fuel tanks still sitting there. I wondered what is going on, is it possible the Naval Architect is right as always and the Japanese, the ISO and the USCG are wrong again according to him. Then two clean up workers came in and removed the tanks. Shortly after that I got a call from chairman. He asked if I would build new fuel tanks according to

the regulations. I said "Sure thing. I just need a written signed request for technical assistance from your Naval Architect" Chairman did not say anything more about it, instead he said he had to go. I don't really require anything, but it was the next best thing I could think of saying to chairman instead of saying "Any real naval architect would not have let this disaster and potential liability lawsuit situation happen in the first place" Later I saw the person in the hall and we both smiled at each other and joked around, which is fine we both know not to have a technical dialogue on design or production issues. Talking about boats and design is an explosive subject for us two that only results in finger pointing and chair throwing.

Yippee !

Sam and Percy have gone to Germany for 10 days visiting a German Boat Engineering and Manufacturing facility. I will miss Sam. Can see it now, Sam saying "Yes, we need this, very good" and Percy saying "No, you cannot do this, it will not work" Sam told me not to worry after I complained that chairman is tight with paying me, yet he has paid many thousands for this trip. Sam assured me the Germans are paying half of the expense, and chairman is only paying for Sam to go. The Germans are paying for Percy. Ha, Ha, Ha you stupid Germans. Having one of them gone will be an even more pleasant environment at ESM. I know others feel the same as I do. I caught Asihtha saying "This is bull shit" in regard to Percy saying the keel of the newly refinished 46 does not need to be smooth and finished, that it is OK to leave the keel rough and warped because it cannot be seen. By the way I taught Asihtha the new phrase to express frustration in the face of stupidity. The rest of the hull is very smooth with no defects, but Percy says "It is no good, it is not shiny" SHINY? What the hell are you talking about, there was no such thing as shiny before I started repairs. Do you think you could have done a better job of refinishing asshole? (I am talking to myself). The Answer is NO; otherwise he would have done it way before I arrived. I see now he put down all improvement I make because it makes him look bad. Every time an improvement is made, Percy says "No it will make more work" I now see why the American did not hire me to refinish his 43 foot sail boat. It is because at that time I relied to Percy for insight into the ESM cost of repairs. Now I know the truth. I had ESM (NOT Percy) price the 18 foot boat I am making for Honolulu. The cost I got from Carleton for one month with one skilled carpenter and 4 skilled laminators was \$2000.00 per month. In July with the Americans job I relied on Percy to price ESM cost. His cost was \$4800.00 per month. No wonder the American did not hire ESM. It does not bother me that much now because now I know the cost and besides I would have been building him an entirely new 43 foot sailboat that would have the Allmand Boats serial number, so a USA price is appropriate. Also I would not have the time to work on my other projects.

My opinion on Iraq:

I think it is a great war. I give GB a lot of credit for his plan. His plan? To get into Iraq, overthrow the government, then let the towel heads kill each other off in a civil war. The fewer Iraqis the better, right? So what if it is now costing many soldiers their life every month 86 died this month. But gee only 2,500 deaths is a good thing when you are at war. It does not matter what the US does now. I here the news say Iraq could slip into a civil war. Hey stupid I got news for you, IT IS ALREADY A CIVIL WAR! If the US stays, things will not get better, only more soldiers will die. If the US leaves, things will not get better. How can GB and the rest of the Nazis in power say things are going fine and to stay the course. GB says "The democrats want to cut and run" and "The democrats don't have a plan" First point I say hell yes get the hell out of there now, the US is only throwing good lives away in vein, the Iraqis defend the militias and object when the militia leaders are arrested and the Iraqis object to the US carrying on military attacks against death squads. Why? Simple the death squads are the only protection there is against the other death squads. If the US left today things could not get any worse. Oh I forgot GB's other reason for going into Iraq and staying against all logic (Maybe GB has some Sri Lankan blood in him, he reminds me of Percy), that reason is that if the Iraqis are busy killing each other and Americans, and Iran is occupied in financing and promoting instability, then the terrorists don't have time to plot another terrorist attack on America. And second No shit democrats do not have a plan because things are so.....up it will take time to figure out how to resolve this mess GB got us into all because he told his dad when he became president "Don't worry dad I'll get Saddam like you wanted to but couldn't" Meanwhile GB's dad GB senior is thinking "You moron".

If you disagree with my opinion you would probably find the Sri Lankan mentality logical and efficient. I agree with Saddam in his latest argument in court where he says "You should let me out of jail so I can fix this mess". I think he is right. GB says the US has saved the Iraqi from the executions and torture of Saddam's regime. Saddam is being tried for a few hundred deaths he was responsible for. Yet now since the US took over there have been over 600,000 deaths. Who is responsible? Not the US, of course not we had nothing to do with it. No wonder the Arabs say the US should be put on trial. Don't get me wrong I think the Arabs are blood thirsty savages hell bent on killing everyone who is not Muslim, which I am not and do not agree with them or support them and in fact cringe and look for a suicide bomb vest whenever I see one near me. But being in Sri Lanka makes one realize the significance logic plays in life. I see now that continuing a failed policy in the face of logic is not just in Sri Lanka. It is only the scale of the contradiction that is different from the USA and here.

04-November

It has been a week or so since I entered anything to the journal. Why? I took chairman's advice on my problem and I have spent the past week or so engaging in activities that mother would not approve of. I thought of writing and taking photos but that would make this an X rated journal. Why ruin the image of innocence that had the wool pulled over my eyes. Now I know why when foreigners come here like Arnuff and the American publisher they stay for many years. Now I know why Arnuff just rolled his eyes when I said to him "If you say you have lived here 30 years there must be a reason you like Sri Lanka". What he was telling me is that if I only knew. Like what chairman, and many others were trying to tell me for the past month.

I see that every man has two lives. One as a family man with a faithful wife (the family girls do not believe in sex before marriage), the other as a playboy. The wives don't mind and it is expected for the man to get his entertainment outside. The wife is for having children. That is what I have seen with nearly every mature middle age couple I have met. But they do not talk about it, you are just supposed to know. So now I have my fun and I also have a family girl for a girlfriend, I have a couple family girls for girlfriends. They don't ask where I am or what I am doing, yet they are usually available for nights out dancing or trips to Bentotta. When I go to Bentotta like I am this next week I bring my tour guide. His name is Jude, he steers me away from the bad elements and acts like my bodyguard. He also makes arrangements for me and family girl when we go out. So when I arrive wherever we go the establishment be it the disco bowling alley, the night club, the resort, the restaurant. The managers are waiting to cater to my every need. I am looking forward to this next trip, as the others were more an expedition and investigation.

Sam and Percy have been in Germany for the past week, Gee I really miss Sam. It has been very quiet at ESM. Only William, my footman has made things a pain by letting ants take over my office, and not bringing my tea unless I hunt him down. Meaning I might as well make it myself. But why bother I don't really care about having tea anyway. Since the execs have been away Abbeh (short for Abbesekera) and Acihta and I are having intelligent conversations without looking over our shoulder to see who is coming. We had a laugh when after I mentioned for the 100th time that Percy is not a real life architect or he would have known how to build fuel tanks correctly from the start, instead of me having to prove the design was flawed by printing out the USCG fuel tank spec regulations. All he did was tell me I was wrong and the tanks could not be built the way I said they were supposed to be built for safety. It is one thing to make a stupid looking boat. But it is another to be irresponsible in making faulty gasoline fuel tanks that could potentially cause death by explosion or fire. Still he argued against me, until I went over his head and showed the regulations to chairman. The reason I brought this up because when ever I show chairman he has been fooled or the morons are making dangerous and or costly mistakes, I feel like it is just talking to a wall. But since the execs are gone Acihta, and Abbeh are telling me what is happening behind the scenes when I tell chairman something is wrong. In fact chairman has taken my advice on many occasions, he just does not want me to know it. Like when I went to chairman and said that CEO moron who is dragging down ESM is not a real life naval architect, but instead a make believe one chairman got angry with me, slammed his fist on his desk and said in a loud voice uncharacteristic of his gentle manner "BULLSHIT". I replied "I bet you have never seen his diploma. Go ahead ask to see his diploma. HE does not have one" I could see the shock in chairman's eyes thinking of the chance I could be right. Since then I figured he did not care and it was the same BS as usual. But Abbeh told me that right after that meeting where I said that, chairman called Sam and demanded to see everyone's diplomas, not just Percy, but Sam and Abbeh. Sam has a diploma from Colombo University in business management, as well as several seminars and grad school courses in Biz Admin, and Abbeh produced his diploma as a certified public accountant from the University of Colombo. But Abbeh. told me Percy turned in his papers to chairman with no diplomas, just an honorable discharge from the navy and that stupid club card that he thinks makes him a naval architect. In regard to the fuel tank fiasco that would have been averted if there was a real naval architect in charge, a couple days after I showed chairman the regulations a man came to Blue Star. He was a Sri Lankan (already a big mark against his credibility) who is the Yamaha engine mechanic for the Yamaha distributor here. His man says he was trained in Japan in Marine Engine Technology. This man agreed with the regulations that the fuel tanks they were building were likely to blow up. No one told me I was right, I did not even know who the man was. Only since the execs left am I told anything. Then ESM got really stupid. The USA requires only copper or brass as gasoline fuel tank supply lines from the tank. Copper is cheaper than stainless steel, is softer and easier to work with and does not oxidize like steel, even stainless steel has been known to rust. The point is that since the regulations say use copper or brass for the reasons stated, ESM argues they should still use stainless steel, this logic flies in the face of common sense. There is something that makes doing business here impossible and has nothing to do with ESM. I just sent a 20 foot container to Norway from Argentina the cost is \$1900 or appx \$90.00 per Cubic Meter. But guess what? If you want to send the same container from Sri Lanka to Norway, which is closer by over 1000miles it will cost \$2800.00 plus fees which I don't even want to hear about. Or \$175 per Cubic Meter. Why? Because the garment adds their BS fees to exports. So no wonder no one does business here unless they want to give all their profit away to the garment. Only clothing can be profitable because you can cram a lot of shirts into a container which spreads out the cost.. It cost me \$1000.00 to ship an 18 foot boat from China to Honolulu. The same boat shipped from Sri Lanka will cost \$2100.00 plus some extra ridiculous fees. I don't know how to tell chairman the cause is lost. I am not about to lose \$1000 profit every order just because I am in Sri Lanka. This is still another nail in the coffin in doing business here.

I am going to Excel World or Millennium Park (The name depends on who you talk to). Excel Millennium Park World is the only place in Sri Lanka that serves real coffee. The other places, even the fancy restaurants serve Nescafe and call it coffee. So I am spending \$15.00 so I can get a real cup of coffee. Which really is not bad when you consider Starbucks is about that expensive for one cup and an ice cream.

04- Sunday-November

Chairman called me to his office at 9:00 am for me to instruct him on fiberglass boat building. When He asked me earlier after being vindicated about the fuel tanks fiasco I said to him "I will be glad to tell you what I know, as long as you are not asking me just to humor me" He said "Of course not, man, I want to know what is going on here". When we arrived at his office I began telling him what I knew was the correct way of doing things. Which by the way was a lot considering they don't know anything? In the USA I don't know much as some people will say, like Jack the master boat builder. He will say "Oh, Todd? He doesn't know his ass from his elbow" Jack was the one who had a stroke last week and now (if not dead) needs a nurse to feed him. So that is what one gets if they mock me, HA! However I thank Jack for that remark as it has come in handy here. Since he got away with it, I use it here when ever at a meeting when chairman is present. Instead of arguing simple logic in the face of complete stupidity, and stupidity winning because it is stupidities home turf, I now simply say "You don't know your ass from your elbow" This seems to shut the morons up in front of the chairman, as they do not know how to respond, I finally catch them off guard. Also it makes chairman laugh and diverts the attention from the issue at hand. The reality is chairman prefers not to talk about the business anyway; he does not care about the details. He just shows up expecting to hear everything is fine and dandy. I see that with certain people of wealth that they really do not care about the workings of the business, business is a hobby, they have so much money they could live comfortably without working a single day. It is their passion for a hobby that motivates them.

Back to the instruction of chairman. I spent about two hours instructing him (which is about 1 hour and 50 minutes more than telling what I know takes). After the two hours chairman said OK, let's have lunch. Chairman was dressed like a golfer that day and he was taking me to a golf club, so I asked him "Do you play golf? If you do we should play sometime" Chairman said he did not play. He told me he tried one time to hit the ball and only dug up the earth and figured he would only make it as a grave digger with the club.

The golf club was very nice high beamed ceiling, open air, island colonial style (new style I made up to describe the décor, it means modern Hawaii 75 years ago.) We had great food and I stuffed myself as so did chairman. He kept urging me to eat more and more. He said "I like taking guys like you to these buffets, because I feel I really get my money's worth". So I obliged and gorged myself using the maximum terminal velocity of my fork. This meeting was different. I knew then it had nothing to do with him wanting to learn anything because he did not keep the literature I gave him on fiberglass. He also was not pressuring me the way he usually does by telling me "We need sales, sales, sales, sales!!!" It was strange in that he did not mention money as being the main issue. Since this was different I learned that when things in the atmosphere are different it is best to let him do all the talking and only answer questions as brief as I can (which is extremely difficult for me, I have this erroneous obsession that people will actually listen to me and do what I say, and in turn their lives would be so much better, so usually when asked a question regardless of the subject I answer by saying "It all started when I was born in a small log cabin ...") I did use one analogy when asked about the difficulties I am having. I said to chairman (Which by the way takes guts to tell him what you really think, but in the end he likes you more for telling the truth) I said "Working with Blue Star is like leading a horse to water." He replies "How so?" I said "It's like this. Normally the saying goes... You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink. But with blue Star it is like the horse is asking you to take him for a drink, and then when you get there the horse does not drink but instead says something stupid." Chairman got a laugh from it. This loosened things up. He told me that everyone at Blue Star

including the Australians think that everything I do is wrong. He said that if I could make sales that would shut everyone up. I replied "I did, I sold two boats and the first engine brackets, I brought a new product from concept to market in six weeks, this is a new president in Sri Lanka history" "Yes that's good, I am just telling you what I hear" said chairman. The subject moved from that to him telling me he has a hat for me to eat. Earlier I told chairman if Percy has a naval architect degree and can prove it by showing you a diploma, I would eat one of the hats he makes. So he told me I would soon be eating a hat. My heart sunk, "Is it possible that moron has a naval architects degree?" "I thought. "Am I really going to have to eat that hat?" I prepared a knife and fork and told chairman to pass the A-1 (he had no idea what I meant, they have no A-1 here) "First" I said "Let me see this diploma from a university" "Oh I don't have it yet, it is coming" said chairman. Whew, what a relief! For a moment I thought I might be wrong and am only qualified to be a shoe salesman if Percy actually had a diploma. But no he does not. I know because when you ask Sam, or Abbeh, or Acilhta for their credentials, they are like doctors and lawyers. They have their credentials hanging on the wall or in a photo album nice and neatly organized for presentation at a moments notice. But weeks ago when Sam and Abbeh and Acilhta submitted their credentials to chairman they had them in their office and ready. But Percy said "OH, I don't carry that around I must write to the college and get them to send me my credentials" Is what was told to chairman. I asked chairman "Did he at least know what college or did he mention the college? Because all you have to do is call the college and they will confirm his credentials over the phone?" "No, the did not mention the college" At that I said to chairman "Maybe it won't be me eating he hat, but you at least taking a bite!" We dropped the subject because it was bringing us both down and we were having fun until eating the hat came up. But I am not about to eat a hat unless I am absolutely sure I must.

At lunch we talked about the next stage. And I said there is no next stage unless you get export shipping rates down to \$90.00 per cubic meter, other wise you cannot make a profit. He told me he would put me in touch with the right shipping agents. Not only that but the materials costing too much. At that he said for me to go to China and get in touch with the supplier and get him a better deal. Then After lunch he went to his home for another meeting with some New Zealanders. They are different than the Aussies, they are real about business, they don't pretend to know it all, instead they hired ESM for due diligence reporting on the tuna fishing plan for a 200 ton long line processing boat. Tahre was mentioned. At that time I knew why chairman had met with me. It was not to humor me; it was not to learn anything. He met with me because Tahere told his dad to take me out and show me a good time. That is why we had the day together. It was a very nice day. We talked a little business without money being the central issue and we told a few jokes. One thing I told chairman I was very good at that I could only have learned in Sri Lanka is answering the phone at 3:00 am and sounding like I was already awake and at work. The truth is in the USA when customers call me they think I am in Miami and it is 3:00 pm, when actually it is 2:00 am in Sri Lanka and I am sleeping. When I used to answer the phone before at 3:00 am the caller would ask "Did I wake you up?" This would be bad for business, because people would think "Hmmm, it is 2:00pm in the day and this guy is sleeping? What kind of business is he running anyway" So because of this I learned to answer the phone from a deep sleep and sound alert like it is near lunchtime. However I have not been able to maintain the alert status for very long. I can seam alert when I first say Hello, but within 10 minutes of the conversation, I yawn, my voice gets scratchy, and it is revealed I was really sleeping. So to avoid detection I learned to answer the phone sounding alert and fully awake, then get off the phone before 3 minutes are up by saying "I have a meeting please send me an email" This has worked and the caller is non the wiser. At first I tried the honest approach telling the caller to email me because it is 3:00 am and I am in Sri Lanka and will respond to their email. This did not work out. Potential customers would say things like SRI LANKA? Where the hell is Sri Lanka and what are you doing there, I don't know if I want a boat made in Sri Lanka. .I would say don't worry, your boat is made in China.... CHINA????!! What kind of operation is this? And they hung up. One guy actually tried to do business anyway but he called back every night for three weeks with hundreds of questions and wanting continual assurances. In the end he did not wire the down payment, and I did not follow up to ask him why not. I knew why not. That is why I came up with the new strategy, and so far I have made many sales this way. The short of it is that chairman got a real laugh at my sales technique for the USA.

10-November

I have a friend named Jude. He works at the Pegasus as a tour and fishing guide. He watches out for me and I don't even know it. It is like wherever I am in Wattala and am having trouble of some sort he appears to help. If I have trouble talking to someone at the market, he appears from no where and translates for me. If I need a 3 wheeler, as soon as Start looking for one he flags one down for me and tells the driver to go wherever I want to by telling the driver in Sinhalese. If unsavory people are asking me to go with them, he appears out of no where and tags a long to say I watch out for you these are not good people. But he never says anything in front of anyone. He tells me after or before. It is like a guardian angel. Today I got out of a 3 wheeler and gave the driver 100 rupees for the ride, the same amount I always give, but at this intersection I asked to be let off at I did not know any of the shop keepers who usually look out for me. The driver took the 100 rupees and I got out but them a thug came up and said to give the driver 50 more rupees. Being in unfamiliar surroundings and not knowing exactly was going on, I thought maybe I was going to be robbed so I prepared to fight. Then out of no where appeared Jude and the criminals left without a word. I brought my Motorola phone with me here thinking I could use it, but the phone locked itself automatically by the Cingular service as soon as I left the USA. Jude asked me if I had a mobile so I could call him if I ever needed his help. I told him I did but it was locked and no good. He asked to see it, I showed it to him and he asked if he could see if he could get it unlocked. The next day he appeared and gave me my phone working and unlocked with 150 minutes on it. He said "Here is your phone and this is your phone number so if you need anything just call" So there are some good people here. Jude is making arrangements for me to go on a trip to a Bentotta resort next week. I have a 22 year old girlfriend and wanted to take her. Her parents wanted an escort. Turns out Jude knows her and her parents and he is going to be her escort on this trip. I am glad to have a guide who knows all the good places to see in Bentotta, instead of relying on the hotel. My girlfriend's name is Anika. She is very pretty; she is what they call a "family girl" which means the parents want her to marry before leaving home. Unlike the other girls, the family girls are raised to be exactly that, faithful wives for having children. Unlike the other girls who just party. Those girls do not come out in the day and if they do they cover their faces so they cannot be recognized and have the neighborhood shun them. The family girls are the ones, who are very pretty, but you must promise to marry them and they don't play until they marry. My family girl is for companionship when I go out. She does not speak any English. She is there to look pretty which is good enough for me. I think maybe she will miss me when I go, or maybe not I don't know because she doesn't say anything. I will send pictures and movies on the trip. Jude is the designated camera man who will be taking our pictures.

Percy and Sam have been back from Germany for a few days now. Sam is him old self and held my hand for five minutes before letting go as soon as he saw me. They hold your hand here to show they like you. Kind of weird if you're not used to it, by now I am used to it. When I meet someone who does not hold my hand for a long time I know they do not like me, and are just talking. But Jude and workers don't touch me as they only call me sir. And am not informal. The two went to Germany to visit the boat factories and see technology in action. At least that is what I was told. Sam showed a slide show of the trip today. He had over 100 photos of the trip from a picture of the airplane they took there, a picture as it was taking off, a few pictures of the clouds and the ground, a picture of the girl sitting next to him, a picture of them landing, getting off the plane arriving at the hotel and every single thing they did. Turns out 15 Sri Lankan Boat company

execs went on this trip partially sponsored by the Germans. I could not figure out why the heck the Germans would do this. As the slide show went on it became apparent. The only photos of boats were the ones at a boat show and tall sailing ships. There were no pictures of manufacturing or production or anything having to do with actually building boats. None, I couldn't believe it. The only other pictures were of a classroom with about 30 students learning making something that looked like fiberglass boxes. No technology No boats under construction, No design or engineering offices or design work being done or anything, just the hotel, the marina, the boat show and the class room. Then it dawned on me. I think the Germans brought them there to get them to sign up for the school. Or maybe bring the school here. All I know is there were a lot of pictures of the classrooms, and no boats being built.

Percy is different now, I think when he told me he hired a REAL naval architect in New Zealand for his mammoth tuna boat, and he finally realized Percy was not a real naval architect like he pretends to be. Since he has been back, Percy does not go downstairs anymore to where production is going on. No more demoralizing speeches to the workers, no speeches at all. He has nothing to do with production now. He just sits in his office and checks figures on the accountant balance sheet. He is not as tall or as proud anymore his head is not always looking up like before, but down. He does not have the intimidating presence as he did like before when he says without speaking... "I am in charge" Now he just hangs around upstairs, almost cowering. For myself I don't go upstairs at all. I spend all my time where the action is.

I see now that it is impossible to try to do business with ESM anymore. I gave up some time ago. And now am just doing time finishing my two boats so I can ship them out, then leave. It is not fun to be here anymore. I used to fight for change, and got a little cooperation, and I always have to prove everything. But I did not come here to prove anything I came here thinking they would eat up the better ways of building, but instead they resist more and more with every new idea that shows it is better. The execs tell me now that the USA boat builders do not know how to build boats, and the US should follow the Sri Lankan methods. My two boats are nearly completed. Ever since I put in the superstructure that gives the boat its strength the execs have not come to export. It was over a week ago the super structure was started. All the execs said was "That is not how we do it" I said "That is right, this is the correct way and the only way to get a boat accepted by the western market" Since I completed the Skeleton superstructure that speaks volumes of my engineering expertise (I don't mind saying so if it is true, which it is). No one from the management will enter export. I purposely have left the hulls with the superstructure open for inspection for the past week. You would think that the management would take pictures; take notes take some sort of record of the new superior design superstructure for the new designed boats I made. You would think if someone wanted to learn like I did at Stapleton they would hang around where the action is to see the techniques as the transform raw materials into a work of maritime art. Like I did at Stapleton's for 14 years. And that is how I learned. You would think they would want to see how it is done, or how the concept takes shape. But you would be wrong. Instead they avoid the boats I made. They talk to me even less, as if that were possible. But it is good in that at least I don't have to hear them telling me how to build boats the right way. Now the fruit of my labor speaks for itself and the management is silent and pretends I am not there. Only the workers gather round and smile and say "Good, Good, USA Good." I will leave the boats open for inspection until a week before I leave I will pack them up.

VJ, my friend in Parliament wants me to make me Exec director of boat factory he wants to start. Before he was ready to hand over \$500,000 to chairman for 51% ownership and have me as exec director of ESM. But I told him the truth. You cannot do business with ESM. ESM is only worth the land it site on. The only thing keeping ESM solvent now is the last bit of tsunami money building boats for the fisherman by the government providing subsidies. Once that is finished, which will be in a few months, ESM will be a ghost town. When I arrived the boats were 43 feet, last month they only built 40 feet, now they are down to 30 feet and working on them very slowly. The boatyard is not as full as when I got here, things are slowing down. Since then we have met a few times going over the cost of starting new on 2 acres he has in Colombo on the water way. I doubt VJ has the guts to start something. If he does, he knows he has to rely on me. I don't know if he trusts me or has the faith that a new boat factory will work. At present he sells boats to fishermen but the boats are old and in need of major repairs, so he is really just helping fishermen import boats from abroad. These are the fishermen who do not have the tsunami subsidies to pay for their boat and ESM prices are ridiculously high. A few times before I mentioned the American publisher who wanted to hire me to fix his 43 foot sail boat, but the price was too high. Actually my price was not too high, what made it too high was when ESM added four times my price to work at ESM. In fact I see now that I have had many people approach me who saw me at ESM and asked me for a price for a boat, a repair or a fish box or something about boats. Come to think of it, every single person went elsewhere to do business telling me the prices were too high. At ESM they charge as much as the USA boat builders charge. The only difference is the price in the USA will get you a boat. Here it will get you a piece of outdated, unstable, unsafe piece of crap. I now know why. When I got here Sam told me that chairman had paid off 50% of the debt from the previous owner's bankruptcy, 2 months ago he told me 75% of the old debt was paid off. Last week he told me the entire old debt was paid off. So that is why prices are high. Not only did he need to charge too much to build boats, chairman also needs to add on top of that the amount needed to pay off the bad debt. In other words my trip here was doomed from the time I got off the plane. So why did he bring me here? I think he uses me to say he has an American boat builder in charge of ESM, which I am sure would help in negotiating with subsidy contracts. This would explain why he really does not want me to do anything. If I wanted to I wouldn't have to go to ESM at all. I only go because it was fun at first, and I got to design some great stuff. It would explain why he doesn't talk to me or ask what the best way to build boats is. It would explain why management does not take good advice. It would explain why he caters to me and asks for nothing in return. It explains a lot of other things. I think chairman was only targeting the subsidy money from the tsunami. That would also explain why he does not give a damn about starting a real export division even though he says he does, or he would have given me support personnel. It would explain why the \$10,000 in new tools and equipment are sitting in the corner of exports collecting dust instead of being put into use. It explains why instead of being pleased that I have brought new technology and have trained workers and have produced some great 20 foot pleasure boats he told me he will not pay anymore. If you could see the improved look of the traditional boats that I have turned from dull and defective to a fine pearl glow, and you could see the new molds I have designed and made as well as the new boats and engine bracket and core material, you would not understand why he all of a sudden want stop going forward. When you see that the subsidy boats are now winding down you see he has no intention of creating an export department. All he wanted was to make ESM look impressive to the ones that are handing out tsunami cash so he could pay off the old debt, and then I think he plans on tearing the building down and expanding the garment factory he has moved into the nicer buildings. The buildings on site where the boats are made look like they were bombed out in the last war. But the buildings on site where the garment factory has moved into are clean neat and very well maintained. It is becoming clear to me what is happening. Still I am more than grateful for this experience for now I have been able to take the designs that have been developing in my mind for the past ten years and bring them to reality. These are marine products no one has thought of before. To make them one only needs a garage size work area. Which reminds me. Mother I will need to use the front carport for a while until I make some sales and can move into a shop, OK? I promise to clean up the fiberglass and resin off the floor so it won't build up too much, and don't worry about the smell of acetone, you get used to it, the same goes for the itching from the fiberglass dust from all the grinding I will need to do, OK?

11/20/06

It has been a while since the last entry. Why? Because I have been living a dog's life. Then a couple of days ago some shit for brains snob named Rob shows up from Moronland located near Bulgaria, Germany, Holland, Norway or some stupid country like that. He said He knew Zahid for a year and had read our emails. Rob told Zahid that if he brought me here that he would have nothing to do with him anymore. So Rob was very surprised when Sam introduced me to him on his second day at ESM. Then I showed Snob Rob my engine brackets and core materials. Even though he pretended to not be interested, I have caught him every day since closely examining the products I am making. Today he told me at least four times that I am wasting my time and Zahid's money and should go now. I agreed, and then asked him what he was going to do. He replies "I am going to make some products" He would not tell me what they were. Could they be engine brackets and core materials maybe? I think yes, definitely, the shit head.

Poor Sam he gets caught in the middle of every argument. Lately I sit in the corner of the paper. He turns the paper down as I walk by, smiles and winks, as he knows what a bunch of B.S. I just lay down. Sudath is my good friend, he now even tells me how messed up management is. Where as before he would avoid the subject. Spray booth hiding and watching my workers. My workers know I am there, but no one else does. This morning I was sitting in my hidden corner and who should have the nerve to come into my territory but none other than my dear friend Percy. By the way every chance I get, especially in the morning when passing by his window which is on the hallway to my office I stop and look at him at his desk for acknowledgement. If he does not see me as he usually pretends not to I knock loudly on his window (Which startles him if he is not pretending to ignore me and really does not see me). I knock loud so everyone around can hear. Wearing a shit eating grin from ear to ear I say "Hi Percy, how's it going? How are you today? Fine I hope, how's the family, great whether huh, but a little too much rain, yes?" He smiles back and says "Yes, good morning to you, how are you?" Then I proceed through the hallway into the sales area where Sudath sits reading

I was talking about my sitting in the corner of the spray booth secretly seeing what everyone was doing. My workers know I am there but no one else does. This morning I was there and Percy appeared but did not see me. He blithered out some orders to my workers and left. I asked Suranga, who by the way has turned out to be a good leader. "What did he say?" Suranga told me that Percy had ordered them to sweep up the outside of the factory since I was not there and had no work for them (which was complete horse shit). What B.S. they were there doing just what I told them, working on the King Fisher Deck. I sat back down in my hidden corner telling Suranga to ignore him and get back to my job. A few minutes went by and guess who showed up again? My dear friend Percy. Percy said to Suranga in a loud voice BLA, BLA, BLA. I don't speak Sinhales, but I know what a tone of voice is. While Percy was demoralizing them, Suranga, Sumitra and Vineetha all turned their eyes from Percy and looked to me for direction as they were not moving like Percy was telling them to do. Percy followed their eyes to see what they were looking at and saw me sitting. I immediately said "Good morning Percy, how's the family? Great whether we are having eh!, but too much rain right?" What could he do but smile and say "Yes, good morning to you" "OK, enough of that" I thought. A few minutes after Percy left I went to my office to fart around on the computer. Not more than 20 minutes went by when I went back downstairs to see what progress my workers had made. To my surprise they were sweeping the outside grounds of the factory picking up bits of paper. I yelled at Suranga "What the hell are you doing? Are you crazy? Get back to the job I gave you. Who the hell told you to go out here and do this anyway?" I said this to him as I knew who had pulled this BS. It was Percy who was standing there watching them pick up bits of paper, knowing full well he was undermining my workers duties. I said all this knowing Percy was hearing every word. But I said so Percy could hear "What stupid idiot, what moron, what asshole told you to pick up paper when we have work to do?" Poor Suranga even though he has become quite a leader, he still gets a very worried look on his face when he thinks I am mad. As soon as we were away from shit head, I turned to him and Vineetha who were just a minute ago sweeping up trash, "You are OK" and I smiled as they saw I was making a joke. Sumitra did not sweep like Percy ordered her too. She is that smart woman I told you about. Actually she is not smart, she just does not put up with anyone pulling her leg. When I try to pull her leg she says "Don't Lie Sir, Sir Don't Lie" Sumitra did not sweep, she went looking for me to intervene. By the way I played a joke on Sumitra the other day. We just had a phone extension put into export. The majority of ESM workers have never used phones before. Whenever the phone rings my workers get me to answer it. Lately I have been telling them "No, you answer it, I don't want to talk to anybody" So yesterday at morning tea I sat down in my chair near the workers who were having tea together. I called the extension from my new cell phone Jude got for me, hiding it so no one could see me make the call, even though I was near them. They weren't paying any attention to me; they were having their morning break. The export phone extension is in the break area. The export phone rang and rang. I hid my cell phone so they could not see it. They all looked at me to get up and answer the phone, but I said to the workers "I told you guys to answer it from now on, and that I am not here" So Sumitra answered the phone "Hello" she said. I picked up my cell phone and said "Sumitra, I want to talk to Todd" She turned to look at me just as I put my cell phone out of sight. She looked at me wondering what to say. I motioned Tell them I am not here. She said "Mr Todd not hear" I then said "Sumitra, what are you doing" By now she was bewildered. She does not know much English. But she did understand her name and the question. She became intent, and said "Who? Who? Who?" I replied "Sumitra, Sumitra" She said "Yes" Still not realizing it was me sitting right behind her talking to her on the phone. I asked "Sumitra, are you an owl?" The other workers who were by now witnessing this joke could not stop from laughing. They broke out in laughter; Sumitra looked around at everyone and did not know what was so funny. Then I said "Sumitra, turn around, it is me." She still did not know what was going on. She replied "Sir! Sir where are you?" I answered "Right behind you". She turned around and saw it was me, She turned back and fourth from the phone then to me, then to the phone not knowing if she should hang up or stay on the line. Finally she broke out and laughed harder than anyone. After that I was getting bored so I went upstairs.

Low and behold the execs were having a meeting. The execs are always having 4 to 6 hour meetings making important decisions they never take action on. The board room is 40 feet long and has a hallway running parallel to it the hallway then goes by Percy's office then opens up to the sales area. The board room has a window the entire length dividing the space from the hallway. The windows let you see who is in the boardroom and anyone in the boardroom can see who is walking down the hallway. The windows sit on top of a 3 foot partition between the hall and boardroom. There are double glass doors on the adjacent side of the boardroom facing the front door. So you can see who is walking towards the board room from the front door or stairway and then see the person as they walk by in the hallway. I detailed this layout because you might appreciate one of my other stealth tactics. Because of the layout, when ever I go upstairs I can see right away who is in the boardroom. When I see they are having a meeting I either walk right by with my shirt pulled up over my head, I turn around and walk back down stairs or I get down and crawl below the window along the board room down the hall so they can't see me as I go to my office past the sales area. At the end of the hall I push open the door just enough to slide by (which in my case was too much, by the time my big ass gets through the door is mostly open). I only get up when I have cleared the hall, past the door and I not in the line of sight from the boardroom. Today I heard there was a big meeting going on and it was a meeting where heads were going to roll. I was told Zahid would be there and he definitely wanted to see me at the meeting. Good ole Sam told me this so I could take precautions and hide, which I did quite well, until I forgot about the meeting and went upstairs. At the last second I saw all the execs seated in the

boardroom and the back of chairman's bald head sitting at the head of the table through the double glass doors. It was too late to turn back. In a flash I was down crawling down the hall under the windows towards my office ever so quietly. I eased the door open to slide by; I did not stand up until I knew I was out of sight of the board room. Only then did I stand up, which I did. Chairman was standing right there in front of me as I straightened up. He had taken a side door from the board room to a second hallway that leads to the sales area. He looked at me and he did not look happy. I asked "Have you seen my contact lens? I seemed to have dropped it somewhere" Chairman said "You don't wear contact lenses" "Oh yea that's right" I replied. He did not laugh and instead went back into the board room. I never was called into the meeting. As the meeting was winding down Sam came to me saying, "Please, you come to meeting chairman want to talk with you. You want me to order you lunch, maybe Pizza, something" I told Sam no I already had lunch. Sam said to go to the board room that they were waiting for me. I went to the board room but everyone had left. I went downstairs to see chairman's car was gone, Dudley's car was gone, and everyone's car was gone. I went back upstairs to find Sam to ask what was going on, was there a meeting or not. But even Sam was gone. So I figured I might as well go too. So I went to my apartment where I am now writing the latest entry.

21-November

One good thing about poverty and hunger stricken countries, All the women have nice slim figures.

I went to Colombo tonight which is different than going to Colombo in the day. I had to go to majestic City for an America cup of coffee. The only places that serve real coffee are in Colombo about 6 miles up the coast. It is only 6 miles but the cultural changes make it look like 1000 miles up the coast. In Wattala it is all factory workers and family. Very few blue jeans if any. Mostly Surongs on the men, women and girls. The boys though wear white shirts with blue shorts. No wild parties here. But go to Colombo at night and you see well dressed Japanese, German, American dressed Sri Lankan couples everywhere walking around the side walks for miles around. Like one big Coconut Grove. The army does not bother pedestrian's only vehicles. When you are driving at night in Colombo you had better keep your inside lights on at all times. This way the army guys can easily see inside your vehicle. If your inside lights are off they think you have something to hide. On the drive to Colombo we were stopped at a checkpoint. AKs everywhere. I had not seen so many decorated soldiers or hard core killers in one place before this. They stopped us and the elderly officer asked for my ID. I don't carry my Passport as I am told it might be conveniently got lost at a checkpoint and it would take a bribe for them to find it. So I always show my drivers' license that I carry everywhere. I have pulled out and shown my drivers license more times here in the past five months than my entire life in Florida. I showed the officer my ID and he asked. "Where are you going?" I said "First to Majestic City, then to Cres Cat Mall" He then said "You are going to the airport?" "No, to Majestic City" He acted like he did not understand, but he kept asking me where I was going. Then I realized I had made the mistake of getting my ID from my wallet and opening it up to see as I pulled out my ID. He kept asking me because He wanted a bribe. So I acted dumb, put the wallet away, we sat there for about a couple of minutes. The army guys all looking at me for a bribe and me saying "Cres Cat, Cres Cat, Cres Cat Mall on Galle Road near Majestic City" over and over again until finally they two army guys with AKs blocking us from proceeding let us pass when I handed him a new pack of Benson & Hedges. He settled for a pack of cigarettes as his bribe which he shared with the other army guys. So it is a good idea when traveling at night outside of Colombo to always have a new pack of cigarettes even if you don't smoke so you can share with the army guys if you want to get through the check points. A pack of smokes is \$2.10 USD and more money they make all day. Never let them see your wallet. They take money too, but it is dangerous if you offer them too little, so be safe and only carry smokes. Once you are in Colombo you can walk around freely. Actually it is ok because you do not have to worry about crime. There is an AK 47 on every corner and a machine gun nest at every block. It is strange to see well dressed couples holding hands and laughing, walking down the boardwalk by the calm surf strolling by a machine gun nest or a bunch of killers with guns ready to kill. If you have all you ID in order like I always do the army guys have no right to hold you, but if you are missing ID then they keep you there until you promise to return with a bribe. If you forget to return with a bribe it is OK. But you must again promise to bring a bribe some day soon. If your papers are in order they cannot mess with you. As soon as I went for my ID the first thing the officer said was do you have ID? Can you find your ID? You can't find your ID? Ok, that was on the way to Colombo. But then on the way back to Wattala, which is like nowhere Ville they had a check point 5 miles out on the way from Colombo. This was a blatant bribe stop. Who the heck would check someone going to wattala. The only thing past wattala is nothing for 30 miles until you get to Negambo, and this was no Negambo check point. The same officer that took the cigarette bribe was there. He took one look at me and saluted and waved us on. Had we not gone by a few hours before in the other direction I am sure he would have wanted some kind of bribe. Just about every day in the paper you see articles of police being investigated at checkpoints for taking bribes. If you have a bribe you can go right thru. Even if you have a bomb it is OK, just throw the officer 500 Ruppees and he will wave you on.

As anyone who knows me will confirm I got a big mouth and talk too much. I talked with the Euro trash advisor a few times when he confronts me by justifying my presence, and defending myself. Big mistake, it was a trap. In the end the snobby Rob said I am wasting chairman's money and time. Oh well just another moron, and I forgot it. Then this morning Sudath and I were having a conversation. Sudath said it is a shame if I leave and stop all the projects from going forward. A complete reversal of what they said in the beginning that they knew more than me and should not have to tell me how to do a job. I agreed and told him I want to go forward, but No, workers, No pay equal Bye, Bye for me and then I said how ESM needs to give me workers and.... Suddenly a large hand came down striking me HARD on my right shoulder. It was the Euro trash. By the way he is in his sixties, and 6 foot 4 still robust. His hand came down hard on my shoulder. If he struck chairman or Sam or any other Sri Lankan that way he would have knocked them to the ground. But I being a solid mass of Blubber did not flinch. It was aggressive and in no way could be seen as a friendly gesture like the Sri Lankan like to hold hands. After this blow the Euro trash said to me in a loud voice reminiscing of Percy demoralizing the workers "Your still talking, quit talking and go, you bring nothing to Blue Star, so leave...now!" I turned to him and said the only thing that came to mind "I am not in it for the money" I really wanted to say... "You son of a bitch piece of shit, I'llyou up, get the..... away from me" then I would have stood up and let him know I was about to smash his face in. But I did not. Instead I said the next thing that came to mind. As he left the sales area down the hall I shouted something at him but I forget what it was. Then I went to my office past Sam, and Asiltha, and the rest of the good guys, went to my office packed my computer and headed out the door to Pegasus for breakfast. Everyone said "Where are you going? You can't leave." I replied "Euro trash told me to go, so I am going" I walked out the front of ESM and headed down the path to Pegasus. Remember the path to Pegasus. In the daytime it is ok; at night all the creatures come out, but don't bother you because they are just going somewhere.

I had to step on the stones to make my way on the path due to the flooded area from the rain. Actually there was no path because of the flood. The path was covered with water, so you could not tell where the path started and where the canal stopped unless you know where the stones are the natives put in place to navigate the path when it floods. I went about 10 to 20 feet along the path on the stepping stones, some of which are just under the surface, so you really must be familiar with the path as I am. I take the path nearly every other day for breakfast or lunch. I got a ways when I turned around and saw they had sent someone after me. I kept walking. The messenger was on the phone with Sam and said "Mr. Todd, Mr. Todd, Sam wants to talk to you" I turned and said "I am going to breakfast" The messenger told this to Sam. Sam told him to follow me but the messenger told Sam "I cannot follow Mr. Todd he is walking on the water." (No, I

do not think I am Jesus) As I was nearing the end of the path a young man came running up behind me saying "Stop, Stop". Never stop in Sri Lanka, when someone says stop. So I kept going as I reached the road he caught up with me carrying a big knife like a machete. I thought I was going to be robbed or murdered or something. But I remembered the only criminals I have encountered were the 3 wheeler drivers. His kid was from the village I just passed on the pathway. I said "What?" He said "Coconut?, Coconut?" "Sure, why not? How much?" I replied to his statement. He obviously wanted to open up a coconut for me. He said 100 rupees, which is 4 times what the going rate is, but I obliged and said OK. Besides he was still holding the machete. I asked "King coconut?" Those are the good ones you can drink them, the other coconuts taste like salty water. He bent down behind a bush where he had his stash of coconuts near the road. He probably gets a lot of business from the tourist. He has a great sales approach. He chases after the tourist, in this case me on the path with a machete, then when he catches up offers the tourist a coconut for 100 rupees. It worked with me. I was so grateful he was not out to butcher me that 100 rupees for a coconut seemed like a good deal. I drank my king coconut and went to breakfast. On the weekdays No One, I mean No One is at the resort. It is very quiet and peaceful. I sat down as the manager, a young man named Suresh came up to tell me there was a party the 31 of November and I should come. I agreed I would. We talked a bit and he asked me how things were going at ESM. So I told him. I said they have a Euro trash idiot there who is trying to pick a fight with me so I left. We talked for a little while as he was my therapist that morning. I ended up witnessing to him about Jesus. After all I had just walked on water. He is a Christian and understood me when I said Jesus sent me here. I said this after he asked me why I came here. After that I said to him "Jesus said I will have people who will hate me for doing good work and that is like the Euro trash. . ." I went on to say "I know God sent me here just as I know in one minute that phone will ring and it will be Sam looking for me" Actually I did not think anyone knew where I was heading The path easily could take one to the road towards the groovy pan restaurant which I don't go to since Fatima hurt my feelings. I took a sip of coffee and the restaurant phone rang. The manager looked at me, and then answered the phone. He returned to my table with amazement in his eyes to tell me Sam was calling looking for me. Actually it was quite simple. I knew Sam was looking for me and there are only a few places I go in Wattala. I figured sooner or later he would call Pegasus. By the way Pegasus employees really cater to me. After all I am their only Non Sri Lankan native member. The manger told me to relax and finish my breakfast and he would tell Sam to call back later. Great, what a nice guy the manager is, Making sure I can relax. I went back to gorging my self at the breakfast buffet they have. I had started my second plate of six scrambled eggs when someone came up behind me and put their hands over my eyes very gently. I said "Who is that?" "Is that Anika? My girlfriend" it could have been the hands were small and soft. Then I smelled Sam's cologne. I turned and said "It's Sam" It was he smiled and sat down saying right away "That bloody man. ." Then Sam called chairman and handed the phone to me. Chairman asked why I left ESM. I said the Euro trash struck me with a bow that would have knocked you or Sam to the ground, then told me to leave now, So I left" Actually that was not why I left, I just wanted to have my breakfast and coffee at the beautiful shoreline in peace. When Chairman heard what had happened he had a fit. He yelled over the phone "That bloody man." I said "Forget it; it is not worth getting upset about." (I forgot I was the one that made the high drama scene at ESM a few minutes before) I was upset so everybody got upset, even the back stabbing execs said "That bloody man. ." I was calm but everyone else was all worked up. Sam took me by the hand and we went back to work. I saw the bloody man Euro trash again that day and he said hello. I said hello back and kept walking. Then later I saw him talking with Percy (By the way I got great news). When I saw the Euro trash was wearing a cheap little red back pack, like the kind kids wear to school, I realized he was an real moron and could not help being an asshole. Anyway, about the good news. One of the first things chairman told me when Sam handed me the phone was that my dear friend Percy was resigning from ESM in December. His reason is that he could not work with Sam anymore. That Sam and I were in Cahoots wasting labor and materials on experiments. Would you like to know the truth? I will tell you. Remember months ago I told chairman Percy is a pretend Naval Architect and cannot produce a diploma? Then a couple weeks ago chairman said he had a hat for me to eat as earlier I said I would eat my hat if Percy had a diploma to prove he was a Naval Architect. Well chairman made everyone at ESM produce their credentials. Everyone complied immediately except Percy. He said his had to be mailed. When chairman said he had a hat for me to eat it was that week that Percy's "Diploma" was to arrive in the mail. Turns out as Sam told me today that Percy's diploma never arrived. When chairman said to Percy on Monday "Where is your diploma, I am tired of waiting?" Percy went on a tirade of how Sam and I were destroying ESM and that Percy could not work with Sam anymore. Percy gave the chairman an ultimatum. Either Sam or I leave or he (Percy) would leave. Well the first thing chairman said to me today is "Percy has resigned" I did not know the details until later.

I feel sorry for chairman, Sam and ESM. They bend over backwards for me when they see I am getting pissed off. This fact is true, as opposed to the facts that can be debated. The fact is ESM's ONLY goal for a future is to sell boats in the USA. Once the tsunami subsidies run out, the business will die, just like it was dead before the tsunami. So the only goal for the future is to sell boats to the USA. Well guess what? Do you know anybody else besides me to come over here and help them achieve their goal? I don't see anybody standing in line, do you? If you do please tell them to relieve me. I see now they are relying on me for their future. Guys like Euro trash and the Australian bastards come and go. No way do they offer any kind of solution for a future. They only want to exploit the cheap labor like me. The only difference is I am actually doing something to help them be able to be better exploited. Even though they are making it very difficult. I see now it is like a child. When you go feed a baby, a lot of the time it may cry, or not eat. And when it needs a diaper change does the baby know it? No the baby does not know how to change a diaper or even that the diaper needs changing. It just has shit in it's pants and cries about it. So what is the alternative. Simple, Stop feeding the baby and let it go with a dirty diaper. That is what is going on here. The difference being I got the baby to eat a little and have changed the diaper more than once. Sure sometimes you want to shake the baby and throw it down on the ground and stomp it. Then walk away. But after you walk away you see that was the wrong thing to do. ESM is a great big baby. It wines, and shits on itself, just like a baby. But sometimes the baby will smile and hold your hand and you see the reward. Just like ESM. After I throw the baby down and stomp it by threatening to walk away, the baby looks to me for survival. I can't believe it either, but it is true. You want to debate it, go ahead come on over and see for yourself I am not bull shitting you. They rely entirely on me to sell their boats in the USA an EU, Which I can. But just like a baby they make it very difficult even though it is for their own good. If I walk away I will be turning my back on God. For he has given me a baby to take care of. Unless you know someone who will take this brat off my hands I am stuck with it. Honestly I have been here long enough to see that if I abandon them, I will be the one who put the last nail in the coffin. Besides Sri Lanka is the only place on earth where I was not kicked out of after I threw a fit. Kind of like a baby, but I can feed myself and change my diaper. That has to count for something. And besides Percy is going YEA, YIPPEE, YAHOOO, WHOOOPPPEE, Lets party!!!!!!

22-November

OK it is not my fault it could happen to anyone. I went into the Pegasus to buy a swim suit and walked out with a swim suit and \$1500 in Sapphires and Rubies. Yes it was dumb but the same gems in the US are \$5000. Sri Lanka is known for having the best quality Sapphires and Rubies. It would have been foolish not to get some. I started with the small ones, and then the salesman said it would look weird for a big guy like me to have the small ones so I got the

bigger ones. They were mined about 100 Kilometers from Wattala. So what if I can't afford it. The guy was a good salesman. The company is the finest jewelry company in Sri Lanka; they have a store at the Pegasus. The salesman told me not to worry, "God will give the money back to you." That night I sold a 14 foot boat to a Mr. Pratt in Jacksonville Florida, making twice what had spent earlier on the gems cost.

This morning was a glorious day. It started out as usual. I arrived at ESM at 7:45 am during the Friday speech to the 120 workers. These speeches are given by Sam. His speeches motivate the workers. He tells them they are good and can do great things: to try hard and everything will work out fine. Good ole Sam. All the managers were present except Percy, who purposely does not attend because he has been stripped of his authority to give demoralizing speeches like telling the workers "You are criminals, you are no good, and how can you do work when you do not brush your teeth or change your underwear..." I swear that was the content of all his speeches. How do I know for certain? Because he told me so. Percy said he gave those demoralizing speeches because the workers needed to be set straight. He actually told me he said to them "They must change their underwear and brush their teeth" He also said to me on more than one occasion that they were all criminals and their parents were criminals too. He told me this! That is how I know it is true.

Getting back to the morning today. Sam was giving the good speech. I stayed about 35 feet in the background not joining the managers because shit head Rob the Snob Euro Trash was there telling the workers the new procedures that were then translated to the workers by Sam. One of his major new policies for the workers was for everyone from now on to wear cotton work gloves, like the garden gloves you see at Home UhDaPoe. Rob Snob held the gloves up like a trophy to show his superiority to the workers as Sam spoke. OK, I had enough I eased up to the managers talking to the crowd of workers. Rob the Snob seemed to approve as it looked as if I was joining his new found flock. I said to Sam "Let me see that glove" Sam gave it to me and I headed to the front to make an announcement to the workers. The workers seem to like me and are always accommodating to me. Before I spoke, which I am good at due to many years of practice. I asked Sam to announce to the workers that I was going to show them how to use the new glove policy initiated by Snob Rob. As I turned I saw Rob Snob give me the nod as if to say "Go ahead and tell them you support me and my gloves that will save ESM" Sam said to the workers in Sinhalese that I will now demonstrate how to use them. Sam looked at me and said "Show them" At that I held up the gloves like a trophy then I said "This is what these gloves are good for" At that I took the gloves that were in my hand and brought them down and made the gesture and motion of wiping my ass with them so all could see. I then said "That is what you do with these gloves" There was a second of silence. Then Rob Snob said as I walked away from the crowd he said "Your Good!" Suddenly all the workers broke out in applause and loud laughter. When I left I went to the export door and waited for Suranga to bring the key. The meeting ended and all 120 of the workers walked by export on the way to their stations. Everyone of them laughed more when they saw me and all gave me the thumbs up. I was a hit. Even workers I did not know were smiling and giving the thumbs up. Later I said to Sam "I am sorry for setting you up this morning" Sam said "You very bad man, we forget ok?" Ever since Euro trash Rob Snob assaulted me I have not been near him. Yesterday he purposely talked with chairman, Dudley, anyone and brought them to the export area near the doors. I sure as heck did not want to see his face again as I would probably tell him off in front of chairman or someone else I respected and thereby make a fool of myself and I think that is what he was trying to set me up for. While he was talking to chairman about 35 feet from the export doors I had to go upstairs, but I did not want him or chairman to see me so I had 2 of my workers each hold one end of a sheet of plywood and walk with me using the plywood as a blind. I walked behind the plywood as they carried it across the factory to the stairs which were out of site of export area. The only thing chairman and Rob Snob could possibly have seen is two workers carrying a sheet of plywood and smooen behind it walking, only the ankles and feet visible. After a while upstairs I went back down when I saw the coast was clear. No more than 10 seconds went by when Aruna and another worker came into export with the same sheet of plywood. Aruna said "Here you left your plywood by the stairs." He knew I was hiding and we all laughed.

Later chairman came by to say that he wanted a report of the time workers spent in export doing my jobs. I asked why. Chairman said that Percy told him I was bankrupting the company wasting labor time. So me and Aruna, remember Aruna, the junior manager? I have been training him in leadership and he is shaping up lately to be a great leader. Aruna went to records and dug up all the records for labor spent at ESM for all departments. Percy had said to chairman on several occasions when I would say I had no men that he, Percy, gave me 4 men 2 women and a carpenter since day one. And that my waste is why not much has been accomplished. Well! After 6 hours combing the records that Percy was supposed to submit (Which he did not because he knew he would be caught in another lie). Aruna added up all the labor I used and it equaled out to one 1600 total hours for 5 months. And only four full time workers, two of which were the girls and are for cleaning only, Suranga, the only full time worker since day one, and Thissa, who regularly misses 1 to 3 days per week; either because it rains or his wife is having a baby. I think his wife must have had 20 babies in the past three months. This total of my labor used averages out to 88 hours per person per month and is equal to a part time job NOT full time as Percy claimed. Even God helped me with the labor total because when it came time to add up the hours for the carpenters, which I frequently complained I had none, yet Percy said I had at least one part time and then he sent me one full time, the total for carpenter hours spent with my work added up to a big fat 0. Only God could have made such a perfect total to prove my point. Then we took the report and had it verified by the accountant Abbey. As Percy had demanded the accountant confirm our figures. Percy said that I mad them up to make him look bad. When in fact I Aruna had the original time cards and records in hand and copies were attached to the report. So I took it to Abbey, Abbey did not take it. He told me to put it down on his desk. As soon as I put the report on his desk he signed off on the cover sheet "approved by accounting, Abbey" He did not even bother to see it for himself. All he said was "Now Percy cannot get out of this one" WOW! What friends I have here at ESM. That was not all the day before my samples came from my Chinese fiberglass supplier. It turns out that FRP Services, that holds a monopoly in fiberglass and resin sales in Sri Lanka is a Japanese company who buy their fiberglass and resin from MY Chinese supplier, then marks up the price, they are just middle men. I know because before I got the samples from China Abbey told me that FRP Services gets their raw materials from China but he did not know where. Then When I talked to Tony Zang the Chinese Raw material manufacturer. He told me the Japanese buy their raw materials from their subsidiary company. Then I thought the next thing he would say was that I could not buy because they already sold in Sri Lanka via FRP Services. Instead Tony told me they are looking for an agent in Sri Lanka and would give me the best price. Tony went on to say "I have thought I would go to Sri Lanka and set up agency" I replied to his statement "You would not survive here" I think he believed me. And it is true; one has to be a complete asshole to survive here. Nice guys cannot take it. So the samples arrived yesterday and I opened the package with Sam in secret. Sam and I tested the material by using it on my King Fisher project. The material was perfect. Just as good id not better than FRP materials. Sam wrote up a report about the price and taxes cost to import and compared it to the FRP Services Price. Guess what? My prices are 30% less than FRP !!!! Yes mother, my prices include all expenses like customs clearance, shipping, taxes, everything and more. The prices are still 30% lower than the monopoly FRP prices. Now I have 2 reports going to chairman today. One showing I got ripped off and received little if no help in export, and prices for raw materials 30% better than what ESM has been paying for the past year. Not only that Toney want to start selling in Sri Lanka Bad. I asked him "Why? You already sell to FRP Services" only explained FRP services buys for Japan and cannot claim territory for Sri Lanka since the owner of the FRP business is operated by a Sri Lankan. And besides he can sell to who ever he wants and he wants to sell to ESM because he will sell more. The Chinese are like that, they sell to anyone who will pay. They have no loyalty, and why should they. The Chinese have told before agencies are no more than middlemen and they prefer to have total control making sure anyone can buy who has the money. I talked to my Parliamentary friend today VJ. He asked me to go to Matara. He said he did not get me because he had not gone yet and he was leaving in the morning and asked me to go. Of course I want to go I said.

Sometimes God gives me a gift. I know it is a gift because they come near or on a holiday like Christmas or my B-day. The last gift he gave me was Hurrigan

Andrew on the 23 of August. 11 days before my birthday. I ended up owning 2 homes outright, one on the lake, a new car paid for and a truck load of cash. What did I do with the gift? I blew it away. For years I saw the loss as my failure in life. For the past few years though I now see it was my membership fee for my salvation. Between that and the Tsunami I have had many little gifts. Like the boat house. Remember Andrew Cunanan and the boat house on Miami Beach. The name of the house boat was the "New Year" It was on January 2, 1998 that I showed up with my best friend Tom Wargo to try and get the job to refloat the morbid scene. When we arrived there were at least 20 other contractors bidding for work. I told the security guard for the owner I wanted to bid on refloating the mammoth sunken shoebox. Five minutes later the owner, a German Fag came to me and Tom and said "How much?" I said "\$20,000 to float it and another \$50,000 to repair it" The German Fag said OK and handed me \$20,000 in cash, now receipt, no contract. He just said "Get to work now!" Turns out that all the other 20 or so contractors standing around were only there to offer to "Clam Shell and cart away" the house boat. They were there only to bid on demolishing it and hauling it away. Tom and I were the only ones there who offered to repair it. In the end I got a bunch of cash out of it, Tom and my workers who we normally were building boats got a piece of it. Even Jesse, a worker I had from the Tile days in the 80's who had just got out of prison on a manslaughter charge got a piece of the action. Jesse was 6'7" and looked like the killer which he was. Jesse was my body guard while at the job site. Some body guard eh? That circus was a gift with a little humor mixed in. The humor was while we were taking out the contents of the house boat the German fag said he did not want anything so we had a street side auction of Andrew Cunanan Suicide souvenirs until the cops shut the sideshow down due to the traffic had come to stop in front of the houseboat.

The next major gift was the Tsunami December 24, 2005. The gift is still giving. The only difference between this gift and the last on the 23 of August 1992 is that I have devoted every second of every day to take action and give 100% all my attention every minute I am not taking this gift for granted this time.

At ESM it is a big deal if someone has spent time working in Dubai. They think it gives them real experience and training. The truth is Dubai hires Sri Lankan labor because it is the next cheapest labor to slave labor. The Sri Lankan workers say they all wish they could work in Dubai because it is such a great opportunity to learn and make more money. OK, I will grant the average worker their makes \$400.00 per month in Dubai instead of \$90 per month in Sri Lanka. But that is it!. Just think about it for a minute. Say you are an Arab construction company. Sure you would hire a Sri Lankan to work and because they are cheap labor. But would you then say "Oh you Sri Lankan foreigner, you are so important we Arabs will teach you skills and train you to be the best" No Bullshit If you were an Arab hiring Sri Lankans you would work the crap out of them, you would not teach them anything you would have them do all the unskilled labor jobs because you would know how stupid Sri Lankans are. Only we bleeding heart Americans take morons and teach them to be smart morons. The rest of the world could give a shit about educating cheap labor. I mention this because chairman a few weeks ago told me he was hiring a highly skilled fiberglass man who had been educated in Dubai for 8 years as a fiberglass man. Right, I knew this guy would be just another idiot. Later I knew I was right when I found out how much chairman pays him. That's right \$80.00 per month. If this guy was such an expert, no way would he settle for peanuts, he would go back to Dubai. But now he is another big mouth Know nothing Know it all. Chairman has him working on the Australian abortion. I think chairman knows the guy is just another smuck and is just saying the moron is skilled so the word might get back to the Australians that chairman hired skilled workers for their project. When in fact only stupid idiots are working on the Australian boats. And most of the time the workers are farting around not doing shit but sitting down talking. Yesterday I made the mistake of letting one of the workers take charge of a job. Well the job came out wrong. Guess what? As soon as the error was uncovered the asshole from Dubai went on and on talking to my workers about how he knew better than the USA guy and more and more B.S. Finally I told him to stop talking and get out of my department. I went outside and knew as soon as I would leave that the Dubai idiot would go back into my department and keep talking trash to my workers, so I waited 2 minutes outside the export window to wait for him to cross over and enter my area of work. Sure enough the asshole came back to talk trash to my workers as soon as I left. When I saw this I knocked on the window to get his attention he came to the window and I said "Get the hell out if my department and go back to Australia" He did not hear me so well because the widow and noise outside, plus he speaks no English. Thissa knew what I meant and went to him and told him "Get out and don't come back!" The asshole understood that just fine. You know at first I felt sorry for the Dubai idiot and tried to show him how to use the tools like spray guns, air sanders, but he does not have a clue how to use them. But still I talked with him now and then as a friend. Not anymore, he is now a shit head. BY the way one thing here in Sri Lanka When You meet someone they are always nice and make you feel at ease until you feel they are your friend. But watch OUT, most will seem like your friend to your face, but as soon as your back is turned they will talk trash about you. That is the way these people are, some have a heart of gold and the others are backstabbers, there are only those 2 types in society.

To hell with this place

I am getting out December 2, as soon as my money is transferred to my account and my engine is shipped out. The reality is the established business men are so set in the stupid traditional ways that Sri Lanka will never become a viable economic place to do business. Putting the failure to do business the rebels make it impossible to enjoy the best parts of the island. If you are used to being dirt poor you can get along here. But for me I can try to get into Pharmacy school or be a shoe salesman. Anything is better than trying to get these idiots to do something. Even if you pay them, they will not do it. Their motto is "Pay us first then we will do it". They are so stupid they don't even see that you have to make something to sell before it can be sold. For the 100th time chairman says. I will make new molds when you bring me an order for 100 boats. Guess what? That will never happen. I ordered two boats and agreed that when the boats were started I would pay as they were completed. Guess what? One month went by, No one lifted a finger to get the job done except me. Chairman actually said to me "Todd, you make the boats then buy them from me." Is that the stupidest thing you have ever heard or what? Like I am actually going to build a boat without getting paid for the work (without any real help) then pay for it too? They think that is the way I should do business with them. I gave up trying to make sense of it and give up and can't wait to get back to the USA. They still ask me to pay for the two boats I ordered two months ago. They want me to pay for something they will not build because they think I should build the two boats. And did I mention I have no competent workers to help? Then there is VJ my friend in Parliament. Oh yeah he wants me to build tuna boats. But does not want to pay for it either. I always have to call him to remind him he said he wanted to do business. Well, no more. I stopped calling him. Going in that direction would be like jumping from the frying pan into the fire.

And the execs are all blind, stupid and stubborn. Besides the example of leading a horse to water it is like they are living before mankind discovered fire. I came to them saying "Look here is fire, it will cook your food, it will keep you warm, and it will light your rooms." But the execs say "No, fire too hard to light we waste sticks rubbing them together for so long, beside you can get a burn from fire" So this place secludes itself not by the vast distance of the oceans or the vast regions of India. Sri Lanka is separate from the rest of the world because of stubborn ignorance, plain and simple. Anyone thinking of coming here for anything other than sitting on the beach should think again. Besides there are no pleasure boats. The Navy will not allow boats with more than 15 hp. And even those must get Navy approval. Even if you had a boat the navy will not let you travel over most of the waters. And even if they did there are no marinas, no where to dock. All boats are pulled up on the beach. Even the big ones are run aground to low tide when being parked for the night. There are no night clubs unless you like top

40 songs from the eighties sung by a duet lounge group with only a karaoke system. Then I met a nice business woman recently who speaks very good English. I thought she would be company. But no sooner had we met when she told me I should invest in her company. Businessmen here like the USA for one reason only. They think they can get USA business to invest in Sri Lanka. I think that is what chairman was after. To show me what a wonderful opportunity ESM was so I would invest in ESM. What a joke. If anyone is stupid enough to invest money in Sri Lanka, they deserve what they get in return, which is absolutely nothing but arguments and criticism. I feel sorry for the poor slob who invests here. Once Sri Lanka has your money, good luck getting a cent back. I know, I twice came close to investing in ESM to build two boats, until I realized they expected me to do all the work and pay them besides. That is the clear picture. Luckily for me the Sri Lankan Navy will not allow the use of my 40 hp engine and has prohibited it to be sold or else I probably would have lost it. I am staying only as long as it takes to have it picked up by the shipper.

This whole trip and experience I see now had nothing to do with an opportunity to build boats for the USA or even do humanitarian work by training in proper methods. Both of those goals went out the window months ago because they made it too difficult. I see now the whole point of this experience was God wanted me to grow up and become an adult. The truth is this place is populated by brats with the mentality of a four year old. The only real people who are intelligent and open minded are the ones who are the workers. They are willing to try new ideas. The workers are very good and disciplined. Too bad the garment taxes the crap out of anyone who tries to start a business. Everyone else is too stubborn to see things in the correct light. They still tell me at ESM that the USA boat builders are wrong and could learn a thing or two from Sri Lanka. The adults here are nothing more than big brats. Even the experienced business men say things and argue like a child. I learned how to deal with difficult people. Myself being the most difficult. The way is to always keep ones mouth shut and don't talk to anybody unless they want to talk to you first. Raleigh Stapleton knew this. He always kept quiet, and did not go out of his way to convince anyone of anything.

Knock down drag out.

I finally found out what chairman likes most of all. He likes a knock down drag out fight over how to do business. Now I know why he attends ESM meetings. He knows they are full of baloney. He just likes the fight and yelling in the boardroom with men. I mean real men. Not the sissies that manage the garment factories. Those guys are pin perfectly dressed and well groomed. At ESM we all dress like men. Having the hair combed and shirt tucked in is good enough. Chairman does not care about details; he cares about telling someone they are full of crap. Today he called me to his office for a private meeting. It was finally my time to let out my frustration as I had already decided to leave. What could he say that I would object to? "Todd I am sorry but you must leave" If he said that I would have said "OK, fine see ya, hasta la vista, bye, so long" and gone to the airport. Instead he asked what the problem is. I was tired of the BS and was ready to leave so I told him what I thought. Which I always do. But this time I did not hold back. He asked me what to do about ESM that he could not take the bickering anymore and was sick of all the problems. Now watch this see if you can catch it. I said to chairman "This is what WE need to do. Fire everybody but Sam, Abbey, and Asitha" Notice I used the word WE. I put that out there to see his reaction. To imply we are a team. He liked that. He replied "But I cannot do that at the moment." I reminded him he said that about Percy and now Percy has resigned, so you can do this now. Next he asked me what I thought of Rob the Snob Euro Trash. I told him I think he is Euro trash and I call him Rob the Snob. I then went on to say "Don't you think it is strange that NOBODY at ESM ever talks about building the boats. This is a..... boat yard yet all these advisors you have only talk about wearing gloves, penny pinching, or how ridiculous my efforts are. Isn't it strange NO ONE has said anything about the actual boats?" Again he liked that and said "Point Taken." Then chairman said I was a nice guy. I see now that is the Sri Lankan way to copy the US management style. Because once a manager tells you that you are a nice guy, the next thing they say is "You're a nice guy, but you're fired." But here they don't follow it up with your fired or it is over. Chairman says things like "I can't afford to pay you anymore" This leaves the door open for negotiation. But I do not negotiate. I am from AA where it is my way or the highway. He must have said to me 10 times in the past month "Todd, you're a nice guy..." yet he did not follow up with "...You're fired" or it is over. Today I saw this negotiating trick and used it to my advantage. When he said to me this time "Todd, you're a nice guy...but I can't afford to pay you" I followed it up by saying "Bullshit you got plenty of money to pay me" That is when the fun started. And I mean fun He said back to me,

"Listen fellow I got more gray hairs on my head than you from doing business"

I shot back,

"Yeah but you only have two years of grey hairs from boats"

I have 13 years of grey hairs from boats. And furthermore, Did your wife leave you because you were devoted to the dream of building boats? Well mine did, so I am ahead."

"OK, you got me there. But I really haven't got the bloody money".

I replied "Well scrape that barrel some more. You know the one. The bottom of that barrel you have been scraping from day one".

"He asked what is it you need to continue." I said I needed a round trip airline ticket to the states so I can have the vacation I earned, and then I would return for another six months. But only if I got the men I need. Chairman asked "What the hell happened to the money I sent you for a round trip ticket before?" I told him that I had spent it on a one way ticket to come here. "You did not buy a round trip ticket? You only bought a one way ticket?" This really got his attention that I came here one way. Suggesting that I had no plans of going back to the US anytime soon. I think this impressed him. He had a hard time believing I came one way. There was then silence. Quickly I let off another round while I was on a roll. "Back to the subject, if you don't have the bloody money to pay me, then shut ESM down now. Because I know you cannot tell me you have made a profit yet from Blue Star." By now he was all ears, smiling with me as we indulged in the truth. Then I asked him "Do you really want to sell boats to the USA and Europe?" He said "yes" that was the most important objective. He just gave me more ammo. I reminded him "Well if that is true do you have any other American boat builder crazy enough to come over hear and put up with ESM crap, because if you do I will gladly step aside. But I don't see anyone in line behind me" I then turned my head around gesturing that I was looking for the next guy in line. At that chairman broke down and asked "What is it that you want from me, Todd?" I immediately felt a calm come over me then answered "I don't know what I want. Chairman reminded me that I have said on more than one occasion that I am not here for the money, and asked me what was I here for if not the money. At that I repeated, "Yes, that is correct, I don't know why I am here" Boy, that threw us both off our guard. He brought me back to my senses saying "Look you're here to make money and I want to make money. So tell me what it is you want in writing and send it to me" "OK" I answered and I left. But not before we both had a good laugh and chairman offered to get me a Pizza and we would have lunch together. That was when I realized he enjoyed the meeting. But I did not think it wise to stay longer. Like George on Seinfeld says "It is great to leave on a high note." Besides one admission of "I don't know what I am doing here." Is enough for one day?

I just sent him the email he asked for. It simply said. "If you want to continue in the path of progress, please pay for a round trip ticket to the states, continue paying me as before, and give me the workers I need full time. If not, I understand, and I would like to leave now."

We shall see what happens. I would be surprised if he agreed, and even more surprised if he did not agree. Either way I will be surprised.

By the way, the criminal 3 wheel drivers are not out to get me anymore. They see I am as broke as they are. Now wherever I go in wattala everyone waves hello to me. That's nice to be in a place where when you go around town people recognize you, say hello and smile.

OH...MY...GOD...!

Sam for the past week has been losing it. Before he used to be all out expressing how important it was for ESM to experiment and try to get into the USA market. For the past month he has been silent and avoids me. He sees now that this business is not like other businesses like garments, which he has Zahid's manager for the past 15 years and has 15 years of pay stubs neatly organized with the rest of his credentials. His starting pay was \$50.00 per month. Garments are straight forward to make. And like I said before, all chairman's garment factories run like clockwork pumping out good quality shirts, pants, hats, tote bags, you name it they make it. But ESM is the complete opposite. There you have completely opposing viewpoints and opinions, arguments, failures, losses because of poor management. A product, unlike the garments that sell in mass quantity all over the world, ESM boats are of poor quality and only sold to the poor fishermen who don't ask for much other than to float. ESM is a mad house. You have Dudley who I thought was my friend, but lately more and more chairman and Sam say he ridicules me behind my back. He too says my ideas are crazy now. The truth is maybe they are but it is not costing ESM anything. I use Off-Cut fiberglass to make boats. Off-Cut is a term they use in garments. The off cut is the small strips of cloth left over after the garment is made. I see now Dudley who is the supplier of fiberglass cloth has taken this idea to ESM. He has chairman convinced that once a length of fiberglass is cut, the rest is off cut and is thrown away. I found tons and tons of off cut in bags hidden all over the factory. I used it to make my two boats. When I told Dudley this he and Carleton said. That was bad because I waste resin doing that. Believe me when I say that is utter horse crap that flies in the face of common sense. Yet they back it up with even more BS. No one can call them on their BS because there is no one in Sri Lanka that knows the truth and is willing to talk.

The other boat builders are in the Free Trade Zone separated from the city. You cannot get into the free trade zone unless you have an appointment with someone who owns a business there. They have armed guards to keep the shit heads out. These business men know enough to stay far away from the real Sri Lankan business men. They now Sri Lankan boat builders are as crazy as a shit house rat (I got that from dear Grandpa). But not me Todd came here to save Sri Lanka. Naturally I thought they would take the new western ideas and say "Oh thank you Oh wise Mr. Todd" maybe even put up a statue of me. Instead I had to get a cat. A cat? Why did I get a cat? Simple to taste my food before I ate it to make sure it was not poisoned. When chairman told me this before I laughed. I don't laugh anymore. Let us see the changes I made. I exposed Percy for the fraud that he is and now chairman made him resign, I now am selling fiberglass here in Sri Lanka for 20% less than Dudley, who has had the monopoly for 30 years, I told Rob the Snob he is a fucking fag the other day, I TOOK Dudley's 30 year traditional fishing boat design and made it 10 times better for the fishermen, as well as being a good boat to export to the USA, I exposed Dudley as a over selling chairman raw materials. There is more, I just cannot think now. I am too exited about the events that unfolded in the past hour.

What happened? This is what happened. I got a call from a guy in Atlanta who just sold his business. He has family in Miami. He wanted a boat to live on for a few years and travel around on. I told him it would cost \$35,000 to get started. He said "Fine when can you start" I said "As soon as you send me a non refundable \$3000.00 deposit" I say this to scare off the ones that are constantly guaranteeing me they will buy a boat then call a hundred times having me research every little bit of equipment prices, then turn out to be just dreamers. I have links on my site where I accept credit card payments up to \$3000.00. And on the agreement is clearly has stated the deposit is non refundable and other legal mumbo jumbo so I am assured there will not be a charge back later. The man told me he would go online now and pay the deposit. OK I told him have a nice day. As if a sale could be that easy. 10 minutes later he called me back and said if I looked at my Pay Pal account will see that he paid. I looked and yes he did pay. Halleluiah!! Thank you Jesus. By the way talking about Jesus. Believers will understand what I am about to say. Non believers will think I am nuts. For many years now I thought I would get a gold band and wear it as a symbol that I am married to Jesus. The other day I bought one from Premedasa Jewelers at Pegasus because it was a nice gold band with a nice Sapphire. I had it sized and have worn it for a few days now. Whenever anyone says "Oh your married, I say yes, I am married to Jesus" But I think from now on I will only say "Yes I am married" and only tell them about Jesus if they ask about my wife. Soon after I put the ring on I indulged in the things I usually indulge in. I have not changed because I wear the ring. So I told Jesus "There is no such thing as a perfect marriage" Getting back to the subject. The payment was there all legally protecting me. Great. Just then the phone rang. It was Sam he called to tell me Chairman has decided to pay for my round trip ticket and continue paying me for another few months when I return in January. Then chairman called me and said "OK Todd I will go along with this, but when you get back you better get us some sales" Perfect or what ! I told him that since he is so nice I will now buy a 27 foot boat from ESM for the USA market. Was that a coincidence or what?

I do not know which happened first in heaven. Did God soften chairman's heart and then send the paying customer or was it the other way around. It is not important.

Now getting back to the subject I began with. Sam Sam is used to the garment industry style management. But ESM is tearing down his spirit. He is caught in the middle of me saying "I have no men, these mangers are idiots!" then Dudley saying "That Todd he is just another crazy American wasting materials and manpower" Then Rob the Snob saying "Oh I am so great I know everything, Listen to my wisdom" "Then Percy saying "No men, No Men" then Chairman yelling "We need sales, sales, sales!!! Get me some bloody sales! Why aren't you out there getting me sales? You are GM at ESM why can't you get me some sales??" No wonder Sam has become withdrawn. When I say withdrawn I mean reverting to the native ways of just existing, no dreams of a great future.

Racism

Here the racism is also weird. There are two types of races here. The light skinned and the dark skinned. Even the light skinned are dark skin, but not as dark as the so called "dark" The darks are mostly Tamil the lights are Sri Lankan. Both are native Sri Lankan. Dark skins are always pulled over at checkpoints. They

say the dark skins are criminals. They ask me if my girlfriend is a light skin or dark skin. They say dark skins are trouble. Who are they that say these things? They are the dark skins who say the dark skin are trouble. The light skin don't say anything and treat everyone the same. I guess there are degrees of dark. Another racism is the Japanese and Chinese. Japan is Sri Lanka's number one financial supporter. Japanese enjoyed being the exclusive elite here when vacationing. But in the past five years or so the Chinese have been coming here in droves since the Japanese do not like the Chinese and think they are inferior. The Sri Lankan acts like they feel the same way. The Chinese could care less about that BS. Often you will see a group of Chinese together. They usually are together in groups. You see them having a ball, taking pictures right and left of everything in sight. They laugh and are very happy, although exclusively with their compatriots. They don't talk to anyone outside their group. Mean while you see a Jap once in a while near the Chinese tourists and you can see the disdain on their face. Sri Lankan act like that too but only when with the Japanese. Racism is against foreigners that have Sri Lanka girlfriends like me. That is why Anika was hesitant to go out with me to Bentota. She did not care but she did not want the attention brought on to us. Like when a white girl is with a black man used to be people stared, some still do. It is weird being on the other side of racism. So now Anika and I only meet in places where we know the people are cool about it. We never go together we go separately then meet up. Or we go out after 12:00am when all the families are asleep. It is the family people who object. Sometimes in Colombo you see a Sri Lankan man with a white woman and no one cares. But see a Sri Lankan woman with a white man and you can cut the tension with a knife.

Today at ESM I announced I was buying a 27 foot cabin boat and boy everyone but the idiots rejoiced. I figured something had to break through the BS. I could have my order made somewhere else but now I know the pit falls and so does chairman. He agreed that what happened last time I ordered boats would not happen again. I told them in writing that if I was jerked around I would go to the siren that signals breaks and lunch that I would hold my finger down on that siren until I got my way. The execs heard this and looked at me as if I was joking. I said "One day you will hear that siren go on, and on, and on, and on. It will be me because you..... up, I am not joking or putting up with any more crap." They immediately stopped smiling. Then Rob the Snob was leaving to go back to Euro pee. He said his goodbyes to everyone in the office like it was some great heart wrenching good bye. Actually no one cared and was too busy working. I stood at my office door waiting for him to leave> I did not want to go passed him. I did not need another confrontation with the Euro trash. He saw me standing there and came up to me anyway. Rob is about 60 but still he is 6'5" and a big guy (for a fagot) .He got close to me and said "Are you upset with me? Why are you upset? Are you disappointed?" I looked at him and kept silent. I wanted to say "Hey pal, you need to brush your teeth" But, I remained silent and let him go on. He then said "what did I do?" I told him that he had slapped me hard on the shoulder and practically shouted to me to leave. I followed it up with calm simple "I did not like that." He tried to look me in the eye and I knew some BS was on the way. I thought he came to apologize for being such an asshole, but instead he said "Todd, You have no vision for the...." I closed my office door in his face and said "I don't want to hear it" He repeated "Todd, you have no vision for the future." I just pushed my shoulder up against my door because he was trying to push his way into my office. All this in front of the office staff. I saw through my glass door everyone by now had stopped what they were doing to see what was going on. I heard Sam say "Why? What? Todd doing to Rob?" I then took the opportunity and yelled "HELP, HELP, SAVE ME FROM THE EURO TRASH" At that Rob let go of my door and walked out of the building saying out loud "Todd has no vision of the future. That is what I think" By then everyone had gone back to what they were doing and paid no attention to him as he left.

Later the timing was perfect again. Dudley has done nothing but laugh at me behind my back, and I thought he was my best friend. He makes fun of me because my ideas are new and there has been nothing wrong with them. Still for months now he has been complaining to chairman that I cut up one of his molds and made it worthless. The truth is I made a silk purse from a sow's ear. The sow's ear being the traditional 20 feet day fishing boat and the silk purse being the modifications I made to the molds that now make my very cool open center console fisherman. Dudley does not bother to see what is actually going on in export he just complains how I have ruined the ESM molds and am wasting material and manpower, and what a fool chairman is and what a joke I am.

Well! today I finished the newly design King Fisher prototype and we brought it to the front of the factory for the mechanic to put the engine on. Just as we were positioning it right next to the drive in gate guess who pulls in to ESM/ that's right Mr. Dudley. He got out of his car and saw the improved King Fisher for the first time. He was all eyes looking it over. Looking down the contours, which were very sleek and nice looking. Everyone around gave me the thumbs up saying "Nice, very Nice USA good" Not Dudley he totally ignored me. But he could not take his eyes off the new design for quite a while. He had said before when he and chairman had come down when I started the project some 2 months ago, that it was a design that will not sell. Funny thing. As he was examining my work of art another boat came in for repairs. It was owned by a wealthy man who owns a resort in Bentota. He has a boat in need of repairs. His boat has a 100hp outboard. Turns out it is only around Colombo the navy stops anyone with over 15 HP everywhere south it is fine. After this man's boat came in. Dudley was standing there and the owner of the boat for repairs came up and saw my creation. Right away the man said "WOW, what a nice boat, I want to buy one how much?" Dudley just pretended not to hear and walked away in disgust. I left to go to my apt. I did not want to get into any talk. The re-design speaks for it self.

Sam saw it and was happy and amazed someone was interested in buying my creation as soon as it was brought it out into the open. Sam was also very happy now that Percy is leaving ESM in a couple weeks; chairman and I both are helping each other. I know Sam is happy again because this morning he sent a cleaning crew to clean my apt. then a cake was waiting for me when I went to have tea upstairs. You always know when Sam and Zahid are happy because they give out Pepsi and cake.

By the way. I am not leaving Sri Lanka until the end of March. Chairman gave me a deal I could not pass up and I am selling boats I will be making. This time ESM is fully aware I will take no crap, and the assholes that were the majority are now the minority. The real people that run ESM do what I ask them too and ignore the morons. Every Thursday Dudley has a meeting in the board room. Every meeting all the managers and team members are in attendance. The meetings sometimes last 4 to 6 hours. But in the past two weeks, only Dudley and Carleton, his henchman, had the meeting. Everyone else ignored him and did not attend, and instead did their work. It is now full circle again. This time full circle meaning that when I first came here Percy told me about all the lies and corruption. Then I saw he was wrong and how everyone really liked me. Now I see the managers and execs Percy mentioned were just putting on an act. They really dislike me, are corrupt and they really do have their henchmen. Percy was right the whole time. But that does not excuse him from being incompetent. But now things are slowly changing. The evil ones and their henchmen are getting less and less attention. I exposed their scare tactics and now they are being exposed as the phonies they are. Not that it is done in a grand way like me standing on a soap box proclaiming "That man is a fraud!" No instead I have proven using common sense that the bad guys were wrong about their thinking and direction. Over and over I have set the record straight for all to see. Now the Sri Lankan are beginning to change and beginning to think on their own instead of blindly following the idiots, just because they talk a good talk. Now the Sri Lankan actually say "No we will do it a different way this time" then look to me to announce my earlier record of having been correct about some technical issue like the fuel tanks. But instead I say "It was Asitha's Idea, he is smart" Or when chairman asked me who to get to be CEO, leaving the door open for me to say "I will be your CEO" Instead I told him Sam would make a great CEO for ESM.

I should not only call this the Sri Lankan Journal, but also the life of a boat builder who does not have millions of dollars or even a pot to piss in. Because No sooner had I made the last entry when the asshole (he sure cannot be called customer) who just put a down payment on a 27 foot boat I was to build at ESM backed out and asked for a refund, giving the excuse his family member had an emergency. So now back to plan A. get the hell out of here. Chairman has agreed to pay for a round trip ticket. And pay me when I return. But after I return I will tell him the truth about boat building in the USA. And that truth is that you must first have the completed boat on display with many in inventory. Then when someone wants one they pay for three whole thing at once either cash or financing. Then just like buying a new car, once you drive it off the lot you are not entitled to any refund. With boat building people put down % pay as the job is completed. There have been several times where a customer has paid 30% down on a boat to build. Then I don't hear from them for years. Meanwhile shipping goes up things change. That is the truth behind boat building without the million dollars first. So there are two things I will tell chairman. One, that boats need to be on display to be purchased so people cannot back out once they buy. We all know what buyers remorse is. Well the car dealers surely don't suffer because of dreamers. But poor slobbs like me sure do. However I do make about \$2000 a year from these flaky people. I got tired of the crap so I put a link on my site for a minimum \$100.00 non refundable Invoice charge. Meaning I charge \$100 to draw up an invoice for someone. And I charge \$80.00 for information on a boat when people ask, what kind of gizmo I can put on the thingamabob. I used to waste my time estimating these extra costs to find out the guy is just a dreamer. So at least I make something. I am looking forward to the day where the non refundable invoice charge can support me, because that is what is happening.

They have done it again.

A month ago Sri Lanka passed a new law that makes it illegal to smoke in ANY public place. This includes all restaurants, hotels, streets, beaches, work place. The only place one is allowed to smoke is in one's home. The penalty is \$50.00 per offense and/or 2 months in jail, meaning if you get caught and don't give the arresting officer a sufficient bribe you are going to jail. I did not think much of it until this morning while watching the stupid business round up TV show. The show announced that malls, restaurant and hotel businesses revenue and attendance have dropped 50%. In addition tourism has dropped dramatically the last month. Other tourists have cut their stay short or canceled plans to visit Sri Lanka. Furthermore matches are no longer allowed to be sold, as this might help someone to light the cigarettes they buy. Stores, restaurants, hotels are not allowed to hand out matches anymore.

Today I bought some fresh fish from the vendors along the canal as they came in with their catch. What we call Redfish or Red Snapper they call Red Mullet. What we call Pompano they call Seer. Buy is Seer good I bought a kilo for \$4.80. I had the guy fillet it. He nor anyone else knew what fillet meant. Nor did any of the salty dog fishermen know how to fillet. They ALWAYS cut the fish into chunks or steaks. I ended up showing them how to fillet a fish. As I began with the razor sharp machete they use and sharpen on the nearest rock, a crowd gathered around to see what in the heck I was doing. They were amazed and like the nice fillet cuts. The only part of filleting they did not approve of was the center cut bones I threw out. They would have kept it and picked it clean. I went to the grocery store for some bread crumbs to fry the Seer up with. But they don't know what it is for have any.

I know now where the new feeling came. It is a change of season. Now the humidity is much less, and the temperature in the day is a constant 79 degrees and 75 degrees in the shade. At night it is nice and just above being cool. It is very nice. It has not rained for a while.

Chairman called me to his office today saying "I want you over here now BUSTER, I have hat for you to eat or you can bring your own hat to eat" So I went to his office thinking "Could this actually be true could I have been wrong about the sun rising in the east and setting in the west, that 2 plus 2 equals 4, that what goes up, must come down, and wrong about this TOO?" I prepared for a tongue lashing. Chairman handed me a neat folder that Percy had submitted as his "Credentials" Chairman handed it to me and said "There, what do you think of that!" "OK" I answered. "Let me look it over." And that is what I did. Inside the folder was a diploma from a welding class, a CAD class, a ship wrights apprentice course, AND the ONE DOCUMENT THAT has been bamboozling the chairman since day one. It is a membership certificate made to look legitimate from the Royal Institute of Naval Architecture. Percy is a member and has claimed all along that this is his "DIPLOMA" In fact the Royal Institute of Naval Architecture is nothing but a scam which is a front that lets people like Percy pretend to be a naval architect. My dog could be a naval architect according to them. All you really have to do to become a member is to send in a donation and pay an annual membership fee. This bogus institute has NO instructors, No classrooms, No curriculum, No competencies, nothing it is just a meeting hall clubhouse that has been chartered by the UK 100 years ago.

I wrote to them asking what their requirements to join were and that members were presenting themselves a Naval Architects solely on their membership card. This is the condensed version of their reply as I had sent it to chairman after refusing to eat his hat and telling him, the credentials he showed me were good only for wiping one's ass.

Zahid,

I wrote the Royal Institute of Naval Architecture asking them the qualifications of their members. Most of the reply was bla...bla...bla. I condensed it to reveal the truth. This place is nothing but a front for people who want to pretend they are something they are not.

"Dear Mr Todd,"

1. "The academic standard will not necessarily be a degree"
(meaning: there is no academic standard)
2. "It is therefore advisable for a prospective employer to find out what experience the member has. In brief, not all members are competent to do everything that other members do"
(meaning: membership does not mean competency)
3. "members do not undertake any task for which they are not competent"
(There are NO competency guidelines, it's all by the honor system)
4. "The assertion that members of the Institution are "certified naval architects" is incorrect... it is not a necessary requirement for members to have a degree"
(meaning: any idiot can be a member)
5. "Also, an individual does not have to be a member of this institution to refer to them selves as a naval architect - unlike the medical Dr, it is not a protected term."

(The term "Naval Architect" IS A PROTECTED! ** see attached definitions **)

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Regards,

Trevor Blakeley

Chief Executive

Royal Institution of Naval Architects

You will note they claim the title Naval Architect is not a protected term, when in FACT by the very definition it is a protected term as you can clearly see on this link to Wikipedia :

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Architect#The_Naval_Architect

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professional_Engineer#Asia

This is why the Ex Sri Lankan Navy people get away with this scam; they have a bogus institute behind them. Pay your membership and you have the freedom to pretend you are a legitimate Naval Architect. Maybe the Universities should shut down because they are not needed according to these assholes in the UK. I knew there was something suspicious when they addressed me as Mr. Todd. Only a third world moron does that.

CEO

Finally after 4 months of me telling chairman Percy is perpetrating a fraud saying he is a naval architect, and chairman telling me I am full of crap, I finally convinced him I was right all along. I have now proven several key flaws in ESM management and designs. Today Chairman invited me to lunch at Sam's house. Sam's house is where we met the first week I arrived for a nice lunch and meeting. I think chairman has only important meetings at Sam's because there is no one around who could be spying or over hearing things. It is the only place where there are no other people present except dear Sam and Ajith ESM's driver and GM assistant. For the first time since I have been here I saw chairman was relaxed and felt he could speak freely. He ate with his fingers and acted like a real Sri Lankan native. I had not seen him this way before. I think it is his true nature that he conceals to everyone. It was another knock down drag out. He told me he did not have the money and I told him bullshit. He said "I have spent \$30,000 on the Todd project and you have not made one sale" I said "That is not true, I tried to buy two boats from ESM, but your management did not lift a finger to build the boats. Even after I waited one month, all the managers said is pay me all the money upfront, while at the same time saying they had no men to do the work" He said "You should have told me, I am not in love with Dudley, and I would have kicked his ass" I said "I did tell you over an over" He said "You did not shout at me to get you men, you should have gotten really mad with me" I said "Don't tell me I have not done everything humanly possible to make improvements while I have been here" He told me "I am not in love with you" I said "I hope not" He said "My only loyalty is to my wallet". I said "Then why do you let morons run your ESM ruining the business?" He said "An American company cost me 250,000 in lost revenue" I told him "Too bad, it has nothing to do with me" He said "You have not always been right" I said "Name one time I have been wrong" He said "I cannot just change the management overnight" I said "Yes you can, you are just afraid" he said "Your right" I said "See I am right again" Finally he said "What do you want me to do?" This time I was prepared. I said "Get rid of Dudley and Carleton, eliminate the position of Managing Director (Dudley's position), and you will save \$2000.00 per month in salary. Then make me CEO and I will get ESM on the right track" He said "OK" I asked "What?" He said "OK, I will make you CEO, but only if you make some bloody sales" I said "ESM is incapable of building boats. Now ESM makes only tubs with motors. ESM cannot build boats good enough for export" He said he would make the decision by Wednesday. I said "No you won't, you will just let things go on the way they have been" He said "No, I have already brought someone into the organization" I said "Great another blind ignorant stubborn moron I will have to deal with" He said "No, this is a top man" I asked "Is he Sri Lanka?" "Yes" he answered "Then whoever he is he is a moron" chairman said "Look, the best I can do until I can fire the management is to get you a secretary" I said "As long as she has big tits" He said "She may not have big boobs" I said "Then I don't want a secretary." He said "Alright you'll have a secretary with big boobs, Sam get Todd a secretary with big boobs". Now I have a secretary with big boobs. I didn't say big Boobs, chairman calls them boobs. Boobs, Boobs, Boobs have I said Boobs enough yet. I called them big tits, but chairman did not know what the word meant. That was how our conversation went for 2 hours. One thing different about today's meeting was that several times chairman just looked at me silent, just looking at me eye to eye. I could tell he was thinking about making a change. If it was to dismiss what I say, he would not talk with me, or have a face to face uninterrupted meeting. He has got something planned but I don't know what it is. I really had a great time shouting back and fourth in one minute than laughing together the next. I have him believing that ESM is very important to me and it is critical to my future. Little does he know that if I wanted I could hop on the next flight out of here and forget ESM entirely without batting an eye. But God sent me here for a reason and I am pushing this to the limit, not holding back anything if it would help get ESM on track. Then chairman said to Sam "Sam I want you to go to the university professor at Colombo University and give him a report on Todd's design changes he wants to make to the boats, and get his opinion." I interrupted "Don't bother, we don't have time. It took me 4 months of aggravation proving to you that Percy was not a real naval architect, and I don't have the time or the energy to keep proving myself. If you want the professor's opinion, then Sam and I will go to him and present a few sketches and present some design concepts. He will either see the common sense or be another moron" "OK, Sam you and Todd Go Monday"

Chairman cannot negotiate well. He shows his hand every time. If he were playing poker he would have lost his shirt many times over. But that is OK because I am not here to take advantage of the situation. I am here for some reason. History is being made. I launched the King Fisher today. The first USA style boat ever to run up and down the Dutch canal/ Crowds gathered on the canal sides to see the crazy American speeding around. Soon Sam, Asitha, Aruna, and Sudath wanted to go for a ride. Even with the 5 of us on board the boat performed well. I think it was the first speedboat ride they ever took. After a while I gave the wheel to Sudath. He is a cool guy and a great bull shitter. You can be having a calm conversation with him then he will go off on someone walking by Shouting at

them in Sinhalese. Then go right back to the calm conversation. He doesn't shout at people expecting them to do anything he does it only for show to look like he knows what is going on. It is OK, his job is sales, and he does a good job. So what if he hasn't sold anything in a year. Every company needs a Sudath to put a handsome face and a gregarious personality into the crap that goes on. So I gave the wheel to Sudath, he took the wheel as if it was made for him. Then it came time to turn around. That was when it happened. The canal is narrow like the ones in Perrine. Sudath had a hard time. First throttling the engine to back up and keep from hitting one side, then throttling the engine that made the boat jump right onto the bank of the canal. We nearly flipped over. The other passengers were terrified. But I knew it was coming and just sat there as I knew the boat would either flip over and I would jump out, or it would slide back into the canal, which it did. Sudath, handled it cool as a cucumber saying "Whoops". So the boat is scratched up, I built it so it could withstand being abused. If I had let ESM build it their way it would have broken in half.

Today,

I woke up late this morning for reasons I will explain later. William had already come, cleaned up and left me a cup of coffee. It was late morning I knew without looking at the clock because the coffee William had left was cold. I strolled to ESM and took care of a few things then went to Pegasus for breakfast. As is nearly every time I go there it was deserted except for me. Which is nice, quiet and peaceful. So peaceful that the peace came over me. I sat and ate on the patio overlooking the beach and sea. I watched the fishermen with their boats slowly silently drift by with their bamboo outriggers swaying side to side as the boats gently rolled with the calm sea waves. On the horizon were container ships coming to Colombo. Then a few whales went by blowing mist high into the air. You could see their humps as they passed by about 2 Kilometers offshore where it drops to 800 feet. In this time I felt that I was supposed to be here, like in a movie. No matter how spectacular or bazaar the movie plots the star of the movie is there at the center of it all. I am in the center, and I am the fat movie star. I knew this place is where I belong. To the fishermen bringing in their catch, the waiter lighting my cigarette and the groundskeeper hosing the sand off the terrace, this was just another day. Soft concert music was playing Christmas music in the background and I was reminded of Jesus. That was when I had a revelation; this is the greatest time of my life and not just another day in paradise.

I returned to ESM after my latest revelation. You know revelation like in the bible sounds scary. It usually means terror of the 4 horsemen, or the other monsters and lake of fire. I find it is different than what I used to think. The difference is instead of thinking about revelation and worry about it; I believe revelation and am grateful for it. Yes there are the 4 horsemen, lake of fire and other monsters. This is the nature of man. The nature of God is the peace and fulfillment. As is said, God Gives and God Takes away. This is true God gives peace joy and fulfillment, and God takes away anxiety, jealousy, hatred, remorse, guilt and so many other things that are taken when the revelation comes. These 4 horsemen and monsters and lake of fire were my mind before the first revelation.

Back to the subject. I went to ESM after Pegasus and I was wearing my hat. Dudley saw me and made a point to greet me with a smile saying "You look very handsome today with your cowboy hat. You come to Blue Star riding on your horse to fire everybody." He said this smiling. So naturally I smiled back and nodded. After all what do you say to a comment like that? Business men here smile in front of you but stab you in the back. So far they have only been able to stab me with rubber knives as I have proven over and over again that their logic is flawed and will not fly.

The other day Sam Abbey and I were shootingg the breeze in broken English when the subject of Anika came up. They asked if I had photos of her. "Why yes I do" I answered and we went to my office and I showed them the Anika gallery. They were impressed. But then Abbey said "I see her but not you" "Oh, you want to see me with her? Ok, check this out." I answered to his questioning if they were just pictures of any girl. So then I showed him the un edited Anika Gallery that I cannot put online. The gallery that has pictures of me and Anika in compromising positions. Abbey's eyes went wide open. There is no Playboy or nude or even topless bars. It seems naked a picture of my naked girlfriend is just another of my many contributions to the Sri Lankan culture. "WOW!" was all either Sam or Abbey could muster. "OK, enough of this, lets get back to work" I said as I closed the laptop. The next day Abbey peeked into my office several times. I finally said out loud "Abbey, come on in you must want to talk to me" Abbey came into my office and just stood there. After about a minute of silence he said "Photos?" He wanted to see the photos again. Just then Sam came barging into my office laughing and saying "Stop, you no show Abbey photos, he cannot take". I forgot about it. Until later in the afternoon Sam told me that Abbey had blabbed about nude Anika to the entire office staff. I really did not mind for two reasons. It showed the men I have balls and it showed the women that I like women. And the second reason it did not bother me was because it showed me that Abbey and I have much in common. Like not being able to keep a secret. What did piss me off was Sam told me that when Carleton overheard this he went to chairman to say how disgusting I was and how I am making ESM look bad. That this proves I am irresponsible and reckless.

By the way Percy has submitted a letter to chairman recommending that Carleton take over the vacant seat of CEO once he leaves office. Carleton is a nice guy when you talk about the whether. But if you ever ask him his opinion on a design idea he always says "It will not work" If you ask Carleton his Ideas on your design to make a toilet with running water he will say "It will not work" or "you cannot do that" Like when I said "I have a boat to build and a customer in the USA to buy it. Let us get started right away" Carleton said "You cannot do that, the shipping will be too high" I said "What the hell do you care the customer is paying for it" Again he said "No the customer will not. We will have to pay for it" I said to myself "Self, what the hell is this guy talking about, the customer already agreed to buy the boat and to pay for the shipping, does Carleton know something I don't?" So I asked Carleton "Do you know something I don't about this sale or this customer? Because if you do I would surely like to hear it" He said "No, but all sales are the same we must pay for shipping. We must absorb this cost and it will be too much." OK at that point I realized Carleton is not playing with a full deck and that is when I gave up on him. Even the off cut fiberglass I found. Ton upon ton of good fiberglass sheets were neatly folded and put into a store room where the rain soaks the fiberglass. I said at a meeting that I can build a boat using nothing but the off cut that was being thrown out into that waste room. Carleton corrected me saying. But you must use resin so the boat will not be free. I said "No kidding dumb shit, but the fiberglass is free because you had already thrown it out" Carleton again corrected me saying "No we sell that off cut for \$1.00 a kilo" I said "Bull Shit, I have not seen one person come here in 6 months to buy any off cut. The amount here now has only doubled from you throwing out more every day. Carleton again corrected me saying "You are wrong we sell off cut to make motorcycle helmets." I knew that was utter bullshit as I would have seen or heard about it if it was true. But in fact no one has touched the off cut except for me who did build a boat out of it despite objections. Even if I was to use the inventory fiberglass then the assholes would have said I was wasting material. When the truth is they are the ones that waste material by building boats like a moron would. There is no pleasing Carleton. Even worse when you ask his opinion on design ideas that are clearly superior and cannot be dismissed

he always says "Yes, this is a good idea, but only I can make it happen. You cannot make it work" In other words you cannot win with Carleton there is no dialog at ESM only the idiots telling me I am wrong whenever I try to have a conversation about how we should proceed on a job. This does not mean you cannot have fun and go out to dinner with him and Dudley who is the same. It just means whatever you do either do not talk business or agree with everything, no matter how stupid. Otherwise they will talk you to death because when you disagree with them, get mad at them, or tell them they are stupid they do not react at all, they simply tell you calmly "I know you believe your words but you are wrong about that because." Then they go on and on and on. Meanwhile you must sit there and listen because you realize you should not have disagreed and now must take the punishment.

Carleton ratted on me and Anika to chairman. Sam told me this to warn me ahead in case chairman gets mad. Instead when chairman brought up the nude subject he asked two questions. First. Are you sure you are safe with these girls. And second question was "Can you get me a girl like that so I do not have to travel to Bangkok?" I answered yes to both. Chairman was joking about getting his own girlfriend, I think.

Speaking of Anika. He other day she came over for breakfast. She made vegetable curry, curry, tuna, fried bread and dahl. Man is this food great once you know how to eat it. You see here you have to know how to eat. In the US you just stuff your face. Here eating is a skill. If you do not have the eating skills you will not like the food. When you learn the skills of eating you really will enjoy it. Besides the breakfast I just mentioned costs seventy cents, and that is with coffee. One thing she served me was a glass of hot water. I was thirsty from the hot curry so I took a gulp of the hot water not knowing it was hot. I said loudly "This is hot water, and I just had a bunch of curry, and you give me firkin hot water; now I my mouth is burning up!" She laughed repeating my words "Friken yes" She too is learning some eloquent English terminology. Turns out the real natives who can barely afford to eat drink hot water with meals because it cleanses the palette of oils and fats from each mouthful so you get the full flavor with every bite. It is a great way to keep the taste fresh. Anika told me she was going to Kandy and would not see me again.

This evening I got a call from VJ my Parliamentarian buddy. He told me to come over his house right away for business. I said you gotta send a car, I am sick of riding in 3 wheelers across town and being gassed by the pollution from the busses. Thirty minutes later a Mercedes stretch limo pulled up to Continental fashions. The driver told the guard to get me. I came down and got into the Limo. Just as I was getting ion the limo and driving away chairman pulled up and saw me getting in a limo. He saw me but luckily I was already on my way over the bridge and it was too late for him to stop us. I pretended not to see him. This is entirely plausible. Plausible that I may not have seen him standing in the middle of Paliya Watta or heard him yelling "Todd come back here I need to talk to you" Yeah he needs to talk to me alright. Sam told me this morning that he changed his mind about everything again for the tenth time. Now he does not want me, he does not want to pay for my airfare home, he only says he will be doing me a favor by letting me stay in the apt. Yeah right as soon as I get used to staying here. You know what's coming right? The next thing he will say is "Todd I need the apt, you cannot stay there anymore. You can stay with the other workers at the ESM apts" Which make the ghettos of Harlem look like luxury town houses. So why not pretend I didn't see or here him. He has nothing I want to hear anyway. Like I said he is a poor poker player. I see his hand every time.

I arrived in style at VJ's house where a nice Sri Lankan lunch of tuna a curry chicken and rice was waiting. Also were Maldives business men. They are borrowing two million dollars from VJ. VJ showed me the loan papers and the men told me their plans. They are building a 72 foot Dohni . A Dohni is a boat where their is a cabin wheel house up front then the entire rear from the wheel hose is wide open flat deck space. They also call it a Packing boat. All it does is go to the fishing boats at sea and collects the fish then packs the fish into wax covered boxes that are then flown out by a helicopter that lands on the deck of the Dohni . VJ is financing the construction of this multi million dollar boat in return for a percentage of the fish they catch for his fish export business to Europe. Besides VJ getting repayment and interest payments of fish for export. He has also negotiated to buy the previous 72 foot ship that was used before. The new one will have more modern technology and modern ice machines for fish packing. VJ says we don't need a helicopter pad we just need to make the boat and molds. He told me he has the money now and is ready to start spending. He says he will pay me a salary and a percentage of profit. He said to me that I did not have the money to help in the project but that he thinks it will require my leadership to build the boats the right way. And that that is just as valuable as having a cash investment. Boy am I glad he said it instead of me trying to explain I aren't got a pot to piss in, let alone hundreds of thousands to invest in a third world business.

The other day chairman and others have said to me that VJ is like the Godfather. People disappear on his word. That doing business with him is dangerous. So I had to tell him my concerns. especially what chairman said. "If VJ doesn't like you if he thinks you are cheating him or stealing from him will have your balls cut off" So I asked VJ. "VJ if things don't go the way you plan, are you gong to have my balls cut off?" He looked at me with a dead serious stare for about 10seconds then said "What is this nonsense you speak?" I again said to him "VJ You are my friend, I respect you and am looking forward to doing everything I can to make our partnership successful, but some people have mentioned that you are a dangerous and difficult man to do business with." He looked at me again to say. "No this is not true; I would not remain on parliament if I were a bad man. The people would have voted me out of office long a go. Don't worry. We are going to make millions in this business. Just do the best you can. I want to build ships and I think we can do it. OK? So now stop this nonsense and do not worry." Boy did I feel like a jerk. The people I believed really took me for a ride and played me like a fiddle. Oh well, I was glad to get that out of the way. VJ does business different than chairman. Chairman is all into the board of directors thing. Taking months to make a decision. Then not following through. Having meeting after meeting then doing nothing about anything. It is like deciding what main course to order for dinner as your Titanic is sinking.

VJ makes decisions then sticks with it and makes things happen whether or not VJ is a godfather or not I do not know but if he is it would not be bad to have him as my friend. And why would things go bad? Before he used to ask me what something costs then he would decide. But today he says that he knows what things cost and is ready to start.

That brings to another matter. VJ and I are flying out to Maldives on the 20th of December for a week. Then flying back to organize a business to build the 72 foot boats in Maldives. It turns out that the bulk of the fish exports to Europe come from Maldives. Maldives is still a good fishing ground for many species that sell in Europe. Species other than tuna. VJ told me that is where the fish are, that is where the boats are needed the most. But also he will build for Sri Lanka also. VJ told me that things have changed since the tsunami. He says that now the world is more aware of the Sri Lankan fish exports and more and more Europeans are importing fish from Maldives.. One reason is that Maldives fishermen use hooks to catch fish, so the fish are pristine when they are displayed at the fish market. Sri Lankan fishermen use gill nets which are illegal in most countries. Gill nets tear off fins, rip open gills and generically tear up fish when they are caught. VJ understands this as he explained it to me and is why he does not deal in Sri Lankan fish. And is the reason the Sri Lankan fishermen say he does not help them. He does not help them because the tear up the fish, then he cannot sell them at a premium. Europeans will not buy fish if they are torn up. Would you buy a fish at a market if it looked like it had been run over by a truck? Of course you wouldn't. You would go to the fish market where the fish look in good shape. I remember talking to Carleton about this. I said Sri Lanka cannot make any money of fish unless the use hooks instead of gillnets that tear the fish up. Carleton answered me saying "That will not work. The hook methods cost too much. The average Sri Lankan will not buy the fish no matter if it looks better. If I were

buying a fish I would not spend more just because it looked better." See what I meant about Carelton who wants to be CEO. A disaster in the making for ESM.

Anyway VJ is very knowledgeable about the fishing industry. As he says the exports of pristine caught fish is a booming business for him and he wants more boats made for the packing purposes. VJ then handed me two brochures. One from ESM and the other from a Maldives Yacht manufacturing Company. I mean a 20 million dollar yacht company that has many pictures of their yachts from 70 feet to 200 feet. and there next to it was ESM's brochure of a decorated colorful tub of a boat. No way could anyone compare the two. I told VJ after one look at the Maldives Yacht company that ESM was incapable of that type of quality and lacked everything to make boats similar to the Maldives fishing boats. So then VJ said to me, Then throw out Blue Star papers. And he smiled. That is all you will get from VJ is a smile. He does not laugh; he is serious all the time. When he invites me over for a meal he says "'Come over to my home for some merriment"

Yes I have a good time but there is no laughing. H only speaks when he has something to say he does not joke around like chairman or Sam. So the short of it is that I am most likely going to Maldives for a while. Good thing I rented the house. I may not be welcome when I return. While I was at VJ's my mobile phone rang it was Sam. He said "Where you are?" I said "I am having lunch with VJ." Sam said "You are having lunch in Colombo with Mahinda Wijesekera?"

I said yes I was. Then Sam told me that Zahid was on the line and wanted to talk to me. I said "Hello?" Chairman asked "Where are you? I want to talk to you? Are you really with Mahinda?" I said yes. At that chairman said "I have a man here and I wanted to talk to you about some issue, but now he is gone so we cannot talk" "OK, bye" I replied. I think me being with Mahinda really caught chairman off guard. I think chairman really believes I need ESM. Because he has been getting tighter and tighter with his money while at the same time allowing me to run my projects. Which I get done despite the resistance I get. I think chairman thinks I am just another stupid Sri Lankan who he distastes terms to and I would take any scraps he sends and be grateful for them.

Instead Just in time VJ comes through with a good plan of action. His plan is to not expect any money from me, rather he will pay me a good salary, provide me a home and transportation and a share of the profits. He came up with this on his own. He just asked me if I liked HIS plan. Of course I like it. Who would not like the opportunity to design and build dhips 72 feet and larger with the authority and freedom to go along with it. And in addition to live in luxury in Maldives where there are few homes, and several 5 star resorts for the millionaires and movie stars. Maldives is the place a lot of wealthy people go to get away from the crowds. Even VJ acknowledged to me that the war has ruined the tourist business and the wealth of the country is fading as fewer and fewer tourist to Maldives for vacation. Maldives that does not have a civil war going on that has lasted 25 years and still going strong. VJ admitted to me it would be better for him to do business in Maldives instead of Sri Lanka because of the many problems here that are just getting worse. So I am off to Maldives in few days.

OK that's it no more entry, go back to whatever it was you were doing, nothing left to see. Stop reading mother that is it, no more.

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OK, I think this is far enough down the page where mother cannot follow. As I said Anika told me she was leaving for Kandy for a long time and would not see me again. I was distressed for about 10 seconds until I heard a knock on the door. It was Anika's friend Gita. Gita is even more beautiful than Anika. Anika told me in half broken English and sign language that Gita was now to be my girlfriend. I had no choice in the matter, and I was not about to object. Gita is a very beautiful dark skin native girl with long shiny soft silk jet black smooth hair wavy like a calm sea. Absolutely a calendar girl. She said she was 23, but I don't think she was more than 18 years old. As Anika left Gita held me to me to keep me from following Anika out the door. To make a long story short. I did not get to ESM until 3:00 Gita entertained me to no end. Here the business may suck but the people are the best I have ever known. They all treat me like a king. There are kings and there are tyrants. Tyrants are served but only out of fear. Kings are waited on because of love. In the US being treated like a king means to be inundated with consumables and catered to 24/7. Here being treated like a king means the people love you protect you, give you what you need, and tell you what you don't need. If you are thirsty. They don't look for a store to get you water or soda. They climb the nearest palm tree to get a king coconut then cut it open for you.

By the way neither Anika or Gita have once mentioned that I am fat. And why are they so nice and devoted to me? Simple. Every now and then I give them \$10.00 so they can go shopping. And what do they go shopping for? They shop for food to feed their family members. Makeup and beauty products they do not need to buy their beauty is all natural.

When I left Gita I left her with Atula my room mate. It is his house I rent. He asks if he could stay in one of the bedrooms and I said sure because Atula is a good friend. Atula is a strikingly handsome young man who could easily be a model or movie star if he were in the USA. He is married and his wife and parents all live together in Colombo. The house is his parents. He works at Pegasus in the week days and goes to his wife in Colombo on the weekends.

I have many friends here now on the sea side. The sea side is a strip about one quarter mile wide that extends the entire length of the Dutch canal about 27 kilometers. There are only a few bridges over the canal. No one goes to the sea side unless the work at Pegasus, at the garment factory, or at ESM All the rest of the businesses are on the Wattala side of the canal. Which is like West Perrine. All the congestion, traffic hassles are on the Wattala side. It is very peaceful and aid back on the sea side.

On the Wattala side is where all the fishermen sell their catch. People drive all the way from Colombo to buy fish on the canal at Wattala. It is the freshest fish outside of Negambo.

Besides my young girlfriends I have another girlfriend. Her name is Marissa. She does tell me I am fat and should exercise. She speaks English very well and works in the hotel business. She won't go to the Pegasus with me for meals because she works with hotels and does not want the word to get around that she is hooked up with a fat American. As far as what she thinks about my young pretty girlfriends; she does not care. She says "Good you get your jollies with her and you go to dinner with me. You cannot take those young girls out because what will you talk about? They only know one thing. I know what that thing is and I give it to you as well, but with me only you can go out to dinner or a show and enjoy conversation" You know she is so right and I told her that saying "Thank you ,

you are so right about that.” Marissa and I are going out Saturday night to a club she says I will like. Gita was at the house when Marissa came over for a visit. At that time Gita got Marissa tea and served it to her with a smile. Even though Marissa were there as a couple. Neither Marissa or Gita had any thoughts about me being with both of them at different times. They were genuinely friendly with each other. I was tempted to get them both together, but I think that contribution to the Sri Lankan culture can wait. Marissa is fun too she is old woman about 40 years but very young looking as well as her figure. As chairman would say “...as long as she has big boobs”

Charlie Hale,

Today something told me to go to Pegasus. I did not know why. Just a feeling that I should be there. It was such a nice day I decided to walk. About two blocks from my apt and the lining in my shoes was worn and uncomfortable. I stopped at a shoe maker's house and he fixed them with some nice double layered leather insides, very nice and comfortable all for \$175. Walking then became much more enjoyable. I got to Pegasus and said to myself “Self, I am here now why did I feel compelled to get here I walked around and nothing jumped out at me to indicate why I needed to be there” I figured it must be because I need to go to Presanna Jewelers on the first floor near the pool. I went into the jewelers and before I knew it I bought three 1/3 carat white sapphires pennant, three 1/3 carat ruby and diamond set in gold pennant, 2 and 1/4 sovereign gold chains, a 1/2 carat bright sapphire, and the three 1/4 ruby and diamond pennant I told Alexis about. I tried taking pictures of it but the camera I have does not take good close-ups as you can see by the flower images I tried to capture. And one Silver chain. Don't ask how much, All I can say these things cost twice as much in the USA. So you see I had to get them. I walked out of the Jewelers quite happy that this was the reason I was drawn here. I decided to have a cup of coffee while at Pegasus. All the tables were full except one on the far side of the courtyard, so I headed that way. As I neared the only empty seat there I heard someone say. “Hey you got a nice ass.” The voice came from a table a few yards away so I could not identify who was there. But I figured it must be someone I know making a joke about my courageous ass. When I looked over and saw it was no one I knew. I went over expecting to break some puny Sri Lankan in half. As I got closer one of the group said “Come sit with us” It was a group of five care free Sri Lankan buddies who were natives but part of the wealthy rich crowd, not the serious working natives. They were there having a lot of good food and Arrarak. Arrarak is Sri Lanka for rum. It is not rum but that is the closest thing to compare it to. It looks like rum, smells like rum and the label is similar to a rum label. I went up and one of them whose name is Naranja got me a chair and I sat. We immediately hit it off talking, laughing and joking around. You know when you are a foreigner. The locals joke around with you and laugh at everything you say and do because it is fun to make jokes about tourists. And I was the joke. Living here I learned it is fun to be a joke and not to takes ones self to seriously. Like the invitation they gave me “Hey you got a nice ass come sit with us” They all joked like “I like USA” That was not a joke, they really do, and so does everyone here lie the USA. They made jokes about me and my big ass. I told them it gives me power. They asked why. I said “It is like a train, when you have just the locomotive it has power, but when the locomotive has a mile of cars it is pulling you cannot stop it.” They got the comparison and we laughed some more. Since I was the tourist wearing my leather elephant tourist hat, I looked like a tourist. But I do not care because my skin is light and I cannot look like anything else but a tourist, so why not go all out. It came time, time for me to stop the joking and see if they really wanted to be friendly or just keep making fun of me.

I waited for my opening which came the next instant. They asked me to drink with them as they passed the Sri Lankan Rum. “Have a drink” they all said. I said “No thanks, I do not drink” They all asked why. I said I did not drink because if I did they would not like me. They continued pushing. “Have a beer at least” “No I do not drink at all” Then I made my move to get them to stop being silly and get real. Thy asked again “Why don't you drink” I said “Because I break out in red blisters when I drink”

Turns out Naranja's family is the UPS agency for Sri Lanka. Naranja This group of guys in their mid to late thirties reminded me of Charlie Hale and how he would have a way to get people to gather together have fun joking around, talking and drinking. You would have thought you were with those hillbillies if you were not in Sri Lanka. The fun lasted for a few hours and then it was time to walk back to the apt. as the guys were getting plastered, yet still joking and having a good time. As I left I realized that this meeting is why I was drawn her to Pegasus. One promise they made and had mush to talk about was planning a trip with all six of us to go to Bangkok. Apparently this is the place to go and party if you live in south Asia. We exchanged phone numbers and as I left Naranga asked me “What is my name?” I said “I forgot” “Naranga, my name is Naranga, call me and we will all go to Bangkok, you will love it there.”

As I left Sam called me. I had been AWOL from ESM since Thursday planning to either get the next flight back to the US or go to Maldives with VJ and the Maldives fishermen. Sam said “Where you now, why you go, I call you four, six time, no answer, Blue Star need you. Now you come to Mount castle. We have meeting with Mr. Zahid, he wait for you, you go, yes?” “OK, Sam I will be right there. Mount castle is a garment factory on the opposite side of the canal from ESM. Instead of walking the road to my apt I took the jungle path to the canal then got a native to get me across on a boat. I sat down with chairman and Sam. Chairman did not acknowledge that I was AWOL. He just asked how is it going. I asked him “Do you want me to tell you the truth?” “Yes man tell me the bloody truth” said “ESM sucks, it is incapable of building boats and you have two faced henchmen that make my work impossible to do then turn around and say “See he has not done anything. They do this right after they tell you they will help me as much as they can when in fact they lie to your face saying yes sir to you then screw you to me as soon as your gone” Chairman was frozen for about two seconds when he let pout a yell and slammed his hand down on the desk like I had never seen him before, like he had real rage in his expression “ God damn it man you son of a bitch what the hell are you talking about?” This is chairman's way of starting the fun. Most don't know it and cower, shrink up and tremble with fear. I know the fun and besides I was right, as Sam will attest to. I replied in a firm voice queuing him in on the zinger I was about to unleash “Let me tell YOU something” Chairman smiled saying semi loudly “Let me have it” I answered “ONE WORD... SABOTAGE, you have sabotage going on at ESM”. Chairman saw I was serious and replied “So why don't you tell those idiots where to go? And to quit giving you a hard time.” I agreed I would. Chairman said that that is unimportant. That I am my own man and he gives me complete freedom at ESM, the only difference from now and from before is that now when I build boats I have to pay for them. I thought about what he just said and I agreed that is very reasonable. He said “I have nursed you here for six months now, if you cannot stand on your own two feet and build boats here for your customers by paying for your own workers and material than I was wrong about you. The act that Dudley and others say bad things about you is something you better get used to because it will happen to you wherever you go. I am giving you the freedom to use ESM as you see fit, justly build things that are selling. Have you experimented enough and built the designs you wanted to or not?” I had to agree with his logic I answered Yes dad “I have done everything I wanted to here and now you are right it is time to start bringing in some sales” “OK, Sell some boats, pay for the labor and materials and I will give you out profits on these boats. This is how you will get paid. Besides I told you things have been really bad for my other businesses lately, but I think that all will be changing soon as an American company has come to help Mount castle get out of a situation we had when a buyer went bankrupt owing us a million dollars.” I said to chairman “I am not the kind of person who gives up. I remember when I was on the Titanic bailing out the sea water telling everyone we can save this ship just keep bailing.”

Chairman like that. He told me that too many people give up and the people who do not give up reap the rewards when things turn for the best. I think this was his way of testing my strength. After all we both know he has the money to pay me, but I see that he is right. I have been living for six months like a pampered baby here. Now it is time for me to take responsibility. At that chairman usually says "OK, good meeting, now I have some work to do But this time he said "All that shouting made me hungry, let's order a Pizza" Now that I am growing up I see that "Let's get a pizza" Is my cue to go while things are looking good and everyone is happy. What an exhilarating time. I see now how to get things done at ESM. I will do what chairman told me to do. And that is to tell those idiots to leave me alone, what I am doing is none of their business. That Chairman owns ESM not them. So why let them get to me. I felt relaxed and relieved and feel even closer to chairman. The reason is his way of talking and dealing with me. The truth is I went into that meeting throwing a fit like a spoiled brat having a tantrum hoping to get a reaction that I could use to justify abandoning ESM. But after each trade and temper tantrum I threw at chairman he just sat there until I ran out of words. At which time he would simply and calmly say "Are you done now?" I would say "No, I also pissed off about this and that and the other thing" "OK, now are you finished, lets order a pizza" "How can you order a pizza when ESM is going to hell in a hand basket?. You have backstabbers running ESM into the ground the same backstabbers running things that ran it into the ground before. This is insane! It has to stop or you wil NEVER sell boats in the USA. I am not a Sri Lankan, you can't talk to me like a Sri Lankan. I am not one of those idiot morons, I have a brain and have proved it over and over again, yet you continue to let those morons ruin ESM!!! It is like being in a bad dream in the land of idiots and not being able to wake up!" "Now are you done? I am hungry lets get a pizza." I finally wore myself out and could like light those bridges I was trying to burn. We finished our meeting on a positive note and I think I matured a little in the process.

As I left the meeting VJ called me to tell me the Maldives fishermen were on their way to pick me up to go to Negambo to meet a rep from a flake Ice machine company. I went along and met with Frenchie. It was refreshing to have dialog with a person who had a brain. He agreed with my ideas on the tuna packing barge designs. He actually agreed with me, can you believe it. Finally someone in Sri Lanka has greed with me. Very amazing. I told VJ and the Maldives guys that frenchie was the man to buy the 10 ton ice machine from. Later that night we all went to VJ's house where we all had a nice tuna and curry dinner. The Maldives guys, frenchie and I sat around the set table and VJ handed me the drawing tools and paper he had saved from my last trip. VJ said to us "OK, now you all get the conversation going on how we are going to do this" Great. I felt there was a real fun time ahead designing and nire building of boats. After all I was not in conflict with chairman. I told chairman I might be going to Maildives and working on this project. Chairman was happy for me. All he said was "Make money for yourself we will be here if you need us, have fun!" I felt retty good. Except the nagging thing chairman and a few others told me about VJ. That is that he is a very wealthy man from a very wealthy family but he does not pay his bills. I knew this was right because he did not pay my cab fare as he said he would when he asked me to come over that night. Who cares the cab fare for a 20 k ride is only \$4.00. But it made me realize these little bits could soon add up and get bigger and bigger. I put it out of my mind and had a good time. After our meeting VJ said the driver would take me home after he dropped the Maldives guys off at their hotel. That was when I saw VJ's way of having fun. About a block before the hotel we passed through a miserable part of Colombo where the train station is and the busses are that go all over. The drive stopped and said "OK, you get out and take a bus home" I looked around, it was about midnight no one was on the streets except the beggers and the poverty stricken, right in the middle of the dirtiest part of town. Kind of like liberty city. Only here you don't have to fear being robbed or killed as much as you do in liberty city. I turned to the drive and said right in front of the wealthy Maldives guys "Bull Shit, I ain't riding on no bus, your taking me home!" The driver said again, "No, you take the bus" I said "No, YOU take the friken bus!, I am calling VJ" I called VJ and said to him the driver told me to take the bus. VJ answered to me that he needed the car now to go to Matara and he hung up. I sat there thinking to myself "Self, this sucks" Actually I did not really care, I could easily get a 3 wheeler for \$3.00 to go the rest of the way. But it was that thing about little things adding up to a big thing that got me. As I thought this over, consumed in a minor panic attack that VJ was a rip off I looked up to see the driver had just taken a short cut and was pulling up into my apt driveway. I looked at him and he at me and all he did was laugh. The joke was on me. The Maldives guys were not in on the joke. They just sat there stone cold fearing I would have a rage attack. The next morning the Maldives let me know they cought on to the joke by giving me a smile and a friendly pat on the back saying "You must take the bus."

Still that got me to tell VJ that I was not going to Maldives with him on the 20th unless I got paid first. I did not want to go on his ticket and accommodations, because then I would owe him something and be on a lower platform in salary negotiations. And the time was growing near as I told him as part of my strategy that Chairman is not paying me, that ESM sucks that my visa is up on the 23 rd and I am going back to USA. I told him this as a set up to keep out any more lingering promises. So now at this conversation the foundation of my position is known to be set and non negotiable. Actually Sam and I are going to extend my visa on Tuesday regardless as Sam and Chairman have given their blessings. But VJ has not paid me yet so to him I am being very careful. At the same time I worked my way in to the position of being franchise's friend to build the tuna barge for the \$130,000.00 ten ton ice machine. Even VJ at the meeting trying to flatter me and sucker me into working for free said. "We need Todd He is USA and is the one who can make our barges". WRONG thing to say to me. So I keep silent. I gave him my terms and that is that. By the way I sold three boats this week. God is rewarding me generously.

Could it be true?

Today stated with me finding \$10,800 into my account for a boat from china that costs \$6000.00 including shipping. Then a few hours later I received an order for eight boats that total \$56,000.00 and a \$13,000. Deposit has been wired to my account. Could it really be true? That the Christmas gift I got in 2004 is beginning to pay off?

I knew things were going well a week ago. Not that ESM is getting better, but that I am getting the resources to hire my own crew. I sent ESM \$8000 they received today in the after noon. This was after the regular 5 hour meeting the execs have at ESM. At that meeting Sam told me that Dudley did nothing but shit all over me. And why? I did not cost him anything, yet the closer to success I bring ESM the more he shouts to chairman that I am making ESM go bankrupt. The fact is ESM has not paid a dime for me in two months. All the work I did with the King fisher I paid for. This includes installing my new 40HP Johnson outboard that I paid for. So what is his problem? Maybe I have an idea.

One thing where I got him good was the new fiberglass supply that is 20% less than his. I proved another point to chairman the other day regarding the new cheaper fiberglass supply that is identical to his brand. I told chairman to follow me the other day. I walked up to Dudley with some fiberglass samples for testing. I asked Dudley what he thought of this new cheaper supplier of fiberglass and what he thought of the quality. I had made some samples for him to examine. He, Dudley, having the monopoly on fiberglass supply in Sri Lanka would surely be the topmost expert in the subject. I gave him the samples in front of chairman and asked his opinion on quality. Well, Dudley went into a very long winded technical explanation about how this new supply according to the samples I submitted was obviously a poor grade and not worth anything. He went on to say that if this new product was used it would "De-Laminate" Meaning come apart (This is a

scare tactic he uses because it cannot be defended. The only way to defend it is to wait 10 years to see if the fiberglass actually does de-laminate). I knew his game and I played right along as he put down the new product as garbage. After about one hour of Dudley's tirade about my inexperience with materials and wasting his time I took chairman to the fiberglass stores department where they allocate raw materials. The samples that Dudley cursed as being junk because it came from me were in fact his own materials that I had fiberglass stores make samples with. I told this to chairman and his eyes lit up. He looked at me in disbelief like he just won the lottery. But I had him ask the guys in Sinhalese about whom had made the samples shown to Dudley. I had the samples marked with numbers and had those numbers recorded by the workers to be a witness to the fact that the samples were Dudley's own brand that he sells to chairman. All that chairman could say over and over is "You're a smart guy." I then told chairman I did this to show him that Dudley would put down the new cheaper fiberglass no matter how good it really was. I went on to tell him that there is no point in asking Dudley his opinion on the new supply. As before chairman asked me several times that before he bought from me he wanted me to get Dudley's opinion on the quality. ZI knew what Dudley would say and I wanted to bet him to the punch which I just did with great satisfaction. As chairman left he said to me "What ever you do, do not tell Dudley what just happened." I agreed, I don't need any trouble. Now I am building new molds for a sleek new 18 foot boat for a 8 boat order. My customer is Josef in Norway. He is a rich guy who does not talk details he just asks how much and where to pay. I had him wire the payments to ESM and chairman will give me boo koo kickbacks. Everything is lovely. But isn't that just when catastrophe strikes. I hope not this time. I need a lot of cash to pay for the boys to go to private school.

VJ has not called me about the Maldives project, and as far as he knows my visa is expiring, and the flight to Maldives is on the 20th that leaves one day for him to pay me. As I sent him a message that I did not want to go to Maldives until we had an agreement. If I went without one I would be in debited to him for the trip. Or even worse held hostage by the Hezbollah there.

I went to Fort again just for fun. I relaxed and had a great time. When I got back I saw Henry, an old timer from the British days who is the garment factory driver. After I showed him what I had bought and how much I paid for everything including the cab fare he said to me "You are now a Sri Lankan" Coming from him that says a lot.

Life in Sri Lanka,

I did not write about life in Sri Lanka before because frankly I thought it was so..... up that no one in their right mind would want to live here. That is what has kept it from being exploited. Without knowing they have protected the island paradise and the warm loving people a secret from the tourists that bring gambling, drugs, crime enabling exploitation. By having all these idiotic laws and insane business practices they weed out the ones who would trash this place. Here there are many ways of life that are unheard of elsewhere. Like backstabbing. Yes the businessmen back stab and sabotage your work, but at the same time they are your close friends. They separate work from personal relationships better than anything ever seen. Carleton, the same guy who ratted on me to chairman about having many girlfriends came to me this morning and told me he had a secretary for me. I said to him "Yes, but you ratted on me. How can I know this is not a set up?" He replied the lesson is "Keep everything a secret." It was my fault to show and tell my girls to Sam and Abbey. This is what Carleton ended up telling me. That he is not to blame for ratting on me, rather it was my fault to let anyone know about it in the first place. He said to me what chairman said "Keep your mouth shut" They are so right. The difference here and the USA is here when I have a big mouth people tell me about it. In the states people avoid you, or try to exploit or rob you.

I see the way to make good friends is by spreading the wealth. How? By giving them money. That does not make sense in USA. But here it is the way because they do not ask for it. When I say spread the wealth I mean hand out five cents here and there. Or pay a dollar tip to the 3 wheel driver after he has driven you all over Colombo and waited on you for hours while you shop and then only ask for \$5.50 for the 6 hour drive. So you give him \$6.50 and he is truly grateful, honor you, and will be your friend. In the street vendors you do the same thing. When they ask \$2.25 for a nice leather crafted wallet, you don't bargain him down. It is ridiculous. I have seen tourists try to bargain a vendor down twenty five cents for a nice tapestry. When you give them what they ask the next time they see you they offer you to pay less. Then when you buy from the street vendors and by mistake give them too much they immediately show you. When you pay fifty cents for a fresh squeezed tall glass of lime aid that only costs forty cents, they hand you your change before you can blink. When you try to tip them they will not take more than a few. If you have a delicious half roasted chicken with fresh vegetables, French fries, coffee for \$3.25 and leave a tip more than 5% they go after you to say too much and give it all back except for a few cents.

There is nothing more enjoyable than a walk to Pegasus from my apt or ESM thru the jungle. While walking today it started to rain. As I walked by a house looking ahead for a tree to stand under, a fisherman waved to me to come over. I followed him and he took me into his home for seat out of the rain. While I was there he cut a coconut for me to drink. His wife gave me a plate of fish, rice and curry while their three little children hid behind a door giggling and peeking out at me. We did not speak; they knew no English. I stayed about a half hour until the rain let up and I could walk again. As I left I put 100 rupees on a table near the front door. Before I made it to the road they gave it back to me smiling, gesturing to me I keep the rupees. You cannot pay for the kindness you receive. Instead I bought a red snapper from him for 200 rupees. He wrapped it in newsprint. Later I fried it up at my apt. I paid Nalaka \$9.00 for diving me to South Colombo to VJ's house the other day and he would not take it. He told me too much, too much. I ended up paying \$4.00 for a 20 kilometer drive with including him waiting 4 hours and sleeping in his 3 wheeler waiting for me. Spreading the wealth means spreading out five cents here and twenty cents there. Even the criminals become your friend and stop taking more money than a thing is worth.

VJ was disappointed with me when I called him today. It seems they do things differently. In the US when you make a deal you send your demands then you get a negotiated response, eventually coming to common ground and a price that is not the first highest price but somewhere in between. Here they take your response of a first high price, and instead of negotiating by saying "That is too much, I will pay this much". They get sad and say "I cannot afford this, so I must forget business" VJ was like that. I hit him with a high price for services because everyone was talking about buying a \$120,000.00 ice machine and how I was needed to build the packing barge and how they were going to fly me over and put me up in a nice house, but not a word about paying me anything. At the same time they were telling me to engineer the thing. Yeah right I am going to spend weeks of design calculations and CAD work for nothing. Yet no mention of my pay. They listed the things they were buying and it totaled \$300,000, but my pay was not included. So that is why I hit VJ with a high figure. I did this to get his attention. Not that I wanted the high figure, but I wanted dialog on my pay and guarantee of pay and to make sure I would be treated like a baby, which is very nice, and is how VJ and chairman care for me. VJ came down and finally discussed the terms of my compensation with is very generous, more than I would have

asked for. But initially he said I was telling them to forget it and I was going back to USA. They took me seriously. Don't they know the art of negotiations? I guess not, they are honest, simple and trusting. VJ said to me "How can we do business when you are leaving? And We cannot afford your fee, so we had to forget our plans" I said to him "USA and Sri Lankan business deals are different" Now VJ and I are meeting at his house so I can tell him that when I throw a fit it means that I am being ignored and all I require is reassurance. I make my point to them by telling them the story of Renee De Carte over and over until they can repeat it to me. The story is that Renee De Cart the father of modern western philosophy and who discovered calculus around the same time it was discovered by the Arabs was an admired man in Europe. He gave lectures and taught the new science of calculus, as well as the founding philosophy of "I think therefore I am" in answer to who we are, not just a brain in a vat having all our thoughts vision feelings, physical characteristics and observations being figment of ones imagination from a brain in a vat. No in fact we are in existence because "I think therefore I am" Renee was sought after for his counsel by kings and queens.

One day the Czar sent a messenger to him asking if he would go to Russia and be the Czar's advisor. The Czar sent a ship just to pick him up for the journey. As the ship sat in the harbor Renee said his goodbyes to his friends and family for his one year term as the Czar's advisor. Renee was known to be the wisest and smartest man in Europe. Yet with all his wisdom he was swept up in the excitement of the great opportunity. He left for Russia. When he got there he met the Czar and all the nobles. At the end of his great welcome a carriage came to take him to his residence while in the service of the czar. The carriage went through the square, then through the markets, then the suburbs, then the farmlands then through the woods then through a swamp. The carriage stopped at a dilapidated one room shack right in the middle of the swamp miles from the nearest neighbor. He was purposely put so far away because the Czar did not want anyone to talk to Renee except the royal family. The roads were mud, the sun did not shine through the trees, and there was a constant fog. There were no servants only an iron stove used for both cooking and heat which did not do much for keeping warm as the wind blew freely through loose timber construction.

At about 4:00am the carriage arrived to take Renee to the Czar's castle. The journey back and fourth began before sunrise travelling over muddy, rocky roads then arriving at the castle by noon. The returning the same way and arriving to the shack in the late evening. It was a brutal existence Renee was totally unsuited for this disaster. Renee was used to comfortable living as we all are. After about six months of this Renee requested he return to Europe to regain his health. But being malnourished then coming down with pneumonia he died the day he was to depart the swamp. The lesson is here is the wisest and smartest man around, yet when the excitement of a wonderful opportunity came to be in the company of royalty came he did not take necessary precautions to be guaranteed he would be cared for in a manner that we all take for granted. Every time chairman or VJ tell me they will take care of me with living and housing expenses I tell them this story. Now when I have to tell it they both know how it ends and finish the story for me. And I say "See I don't ant to end up like Renee." This is how they understand. You cannot tell them you require this and you require that because their culture and living is totally different than ours. A story they can relate to is how to get them to agree and follow through. So after I tell the story and they see my point I always get treated like I am a baby, not able to do anything for myself. When I am ignored I throw a fit, like when a baby is ignored it cries. You have to do something to keep from slipping into living in the swamp.

Oh Boy, now I ve'done it,

A few days ago I went to the fort (train station and location of the old fort built by the Portugese in 1700's) with Nalaka my bright eyed friend who is also one of my drivers. He followed me as I bought stuff and he took the videos of me there. We went along and I bought a nice pair of sunglasses for \$1.50 I bought a pair for him as well. He was amazed someone would do that for him and he double checked with me to make sure it was OK to accept. I seem no one here (In the poor seaside village near Watala) has ever been able to afford such a luxury. After he put them on he spent the rest of the day checking him out in the side rear view mirror. First he looked at how cool he was wearing them, then he would put them up and check out that look. The back to wearing them then back on top of his head. He was fascinated by his new look and could not get enough. That was a few days ago and I have not seen him wear them since.

We went to another jeweler. Jewelers, electronics salesmen are the only people here that I can relate to except chairman and VJ. Everyone else is wrapped up in the day to day affairs of Sri Lanka. While at the jewelry store the stone cutter who made my latest twin sapphire, ruby, emerald wide band ring asked me if I had seen USA wrestling. He asked me "Is it real?" I said "Of course it is real." That got everyone's attention there and they gathered around me wanting to know more about USA wrestling. They said the wrestlers were so big, bigger than any Sri Lankan ever! They are very impressed with the show, I mean real wrestling matches. I left and went to get my driver at the car lot. On the way from majestic city to the street there are at least 10 beggars. And I mean the kind you cannot help but give to. Some are blind, some are missing an arm or a leg or both legs. Some don't even have their head, they carry it around under one arm and the other extended for Rupees. So if you go there be sure to carry a pocket full of Rupees in change. They are just as pleased to get five cents as they are with one US dollar. Then there are the women who carry their babies around as a prop acting like they are starving. I give a few cents to them too. But then there are the ones on crutches or just sitting there. I was going to give one a five cents when Nalaka said to the beggar. "Why are you here? You have your legs, arms, go to work" At that he wisped me away to the car park. When you get a driver or a friend here they follow you around staying out if site unless someone is bothering you and then they appear from thin air to get you away from the mobs of beggars. I met a guy who looked and sounded like Kojak. I see him in front of MC whenever I go. He always comes up to me to show his collection of authentic Rolex watches. I mean these are as close to the real thing as I have ever seen. Not the cheap craps you can tell are fraud as soon as you see it. This look and feel exactly like a Rolex. I had to ask him "Are these genuine?" He answered "Yes, these are genuine Rolex copies made in Malaysia" So they are copies but you could not tell by looking at it, it says Rolex and has all the gadgets. I am going to get me one soon! Maybe I will get 4 or 5; they are only \$80.00 a piece. Seems like a lot but if you saw how nice and well made they were you would say it is a bargain like everything else here. If you come here you will want to buy everything you see. Because in the states these things are rare and they are made with quality, completely the opposite of real counterfeit stuff.

I also bought some more leather stuff I will send.

Now for the part where I said I went too far. As I said before everyone in the seaside knows me and looks out for me. Today Atula, the strikingly handsome native came to talk to me. He had just dropped his wife off at Colombo university where she is studying to be an Attorney. Meanwhile Atula is poor as dirt, but the good looking dashing type of young man that any young rich beautiful woman would want as a husband. Atula's wife is one of the prettiest women I have seen here, and there are countless beautiful girls! Atula came to tell me he knows a very poor family in the sea side that sees me regularly walking to Pegasus. He told me they have a daughter 21 who would make a good honest girlfriend for me. Atula went on to say that my girlfriend now, Gita sleeps with other men (as if I cared) Atula told me that now it is time I have a good girl, have one girl who is for me only. OK, why not I thought so I went with Atula to meet the family. Well,

let me tell you they are poorer than dirt. No phone, No washing machine, No TV, No radio, No electricity. Yet they were the happiest loving family I have ever seen. First I met the father who did not know one word of English, then the mother who knew even less English, and then they went in their rooms. Then out came their very lovely daughter Nila. She said she is 21 but I don't think she is more than 17. Well we sat in her house and the parents brought us tea and left us alone. I talked to my self saying "Well how are you? Nice house you have here, so do you like the opera? I saw the opera once when I was a boy but I fell asleep during the performance" All Nila could do is three things, smile at me with here big eyes, look at me with bewilderment at what I was saying, and talk Atula in Sinhalese telling him she dos not understand me. That's OK. It is a refreshing change talking to these people and they don't understand a word so there is never a disagreement. Just smiles, and nods for the crazy American. Then Atula suggested , Nila and I go out to dinner. I looked at the father and he just smiled and gestured for us to go with his approval. We had a nice Burianni, which is a Sinhalese dish I cannot even describe except to say it is very good with mango chuntney, once you develop the curry and hot pepper tastes as I have now. After dinner Atula dropped us off at my rented house next to Pegasus where we had a very nice time. Nila is entirely different than any other girlfriend I have had. She is quite extraordinary, communicative and entertaining. After a while it came time for her to go home. While we waited for the cab service to arrive I asked her in sign language. "Why are you so very kind to me?" I think she wants to have children. I contemplated the thought in absolute terror. What the heck am I going to do with a pregnant Sri Lankan? I first thought about it in the western USA thinking. Which really bummed me out. Then I thought about it in Sri Lankan terms. Well if I have a Sri Lankan wife and children, then they can own a home and will not have to worry about residence here. I can buy a house if I have a Sri Lankan Wife as well as a bank account and a business that does not get tax to death. Besides they need me here. For what, I have no idea, they put me up in a paid for luxury apt, pay for my meals, transportation and ask nothing in return except to show up at ESM every once in a while and act interested. Only a fool would pass this up. A fool is how I thought before. I see now one can have true peace and heart felt joy without having any of the things that bind us to stress in the USA. If I was to buy a house here it would cost about \$10,000. The cost to maintain such a house is minimal since they do not expect to have electricity, a phone, a refrigerator (every meal is bought from the local farmer, fisherman and cooked the same day, only rice, onions, potatoes and beans are stored for more than a day.), a washing machine or anything else we are depended on, so how much can it cost? Not much.

I think about now mother has fainted. Plus the Sri Lankan wives do not expect anything from the husband as far as fidelity goes, so I am OK on that point. Plus they can provide more for their family with \$25.00 than most Americans can do with \$1000.00 it's a win situation! OK, by now mother has fainted again. All I can say in my defense against the barrage of insanity claims against me that are sure to come is that you only live once and God wants me to spread my seed all over the world. How them apples? Went from a wife who was never satisfied with any amount I would spend on her happiness to one now who is grateful for everything. There is no way I would want to get involved like that here, if I can avoid it, so let' hope I can avoid it because there is no such thing as abortion here and I really don't want to run away escaping on the next flight out. But you tell me, all you men in the USA who are not as young or as fit as you were 20 years ago. You tell me your chances of getting a hold of a 21(?) year old beauty who will love you and expects nothing from you except to help the family from starving. OK, by now mother has turned the computer off and refuses to read any more craziness from me. One lat thing. For some reason it felt very great to be here on the second anniversary of the tsunami. I did not realize it at the time but when they announced that it was the second anniversary I was filled with wholeness of purpose. God has truly blessed me with riches that are compounding ever since I accepted the ways here. If those blessings stop and again I feel the pang of having to use my credit cards again to pay bills, I will be on the first flight back, lest I end up like the poor, I am surrounded by, being content earning \$3.00 a day.

New Years,

I honestly can say I have never experienced a more enjoyable new years day in my life than the one I experienced here. Words cannot describe the joy and love in the air.

After I got up I looked out and saw all the girls downstairs in their best dressed saris. I had curry rice breakfast with them and most came up to say Happy New Year and we had fun. I have never experienced such joy in people's lives as the garment workers. Most are very poor and very young. Some are a little older and a few are in their late 20's and are managers. One of the women I am in absolute love with and would marry her without hesitation as long as she got a nose job. Even without the nose job I am still in love with her. She is the one in the large picture with the peach colored sari with her friend I have two pictures of her. Maybe it is because she looks a little like Heidi, I don't know. Then after I went to ESM New Years Party where there were dancing girls whose style and grace is many times more sensual and desirable than the crap you get at the strip clubs where the only dancing you see is unorganized tasteless jiggling and pole swinging. When it comes to class this place has the US beat in the sensuality department.

The next day I spent with Nilu my 21 year old beauty in the rough. She is very poor and I get great pleasure buying her clothes and stuff. Stuff that would make a US woman think "What a cheap skate" However here Nilu and the other girls feel they are the lucky ones and lovingly show their gratitude with affection and kindness for the simplest gift of clothes or anything, even a dinner which reminds me. That night I kept Nilu out until 12:00. It was time for her to go home where she lives with her parents, sisters and brother. Her sister has two children of her own. I pay Atula \$50.00 a month to keep track of Nilu and other girls. He does things like arranging transportation and translates. He is also grateful for the pay. Atula says he is a gigolo for the tourist women from Germany. I did not believe him at first, but reconsidered when he started speaking in fluent German. I settled down with Nilu and people are getting used to seeing us together. She is so nice to me at all times, something I have not experienced since I was a teenager when we were too young to be interested in being justified, or having a purpose, just interested in relaxing and having a good time with no other motives. I had experienced that with a girl in 2000 but I blew it by losing interest in her after I got what I needed. Here Nilu is always there when ever I call for her. She does not expect me to be interested in her things that women in the US expect you to be interested in. She just smiles. There are three words she knows and uses that she speaks in English. She says "Very nice" and the other word she says to me is said in a firm little voice "NO" Other than that she sits cuddled with me listening to me go on talking to myself and nodding in agreement when I nod to here and ask "Understand?" Nilu I will not take pictures of. For her that is a "NO" Too bad, Nilu is even more prettier than Gita and smaller than her too. That night I treated Atula, Nalaka (driver) and Nilu to a 7 course dinner at the groovy pan. They had beers, I had Nescafe, Nilu had coke. We had appetizers, and the table was covered with great Chinese food. We ate until 1:00am we were stuffed. The Bill? \$27.00 including the tip!! We left around 1:30 am while the restaurant was just beginning to fill up. During the day it is empty, except for lunch, and now I know why the real Sri Lankan restaurants are closed from 3:00pm to 7:00pm

Today I went for a walk to Wattala junction to have all my clothes taken in (YES hurray I am not so fat anymore, except for mother who says I need a breast reduction) about two kilometers and a 3 wheeler driver picked me up. Now I cannot walk very far without one of them giving me a ride free. I say "No, I do not want a ride, I am walking for exercise" They reply "So you exercise tomorrow, today you get in" How can I refuse? On the way back I took a side street.

Actually it was more like a crooked path for the ox drawn carts. There I saw more beautiful women washing their clothes on rocks by the river. When they saw me they were startled. They had never seen an Anglo on the back roads. Before I knew it children had crowded around me and the men in their sarongs were coming up to me to say hello. One man was digging the debris out of a drainage ditch with some others. He came up to me with his muddy right hand extended. He did not think I would shake his hand because it was covered in mud and I was all dressed up in new clothes. So I shook his hand as if it were not covered in mud. All the men liked this. I said "OK, now you have to get me some water to wash the mud off" They obliged by not giving me the tap water, but by carefully poring their limited supply of chilled drinking water on a cloth to wash my hand for me.

I found a path back to the main road where I came across a new hotel being built. I had been there months earlier, but now it was in better shape. At least that is what the owner thought. Actually it looked the same as before. They were very interested in me and invited me to the upstairs restaurant where I had a nice lunch. While at lunch the owner introduced me to his five, yes five other brothers who all work there. We all sat and talked. Then Marush came in with his uncle Sampath. Marush is a financier who handles the investment money in the hotel. Sampath is a senior Police officer with a wondering eye, you have to figure out which one is he using. Both immediately opened a new bottle of Arrack, Sri Lankan dark rum. They said "Drink, Drink". I said no, No, and they did not bother me after that. Marush began by asking me about the hotel, and what I thought of the hotel he was building on the seaside. Yes true he is building a hotel on the sea side, but nothing has been completed in the past four months other than excavating and the foundation. All over here you find buildings under construction and taking eternity to complete. It was not long before Marush and Sampat were drunk. First they were both tipsy when they sat down, and this new bottle of Arrack put them over the top of civilized behavior. Sampat is a big man, twice as big as me; he said to me "Let me tell you something MR. USA. I know for a fact you did not go to the moon! It was all made in Hollywood" Then Marush interjected "Why do you Americans kill Sad am? Why do you Americans poke everyone in the world? Do you want to rule the world" "Even here you Americans come to fuck Sri Lanka" By now the slurred speech and curse words were flowing. I was not concerned as the hotel managers were there ready to escort me away at any moment but I told them "No, I want to hear what Sri Lankan really thinks of the US" Marush went on "Yes you killed Saddam. What did he do to you" By now Marush was making the entire global situation my personal fault. Then he asked me. "Why are you in Sri Lanka" I replied laughing as a drunk would laugh "I am here to fuck Sri Lanka so bend over Sri Lanka, here I come" This shut him up for a moment Then Sampat took over. This scared me because one he is a senior policeman and two he is twice my size. He said to me pointing his finger at me "Hey, Mr. America USA All I say is I respect you because you Americans do what you say without wishy washy. You say you no drink, so you no drink. I like that and admire you for that. You have great willpower!" UhOh, I wished he had not said that. Because this is they type of opening God sends us to witness to others. I had to correct him by saying "I have no will power, it is God who has given me the grace to not drink for the past 14 years, it is God who is my strength" At that Sampat held up his hand in salute to me saying "I salute you Mr. USA America. America is a great country. You fuck the world because you have the power of God with you!" He turned to Marush who by now was really drunk and said "If America (they call me America) wants to fuck us we cannot stop him" Marush just repeated "Why do you kill Sa dam? Why George Bush do this? I give George Bush two days to live!" I told him I did not vote for GB or support going into Iraq at all, but by now I was America and took the brunt of all the criticism. Marush said "OK, sorry, we are friends let us not talk politics anymore, lets talk about my new hotel on the seaside. . . ." I interrupted him telling him "Fuck the new hotel, How do we kill George bush? (for those of you who can't understand the context, too bad. Wait and see someone in the US will quote me on this and I will be criticized. I just wish the ones who criticize me in the US would come here and be the ONLY GOD DAMN AMERICAN WITHIN 50 FRIKEN MILES like I have been living for the past six months)" They both laughed and by now were on their way to passing out. At that the manager escorted me out telling them I had a phone call. Again I had left even the drunkest Sri Lankan on a high note. All in all it was another very interesting day. I cannot wait to meet up with Sampat and Marush again when they are sober. How will they act? Friendly and warm or cold and ashamed of being smashed.

Percy was at the ESM New Years Party but said nothing to anybody. He seemed very sad. Abbey came up to me and said "You very bad man, Captain is leaving now" I would have kicked Abbey's little ass right there and then if he wasn't smiling when he said that. Percy left soon after it began, leaving unceremoniously. Chairman gave a speech saying he was grateful to Percy for his work. Then he announced Sam was now to be in charge of ESM. At that everyone cheered and made Percy feel even worse. Chairman went on to repeat several times "I have faith in Sam that he can do the job. I know Sam is Unbiased. I mean he does not take sides. Same does not take sides with anyone. Sam is fair and does not take sides. Sam does what is right, and does not take sides" Wonder why he said that? Maybe because every time I am right about manufacturing, which I always am, the henchmen say Sam is taking my side. By the way I am no expert, but they way they do things is so crazy, one only needs common sense here to be an expert. Hey have no common sense when it comes to manufacturing. Later as Sam and I crossed paths I briefly in passing said "Congratulations on your promotion of being in charge of ESM." I did not think much of it, but Sam did an about face and came up to me and took my hands in his telling me "It is you, why I have promotion" Good ole Sam you can see him in the videos, he is always the one who is next to or talking to Chairman.

Racism in Sri Lanka,

At first during your several months of discovery you think these people are all kind and you forget about racism like in the USA. Especially if you are white you don't see it in the USA anyway. Here it took me a while to see through the layers of BS to realize they are very racist here against foreigners and each other. The Sri Lankan are jealous of the Tamils because the Tamils are very hard working and get all the jobs because they are honest and do not rest until you say rest. The Sri Lankan are dumb and extremely lazy which is why so many are poor. Then you have the Burghers who have British ancestors. They think they are better than anyone. Funny, you cannot tell them apart from any other Sri Lankan. They are all Sri Lankan Burghers, Tamils, and Sri Lankan. Here is what I have found out from talking to this guy who hates this race then talking to that race and asking them why they are hated and who do they hate and so on until I ran out of races

and seniors who are old enough to have a little wisdom. OK, so you are not an idiot if you disagreed with me about the Tamils being the problem. That is part of it. Meaning the Tamils had all the jobs and were self governing as they were preferred by the British to manage the country during the colonial days prior to 1948. A Sri Lankan will tell you the Tamils had all the wealth and jobs that the British left behind and the Sri Lankan simply wanted to unite the country. Now a Burgher will tell you this is not true. They say the British relied on the Tamils because they were the only ones who were smart enough and willing to work for the British, while the Sri Lankans were too lazy to do anything the British wanted them to do in order to be involved in the commerce government or anything else. One senior Burgher who is the chef at the Plann Hotel told me that when he was a boy they used to have real rickshaws powered by men who would sometimes run 7 kilometers or more to take him to school and back or to take his mother to market. He told me that after the British left the Sri Lankans were jealous of the money the Tamils had saved and the money they made from hard work so the Sri Lankans began murdering the Tamils. One of which was the Berger's rickshaw driver as he was taking the mother to market. He was killed in the street as he was working. This began the revolution of Sri Lankans getting revenge for the Tamils success with the British. This revenge did not last long as the Sri Lankans are lazy and do not follow through with anything even a revolution. However this murder of Tamils after the British left caused many infant and young Tamils without parents. These Tamils are the ones who are bent on separating from Sri Lanka for the injustice they suffered decades before.

I believe this version more than others for the reason that I have witnessed first hand and have documented in my many entries about the laziness and stupidity of the Sri Lankans like my friend Percy for one, as well as many others. I also witnessed the jealousy and negative talk about me for the littlest things that I do by the henchmen who happen to be Sri Lankans. I also witnessed the hard working Tamils who help me in export. I can say for certain that when you have a bright eyed young man working every minute of the day tirelessly looking for tasks to do, this is a Tamil. I can also say with certainty from many months of observation and labor management that when you have a worker who is constantly messing up, disappearing for no reason, or just standing around staring at the wall that this is a Sri Lankan. These are things I could not say had I not been in the trenches hand in hand with these buggers.

As far as racist that deals with locals. With foreigners it is different and more universal. The poor and working poor Sri Lankan and Tamil alike are very kind and generous with what they have. It is these poor that have been so kind. The other kind and generous are the wealthy. They give freely as long as you are not doing business with them. As soon as you do business with them they cut you off from kindness, so I always walk a fine line with chairman and VJ. Like with my rented house. I needed some furniture. Chairman said "Don't think I am getting you any buster, your making enough money off ESM already". So I asked Chairman "Well would you at least let me borrow a couple plastic buckets to sit on" He laughed and said he had to go to a meeting. The next day a truck pulled up to my rented house loaded with very nice new Teak furniture to fill the house. It was a gift.

Back to the racists against foreigners. These are the middle class Sri Lankans who depend on the foreigner for their very means to live in the middle class. You would think they would be nice to foreigners since it is where they derive the majority of their income. You would be wrong. Remember Naranja and the Sri Lankan Hillbillies who I thought were my friends? Well they are not. They mock me. I saw them at the Pegasus last Sunday. They were drinking Arrack and the whole gang was there. I saw them and they saw me. I went up to them and said hello. All they said was "OH, hello" Then silence for a few seconds and I took my queue I was not welcome. Then as I walked away they threw a volley ball and hit me in the back of the head all the while laughing. I walked back as my hulk rage grew quietly and looked at each one of them sizing up who to punch first, probably the big guy who was still smaller than me. Then I heard an apology, so I left without a word.

Then there is Marrisona who is a tour guide and books rooms and bungalows for tour agencies. I can't tell you how many times she has stood me up. All the time saying we cannot be seen together as it would ruin her reputation. You know what? To heck with them, even if she is the finest woman I have seen here next to VJ's daughter who I made my jaw drop when I saw her, which made VJ give me the tare of death. I slipped out of that one by saying "My, God she looks just like here mother!" Actually she does not look like her mother at all, but it seemed to get me out of a tight spot. Anyhow, Marrisona is beautiful but racist like the others who pretend to be a friend then make bogus plans that get you excited only to stand you up over and over. That is OK; I know Marrisona will someday let me in. She is racist and playing hard to get but also drools at the famous people I rub elbows with. People she wishes she could get an audience with but can only do so when I am around. I see now these middle class I meet outside ESM are first jealous that I am from the USA because they wish they could go but cannot afford the visa.

Nice People,

As I said before the Sri Lankans are lazy and the middle class are all shit heads. The nice ones are the rich who don't have you over very often. Then there are the poor and working poor who are very hospitable. Last night I went to Atula's sister's home for dinner. When you are with real Sri Lankans they always eat with their fingers, mixing the chicken curry and rice together. They also feed one another with their fingers. Everyone was feeding each other while I was using a fork. Nilu took my fork and began feeding me with her fingers and her hand under to catch any food that might fall. They do this because it is neater when someone feeds you. You don't get the food all over the place. So couples feed each other and that is how Nilu fed me. Actually it is nice. A smart way for lazy people to eat. You save all that energy and instead just open your mouth and they stuff it for you. I got Atula and Nilu Cell phones and they both cannot stop playing with them checking out the ring tones and calling other friends to say hello, then hang up and call them back two minutes later. I put in running water into Atula's house over the weekend. He had still not repaired his house from the tsunami which had ruined the old plumbing. When I say plumbing I do not mean copper pipes like the USA I mean 20 gauge (very thin) PVC pipe fittings. You will not see any copper plumbing here, even in the hotels.

Last week chairman moved me from the apt to Atula's house he paid for the electric to be done and then delivered nice new teak furniture. Then the next day he came and took the furniture back and moved me back into my apt. Why did he do this? Well first he said I had to move because of my whore mongering and exploiting of the virgins desiring to get pregnant from a man from USA. After time though and my detective work that I have had to get good at, I proved that all these allegations were coming only from the security guards at the garment factory and Carleton at ESM. I proved Father Nihal of the Catholic Church and all the people of the sea side liked me. Then I asked chairman to please tell me the source of these rumors. First chairman told me they came from Suresh the nice fag genius with 6 degrees. Then I asked Suresh who told him these things. I first said you heard these things from the guards didn't you? The same guards I had to get chairman to tell to leave me alone because they were always bugging me to get them a visa to the USA. Suresh said "The guards only verified" What the hell is that supposed to mean. "You rely on security guards to validate my character?" I asked again "Who told you these things? Before you said it was father Nihal, but I went to father Nihal and he vindicated me and told me he never heard or said anything like that and it is only jealous people making trouble, so again tell me

where you heard these things” “Carleton at ESM” he answered. OK, now I was getting somewhere. I went to Sam to tell Chairman this is the usual backstabbing BS from his employees and no one else. Still Chairman said he cannot take the risk. So I said to him “Fine, if I am to move into the house I need security bars, a refrigerator, an A/C unit, new security doors with hardware and furniture” Chairman said “I cannot afford that” I said “Then the only alternative for me is to complete my 22 boat in the next week and I will go back to the USA until I can afford it.” “OK, I will pay, but you have to pay me back some of the expense someday.” “OK, I agree” Then next week I spent putting in running water. Chairman sent over nice furniture and had the entire house rewired because it was flooded from the tsunami and the wires were ruined. I spent the night there, and then was awakened by a truck from ESM to take the furniture back. Chairman called me to say I will stay in my apt after all, but temporarily only (temporary in Sri Lanka means permanent). You would think this would now be a resolved issue and you would be wrong. You see Atula’s house was damaged from the tsunami. He had no furniture there except a swollen particle board table and a few pieces of antique furniture that survived the tsunami. By the way the furniture he had was an ebony standing closet and a bed made from ebony. It was real ebony. Anyone can tell by just feeling it. There is no other wood that feels as smooth as ebony. Ebony does not need any varnish, veneer or paint to make it glass smooth, it is that way naturally. These furnishings were big, made from a time long ago when there was ebony in supply to make it. Today I do not think there is enough ebony to make these things. I asked how old the furnishings were. “200 years old” he answered, and then showed me the artists’ initials and date on the bottom corners of the pieces “1799 was the date” Other than those pieces in need of repair there was no furniture until the chairman sent mine over. The night the furniture came Atula’s 4 sisters came over and thanked me for making Atula so happy. And he was very happy to finally get his house in order after years from the devastation from the tsunami. His sister brought me a sarong which I wear now when at the house, and they say I am now Sri Lankan. His sisters cooked dinner and we had a nice time. But the next day when the furniture was taken I saw Atula’s hopes and dreams melt away and he faded back into that state of hopelessness they have here being used to crushing poverty. How the hell could I let this happen? I couldn’t. This gave me the perfect opportunity to show Jesus at work. I went to the furniture store and bought a houseful of furniture for Atula’s house. Paid for with money I am sure Jesus will give back to me (Right Jesus?) Look I stay at his house because I cannot have any visitors at my apt. But at the same time I like having the apt for security and Chairman did get the electric working, so I see it as a win situation for me. Now I have a secure apt. AND a swinging groovy bachelor pad. And as a bonus I made some Sri Lankans who have suffered from the tsunami very happy. Now they say I am family. What is that worth? For some reason God has given me money since I have been here. Before in the states I had money, but never enough to buy stuff with. Now I can buy stuff for my self which made me think, what would God be saying about me about now? I think God would have been thinking “OK Todd I am blessing you with girls, money and power, and what are you doing with it” I have an answer “I am giving it to the people who have been nice to me who also need the help” OK I know deeds do not count, but I am making fellowship. Tell me who you would rather listen to. A man from another country who tells you stuff with words, or a man from another country who puts his money where his mouth is. Well here they listen and appreciate the later because they cannot eat words, they cannot sit on promises. I did not know why I came here, I still do not know, but God has put these things in front of me. Now I cannot wait to get home to my boys and spend every minute with them. I am not meeting any more girls, or anyone else because the rest of the money promised to me by Jesus is reserved for them .

By the way I see many cultures coming to Pegasus. I see Chinese Lesbians, Irish lesbians, German lesbians many lesbians from different nationalities. But homosexuality in Sri Lanka is illegal, did you know that? At the same time it is common to see men holding hands or with their arms around each other in affection. Their affection is different from a fags affection. Fags hug in public because they want to selfishly display their grotesque perversions. Here men hug to show they are a family or are close friends, no sexual connotations.

Nilu I think has been unfaithful. Either that or she is really dumb. This makes Atula very angry with her. I told him “Atula, this is how women are. You are lucky to have a wife who is not like this. Do not worry about it” I felt bad getting him involved but I need someone to help me make arrangements with Nilu . These women here are the most beautiful women in the world! This is why Arnuff just rolled his eyes when I said to him that there must be something he liked about Sri Lanka to stay here 33 years if the business was not the reason. He was gesturing “If I only knew” Well now I know. Still I cannot wait to get home to my boys. But do not be surprised if I come back with a very young beautiful Sri Lankan wife. Because I will marry one if I get the chance. I aren’t getting any younger, are you? Some will say I am obsessed, well true I am too bad. I used to be obsessed with Heidi until I lost everything, then I became obsessed with the computer until I figured it out, now I am obsessed with having the most beautiful young devoted wife because I can. When you have a significant other you think people like me are demented. But I challenge you to live alone for 15 years and then get put into an environment where there is nothing to do all day but enjoy yourself and have mingle with the opposite sex. So there! Why am I defending myself, I don’t care what people think. I have to remind myself of that.

VJ,

Today my close personal friend VJ Wijsekera called me to his home. When I talked to him on the phone he told me he has been appointed Minister of Special Projects in Sri Lanka that is a very big important position in the government. He had switched parties after his party had lost the election. I always tell him when I see him that he should be the president of Sri Lanka. I told him congratulations. As soon as I got off the phone Sam asked for his phone number. Turns out that now that VJ is the Minister of Special Projects (Whatever that means) he is being sought after by many large companies and rich people for permission to make future business plans that involve the fishing industry. In Sri Lanka they passed a new law they are serious about. The new law says that by 2010 the use of gill nets will be prohibited. This is due to the absence of fish exports from Sri Lanka due to the practice of gill netting fish which tears them up and makes them not presentable to foreign buyers. Maldives is growing in fish exports and Sri Lanka does not want to miss out. They say the Maldives exported some 15 billion in tuna and other fish. The alternative way to fish is by hook and is hard work as opposed to just throwing out a net. Hook fishing takes a little brains. As of now there are zero hook fishermen here. Today a Korean man came to ESM to order six 46 foot hook fishing boats. These boats use electric powered reels to bring in the lines. They set each line for one kilometer and set about 50 lines then go back and reel each one in. Sri Lanka is the last country in this area to outlaw gillnets, it is about time and is one reason VJ tells me he cannot do business with Sri Lanka fishermen. So now chairman want a special project approved to make hook fishing boats with spools and electric reels. You see one cannot build a boat here unless the design is approved by the minister of fisheries. That is one reason my improved designs have not made it to production. It is too much paper work. But now chairman wants approval for a new design for hook fishing, but not a better boat. Sam asked me for VJ’s number and I said,

“I don’t know, what’s in it for me?”

Sam replied “Yes we need you to help with new design and help with VJ. So please give to me his number. ”

I repeated “I still don’t know, you guys might cut me out of the loop”

At that Sam turned to Depani and said “Depani, look up VJ number and give to me” “OK Sam here it is 0777521149”

“Thanks Todd, don’t worry, we include you too.”

Sam had other business so I went back to Export. Later Sam got me a cab to go to VJ's house and we talked business VJ told me to go to Maldives and do business with him. I told him OK, but I am building my US projects at ESM where I get all the profits after paying for the work and facility. "Fine, you do that but help us in Maldives we need US technology. We are friends, no? So let's be friends, you stay at my house anytime, anytime you are welcome. I have you for dinner like family. So why we fight over money. Let us not fight. You come to Maldives with me in a week and we start business" Said VJ. I answered "OK, sure lets do business. I will help you with your local market and you pay me small commission plus house and salary, and my US projects are separate, and I do them at ESM for now. Maybe we will change that part later, but for now at least we can go" "Yes fine we do this. Did you know I am now Minister of special projects?" "Yes you told me, and I saw the article in the paper, remember I congratulated you on the phone when you told me" "That was not good enough" "OK, congratulations! I think you should next be the president" We all laughed and had some tea except for the body guards in black leather jackets holding machine guns on either side of VJ. They just stood there staring into the wall. By the way if you come here do not look these guys in the eye, or even try to say hello, they take it as a threat. I thought about doing business with VJ and feel good about it, after all how many times you have been asked by a minister of a government to help with technology. It does not happen every day. Now VJ knows I do not just go because he is powerful and famous. Most Sri Lankans would do anything for him without pay, and that is what he is used to. But when he treated me like a Sri Lankan I said "Sorry I cannot do business like this. You don't need me and you said you can get anyone to do the job you have for me so get the other people you say can do it. I have USA boats to build anyway."

He could have killed me right there, but truthfully I am not that important. But now he has a different tune, more as a friend needing help than a business man using an indentured slave. Since he treats me like a friend now I will help out. I told him in the USA I have to make at least \$40,000 to pay my bills. He answered "Then why are you here if USA if you can make so much more in the USA?" He said this trying to bargain with me. When chairman asked me that ...why am I here? I answered "I don't know" Now I know. I answered VJ "I am only here because it is fun and I am having a good time." You know that is the truth. It took me five months to realize that is why God sent me here. After analyzing through the self thought process believing I could actually interpret the meaning of my journey here by invitation of the Sri Lankan orchestrated by God that there must be a higher purpose for this whole adventure I realized the only true gains have been my complete and utter enjoyment of life.

Yes the new designs, the business the proving of facts to the people who finally acknowledge that yes there is a better way than the traditional moronic ways is not as significant as the shit I have been able to get away with. Or the stuff that comes across my path. Like today after going to VJ's house I went to Majestic City. One of my favorite places to go. Majestic City is about two blocks of high rise shopping malls. Today was the last day of the Muslim mourning of Mohamed's grandchildren. For two weeks they mourn and have prayer during this time. 40,000 Muslims came from all over the world to Sri Lanka for this event. Why did they come here this time? It is because their Pope visits a different Muslim country every year for this event. This year their "Pope" came to Sri Lanka. I mentioned this because at Majestic City there must have been 10,000 Muslims shopping. I never saw so many long white robed men wearing white caps in my life. The women were wearing their traditional veils, but not like the ones you see on the news. These Muslim women were fashionable, not traditional or all in black or all covered up like that Taliban shit. They were casual. By the way I am not a Muslim advocate but the Muslims here are very kind, gentle and generous. Completely the opposite of what you see on the news. There I was in a sea of Muslims at Majestic City where all most of the shopkeepers know me. I went to my favorite jeweler Blue Moon Jeweler. I squeezed by a few customers as the store is 20 feet deep but only five feet wide then sat down in a chair put for me by the owner who greeted me as his best friend. All the sales men are very happy to see me wherever I go. I sat down and looked at a few beautiful Sapphires and Pigeon blood rubies. Then I noticed a gorgeous girl sitting next to me. She saw me then reached by me to show the owner a necklace she wanted to copy. Since here boobs were in my face I said "Nice Necklace" It would have been rude to ignore her. By the way when ever I go out to Colombo places I wear all my gold and gems. I also wear new clothes I have tailor made for me, with the top button undone so everyone can see all the gold and gems. What's the point of being white trash if you can't flaunt it? Besides I have to keep up the reputation of Americans to these natives. I grease my hair back and I look like a movie star. At least that is what they say about me now that I am not so fat anymore. This beautiful girl was getting my attention by sticking her breasts in my face but I played it cool and put on my reading glasses to look closer at the gems, not her boobs. Then the owner told everyone to see how nice his work was by having me display the \$10,000 in gold and gems he had made that I was wearing in rings, chains and pennants. Naturally the girl took note and I did not have to show off, they did it for me, besides you can't miss all the stuff I got when my shirt is unbuttoned. The next thing I heard from her direction was "I don't have a boy friend, this I am getting for myself because I am beautiful. Yes that's right I am not married, and have no boyfriend" Believe me that is how simple it is here. There is no BS game playing. They come right out and tell you indirectly in no uncertain terms they are available. Still I ignored her as in my years I learned how to reel in the beauties. She turned to me and told me she was meeting the President of Sri Lanka. I said "Oh, really that is great" She said "Yes, I graduated and am getting a presidential award" I thought maybe this girl is a genius or something. Then she told me she graduated from beautician school and was getting the presidential award for accomplishment. I can see it now, the president of Sri Lanka attending the graduating class for the six month course for beauticians, I mean beauticians are like rare, and like doctors, surgeons, generals, diplomats right? "WOW, that is amazing! You are now a beautician with a presidential award?" "Yes" she answered proudly. She then gave me her card saying the clerk told her she should give it to me. I took it and went back to a real beauty. A dark clear glowing shimmering 2 carat Sapphire. She then mentioned to me that she only likes white gold. I replied "White gold? You might as well save your money and be wearing silver. No one can tell white gold from silver. If you're going to wear gold wear gold so people know what it is. Otherwise people will say Oh, that's nice silver whatever, then you have to say, no that's white gold. Who needs the hassle, just get gold, then everyone knows what it is, right?" She looked at me with here big brown eyes and just smiled. I could not think of anything to say so I asked her "Since you're now a beautician, can you give me a hair cut?" She did not answer. She talked a while with the clerk then left saying goodbye to everyone but me. The owner said "Hey she gave you her card, she likes you. I have known her for 10 years and she does not do that often." I said "Yes true, but she did not tell me if she was going to give me a hair cut or not" We all laughed.

Back to VJ. While at VJ's house I told him that I wanted him to know that chairman and ESM want to meet with him about special projects concerning new designs for the 46 foot boats they sold to the Korean. VJ said to me "Ah, yes, now they want to talk, before they did not want to talk, but now I am minister of their department, they want to talk. Now whenever they want to meet with me I will tell them you have to be present. We all laughed and I shook his hand asking "Promise?" "Yes" GREAT! So much for being cut out of the loop. VJ needs me and I am going to help his business, and chairman needs VJ because VJ is high up and has authority over fishing boat projects. This situation could not have been better if negotiated by Donald Trump. Did I mention that Sam and chairman met with the president yesterday? Well they did and did not invite me. They have a picture of Sam chairman and the president. I asked Sam "Why didn't you ask me to go? I want a picture of me with the president." Sam said to me "Yes, I told chairman he must bring you, but chairman said you are too loud." I think he means I talk around too much and would not be serious, or maybe I would tell him how to fix Sri Lanka's problems. Either way I must let chairman know my feelings are hurt. Actually my feelings are not hurt, I don't really care about it but I could not miss out on the opportunity to let them think that. Just for the heck of it I told VJ about being overlooked in the ESM meeting with the president. VJ told me "Don't worry, I see the president many times a week and you and I will take a picture with him soon, no problem" Alright wait till I show that picture to Sam and chairman. Here I have been arguing with chairman that he should talk to VJ, that VJ is a smart man who knows the tuna fishing industry chairman is getting into, that VJ is my friend and if not for him I would not have come here or even wanted to, that VJ is a powerful man in government. "Hold it right there" chairman has always said, then follows it up with "VJ is not a powerful man. He is not in power he is with the opposition party and has no influence. I already told you I do not want to do business with him. But there is now harm in talking" Then I

say "Talking? What's there to talk about, when you say there is no harm in talking that means you are going to do nothing with him, yet he is the one you need to be successful in the tuna business" Then I have said many times to chairman "If I could only get you two together things would be great, but you and he are too proud to have a dialogue, no one want to be the one to invite a talk because it is seen as a sign of weakness or need" "Look here buster." "Yeah I know, you got more grey hairs on your head than I do. But let me tell you something. You don't have any hair on the top of your head cause your bald, so in the near future I will be the one with the most grey hair!" "True" and we both laugh. But now the tables have turned Boy am I glad I put VJ on a pedestal, because now he is all I said he is and now ESM needs VJ's approval for all new developments. ESM will have to have many meetings with him, meetings that I will not take place without me being present as VJ's advisor. How's that for having fun? That's right after all the deep thought about why God sent me here it is so I would have the greatest time that very few people everyday have. More valuable than money.

Eating with the family,

It took me a couple of weeks to say this out loud because when I told mother she surprised me by saying "That's disgusting!" What is disgusting? I will tell you. For the past month two families have invited me over for meals on a regular basis and it is really nice and healthy to have home cooked meals instead of the take out I always get otherwise. I have Sunday lunch with Ambika's family and her brother Asanka greets me at the road and walks me to her. Both families want me to marry their 21 year old daughters. Both families are very poor. One family lives in an unfinished brick house and the other lives in a two room wooden shack about 350 square feet total. Neither have a refrigerator, gas or electric stoves or ovens. All cooking is done over a fire in the kitchen fireplace. The food for each meal is bought just before preparing.

I already am in love with both girls as they treat me with love and affection. When I say in love I mean I will really miss them when I go back to the USA. No where in the USA would a fat old guy like me find the genuine care and attention I get here from Ambika and Nilu, the two girls. So here is the part that some may see as gross but here it is looked as an honor. When I sit down to eat, no one else is at the table. Percy did this when I first got here and then I thought it was rude. But here it is an honor to have the table set for you and you being served alone. The guest or leader of the home always eats alone with a full table setting of the meal. Then when the leader or guest has had their fill, they family cleans up and makes a separate dinner of lesser food for the rest of the family. This is how they treat me. I sit down to a gourmet 7 course meal, make a pig of myself, burp (they think you did not like the food if you do not let out a few good burps after eating). Then they clear off the table and set it again for everyone else while I sit and relax.

Yes even the minister has his home meals like this, but it gets better. When I sit down to eat Ambika or Nilu depending on who I am visiting for lunch, fills my plate with rice and tuna and chicken and fish (The girls pick thru the fish and take out any bones before feeding me) Once the plate has the great food on it they pick up a handful and shove it into my open mouth. They hold one hand open under my chin to catch anything that may fall. One handful at a time they feed me. All I do is open my mouth. Then when I need a drink they hold the glass and let me drink. They feed me like a baby, a big baby. And yes that is how the family treats ALL the important guests or the head of the family.

Today I went to Parliament with VJ. It was an informal session and everyone was drinking Arrack or spelled Arrack, or Arrack depending on the bottler. Arrack is made from the flowers of the coconut palm and is a little lighter than rum, so they tell me. I do not drink even though everyone always tries to get me to just taste it. They are amazed in disbelief that I do not drink. So there I was in Parliament and VJ was joking with his fellow ministers how I should be appointed to parliament and they will think up a position for me. I knew it was the Arrack talking and I went along with it. Next week I go to Maldives with VJ on a very high investment project. In Maldives there are millionaires partnering with VJ who is also a multi millionaire to design and build boats for the growing Maldives market. It turns out that Maldives is the center of luxury tourism and the only thing missing are the luxury boats for ferries, pleasure as well as modern tuna boats. Sup until now all the boats in Maldives have been made of wood and are now outdated. The boat building companies established there have turned their attention to the tuna and fish export markets. Turns out Maldives and Madagascar are two of the few sources for good tuna and fish, so naturally everyone is turning their attention to this market. VJ is already a successful fish exporter to the USA and Europe he and his partners now want to turn their attention to new boats for pleasure, which is right up my alley. Materials are 35% less costly and labor is the same as Sri Lanka so it makes sense.

VJ has not laid out a new agreement, he just says, let's do something and we will be rich. He knows I do not have a dime to invest, and before when he presented an agreement I said it was not enough money for me and I wanted to be a director and earn some of the profits he said "Forget it, boat builders are a dime a dozen, we can get someone else" I said "OK get someone else" That was then. Now he says he needs me. He has a nice house for me in Maldives with a salary that is more than any Sri Lankan makes. Yes it is peanuts in the USA but to not accept the offer would be an insult. I am not here to dictate terms, I am here to engage in the people and interact in their business to see what opportunities may arise. It is a fool who says the pay is not enough so I will not be the prim Dona in a new state of the art boat factory with me at the helm of design technology. In the USA people are so greedy for the big buck they do not see the potential in the long run. All I know is how many people get invited to then accepted into a culture with friends in high places who protect and care for you, families who have beautiful daughters who feed you like a baby, and members of the Parliament inviting you to go on trips to exotic locations, stay in their home when ever you are in the neighborhood? It is kind of like the movie with Tom Cruz "The last Samurai" Except I am better looking then Tom and I don't carry a

sword.

I am building a trailer for a boat I am sending to a customer in Panama City Panama at the Panama Canal. It took me two weeks to find all the parts. Many common hardware items are non-existent here unless you go by foot for miles and miles thru the markets on Amma Street. Amma Street is like Disney world for the tool freak, but the selection is very limited. If you need something you cannot find do not ask anyone where to find it because everyone will tell you where to go to find everything but you always end up going on a wild goose chase. This is primarily due to the lazy attitude, they tell you to go around the block to find what you need just to get rid of you so they can go back to what they were doing, or they just pretend to understand. Either way only by pounding the pavement will you find specialty hardware items? Well guess what I now know where 99% of all the specialty hardware items can be found. And no they are not scattered miles apart, they are all within a few blocks of each other. But I had to go by foot looking at stuff to see if it was what I was searching for. If you ask someone where to find a hammer they will show you where you can find a tire. Someday this knowledge of where everything is will come in handy.

About my Sri Lankan hillbillies who I thought were my friends, then treated me like a fool, now are my friends. Naranja called me the other day and brought over to my house two girls one for me and one for himself. Very nice gesture, when Naranja called he said "Tal, I come to your house and bring two bitches ok? I bring some Arrack we have a good time." I told him I do not drink and he said "OK, me and bitches drink and you enjoy" So I guess I was wrong about the racism thing. I guess it was the Arrack talking the day they mocked me at Pegasus. Now all is forgiven, I think maybe this is Naranja's way of making up for dicing me that other day Anyway.

It aren't worth it,

Yes it is true there are plenty of young beautiful women to have fun with, but it is getting to be a hassle. Nilu for the third time stood me up. The first time she said she was detained at a checkpoint for 12 hours because she had no ID. The next time she left her phone at home and her brother answered saying she was visiting her grandmother in the hospital. Yeah right, from 5:00 pm till 1:00am Atula said he was 90% sure she was telling the truth and I told him it is the 10% that is the problem. Then last night she stood me up again. This time she said two men followed her and chased down her three wheel driver, took her phone and said bad things to her. She said it took all night to get her phone back from the two men. This I find 35% believable, because she did not give her drivers name or bring her driver to witness what had happened, nor did she mention anything about having a driver. Now if I was chased down by a two men in a three wheeler, I know my driver would have noticed and said something about it to whoever was waiting for me. But not a word or name of any driver. And the men, she does not know who they are. Seems a little far fetched that two men would wait in a bush for someone they cannot see clearly in the three wheeler. Besides No one knew she was coming, so it is not logical. For this to be true, two men would have had to get a perfect sight of Nilu in the backseat, which is obscured by the driver in front, then these two men would have had to say to themselves, lets get Nilu, Then they would have to do all this shouting in broad daylight in the middle of a busy street. And no one took notice of this, in an area where if you say bitch everyone turns their head to see who said that. And lastly this happened coincidentally the day I told Nilu I had no money to pay her because the banks were closed and I was out of Ruppees that day. Back to the other questionable unmentioned details. Then after they got away with her phone, Nilu would have to physically chase the two men down with her driver, who is a mystery man, and then physically take the phone back. All this taking place not in a few hours, but between 2:30 pm and 11:00pm. Sounds more and more like the stories Heidi used to tell me.

Heidi would tell me stories that got increasingly more and more dramatic, just like Nilu's are. Then there are the family girls in their 20's whose parents want them to marry me, an American. These are really still children. They are scared little things. I can only imagine the pain in the ass they would be and the time it would take to really know them. Meanwhile they have been bleeding me with clothes, shoes, shampoo and other necessities I purchase for them that they never had. There was one benefit from this. I was standing in the clothing store while Ambika and her sister were putting hundreds of dollars in clothes on the counter for me to pay for when a nice Sri Lankan lady walked up to me and said "You are an American" Normally people ask first if I am Australian, or German, but this woman somehow knew I was American right off. I asked her "How did you know I was an American?" She said "Only an American would let Sri Lankans buy as much as they wanted without saying that's enough." This was the second time someone said that to me. The other time the owner of the store said it to Atula when I took him to buy clothes for his daughter. They said Only an American would let someone buy as much as they wanted. These people never had such an experience and probably never will again, but still I feel like an idiot. All this money I should have sent to the boys instead of this bullshit. And that is what it is.

2.00 That Was Yesterday,

Yesterday I concluded Nilu was making stories. Today I found she is truthful. Earlier today Atula suggested we make a surprise visit to her house and see what is really going on. At about 5:00 pm Atula and I got on a three wheeler to Maratuwa where her family lives in a very small two room shack. I waited at the end of the road and Atula went up to the house to the front door. Actually there is no front door, just a cloth. Nilu family home looks just like the ones you see on those feed the children commercials. Atula looked in and came back to get me. He wanted me to see how they lived. I approached the door opening and looked inside. There was Nilu and her father sleeping on the floor next to the door. The house was dark. Atula said to me "What are they doing, they no eat no? They cannot do like this" Atula then shouted for them to wake up. Nilu and her father brother and mother all woke up. Atula asked them "Why you sleep like this it still light?"

Nilu and her family said they had no food to eat and were very hungry and the only way they can deal with it is to go to bed hungry, and when they go to bed hungry they sleep early so they can wake up next day sooner and maybe they have food next day. I asked Nilu why she bought so many nice clothes when she had no food. Why did she not ask for food? I left on another three wheeler and told Atula to stay and get them some food then bring Nilu to the house. Later at about 9:00 pm Atula brought Nilu. Nilu called me. when they arrived she said "My Tal, Nilu come" She was happy. When I saw her she was very beautiful to me and very nicely dressed in her new clothes. It was then I finally got the true story of the day she was harassed driving to meet me. Last week I went to Nilu's house to get an estimate to at least make it livable so they could have electricity. In that neighborhood there are many people who live on jealousy and are extremely jealous of Nilu since she has been getting new clothes and seeing an American. When the jealous neighbors heard I was going to fix the house, they retaliated. The neighbors were the ones that saw Nilu leave to meet me all dressed up and the neighbors had some creeps harass her when she was on her way. All this was explained to me by Atula in Broken English enough so I got the picture. Atula then went to his sister's house to get Nilu some dinner because she still had not eaten that day. After dinner Atula and I told Nilu she cannot live like that. She cannot live in a tiny shack with a mother, father and brother who do not want to work and buy food. Yes the brother is healthy and could very easily get some kind of job, but no he just sleeps all day and night. The mother is 80, the father 85. Nilu is 21; I cannot figure it out except that I think the real parents of Nilu took off when she was born. Like Atula there is no family resemblance. Like Atula his mother vanished when he was a small boy and another family raised him. I think the same with Nilu.

Finally after we ate and settled down, Atula was very upset to see Nilu living like this. Nilu is sleeping on the floor while the lazy dump brother sleeps on the bed. Meanwhile it is Nilu who gets the money to buy food by working temp jobs at restaurants and garment factories. I said to Atula that is BS. The brother should be the one sleeping on the floor. I don't get Nilu's family food just to see her lazy brother eat it all then make her sleep on the floor. It was adding up more and more. Then as far as the house goes Atula found out that the brother owns the house (Shack) the brother's parents took off and it is the grandparents that care for him in the house and also that took on Nilu when she was a baby and abandoned. I told Atula before he could tell me that fixing the house was now out of the question. No way am I going to spend a lot of money to fix the house that belongs to the brother when any day the brother could kick Nilu out. But the family don't volunteer this info, they suck you dry for whatever they can. This reminds me of the very poor who live in worse conditions. There are mothers who sit out in front of MC (Majestic City Mall) holding babies begging for Rupees. Then there are those families who live on the side of the street and dress their children for school on the side of the road. Unbelievable. It is worse than the people who live under the bridges in Miami. Those people want to live under the bridges because they are mentally ill and refuse to live by societies guidelines. But here these people live in deplorable situations because they earn money from begging. I see tourists stopping to say "OH my god this is horrible, Honey give these poor people some cash." I did not come up with this thought, Atula and others say these people live like this only near where the tourists go. Why should they work for \$2.00 per day when they can get \$5-10 per day begging? That is fine, but to maximize the begging potential, they wave their babies around to get attention and get more from the suckers. Nilu's case is a little different. The brother's grandparents, who Nilu thinks are her parents take care of the brother and don't hound him to work because it is his house left to him when his mother died giving birth to him. The brother's father took off when the mother died giving birth and left the boy with his grandparents. So Nilu has no real family connection other than a really strong bond to the elders that she grew up with thinking they were her parents. I find these things out when talking to people in the neighborhood who are smart, have nothing to lose, and don't like seeing me get swindled. I find these things out with Atula present. Seams EVERYONE in Sri Lanka is Atula's best friend. Meanwhile Nilu is kept in the dark about everything. Kind of like I was after my dad died, so I know what people are capable of. Finally Nilu, Atula and I settled down from a very stressful day. Atula and I told Nilu she can't live like that and she should live in Atula's house from now on in exchange I will let her visit her pseudo family and give them rice and beans weekly so they don't starve like they are because they are too lazy and to conniving to do what is right. Nilu agreed and smiled but I saw a tear run down her face. Then Nilu went to her nicely furnished room I made for her and stood in the corner sobbing with her head in her hands. I said "Atula find out why she is crying?"

He asked her and he said that she will miss her brother mother and father. I said "But Nilu they are starving you, they make you sleep on the floor, they don't care if you get hungry or not, they only care about your brother, he is really not your brother." Well she understood enough to get her really crying a river of tears. I said "Nilu stay with me, at least I will feed you and let you sleep in a nice clean soft bed and get you the things you need?" Her tears slowed down and turned to a slight snuffle. We laid down and she put her head on my shoulder and said to me in the first new English words I heard from her "I am very sorry" At that she fell asleep and we slept quite well despite having no electricity as it had gone off for the night. Still there is always a nice cool ocean breeze blowing through the house. The next morning Atula woke us up with his feeble attempt at making tea, still it was good enough so that I did not tell him to get lost when he asked me to buy him a pack of smokes. It wasn't 10 minutes after we awoke until Nilu began balling again worrying if her pseudo family had eaten. "But Nilu last night I bought your family groceries, so you know they have, so why are you crying?" Atula told me that she will miss them if she does not go home." OK enough of this Bull shit, I don't have to hear all this or worry about her or her family" I thought to myself. So I turned to Nilu and said "Nilu I think maybe it is too much for you to see me anymore, you cry when you leave your home for a day, but then you starve and sleep on a bare floor when you are not with me, I would rather see you sleeping on a bare floor and starving and be happy than to be with me a cry all the time. So Maybe I will just send you food every week so you don't starve and I will get another girlfriend, OK?" "Oh, No, No, No Nilu Love you, " "Ok, then no more tears, If I want tears there are plenty around to give me tears, I want happy, OK?" " "OK, Nilu Happy" At that she dried her eyes and I left her with Atula to get her a ride home. You may think Nilu is a little childish, but I know Nilu is very smart. Like a few days ago it had been over a week since I had called her over to the house. Then one day I was with Atula and asked him to call while I was listening in. He said "Nilu My Tal need you to come." Nilu replied "Oh, so now he needs me?" I heard this translated as Atula covered the receiver to tell me what she was saying. Next I told Atula to ask her if she had a boyfriend. Atula asked her and Atula translated her answer "Nilu say, she want me to find her a boyfriend, because Tal no want her anymore". OK, I felt like an idiot I aren't so clever. Nilu is bright and onto me even though she is only 21. Before Nilu came over that night I made sure to clean up all the evidence of a girl Naranja had brought over for me the night before. I thought I was in the clear until Nilu said to me "Girl?" I looked at her to see if I heard correctly. "Girl?" She repeated. "You're my girl Nilu" I answered. She let it go. What is important is how smart Nilu is. Now she acts more relaxed like she feels she belongs and talks to me like I like to be talked to, lets me do what I want, without any judgment, only love and affection at the same time letting me know she is no dummy. This is the first unconditional love I have ever witnessed.

That was this morning. After I left her and Atula I went to the welding shop in Wattala. I did not have ESM do my welding because they are incompetent fools. Not the welders, the management. If you asked management to nail two boards together they would have to have a meeting on it, then inform chairman, then wait for his decision, then tell stores they need to get quotes from suppliers on the cost of a nail, then the cost of the two boards. Then they have to schedule the job. Then the day the job was to be done there would always be a delay till the next day. In all it would take an average of one week to nail those two boards together if you are lucky. So I hired an outside shop. I sit there all day, not because I want to but because the owner wants an American sitting in his shop so everybody can see. Yes he reminds me of when me and Tom Wargo (Yes ME and Tom Wargo, Not Tom Wargo and I) used to chop firewood on the side of US-1 putting on a show splitting logs of dried up rotted pine for the drivers by in order to sell them trunk full of the fire wood. This welder whose name is Milroy has a nice work shop, but he has his Steel Lathe set up on the road side along with his arc welder. He does all his work on the roadside. Not because he has to, but because this is how he advertises. Kind of like Me and Tom (Yes, Me and Tom, not Tom and I) and the firewood. Milroy is very skilled in machine work and I had to tell him everything. Yes Everything I told him was wrong, but I had to because I am the smart American. Yet he let me tell him how to do things the wrong way, so he could do it his way the right way. He is very patient with me. I am say "Do it this way, do it that way". He says "Would you like some tea and biscuit, my wife makes good tea." Then I say "You hardly got any work done today". Me not having a clue about how time consuming semi precision machining steel can be. But Milroy just tells me. "You don't have to pay me for today, OK?" I reply "OK" to test his will and he only replies "OK I work for free today." Then goes back to working on my job. I cannot help it but who does he think he is telling me he is going to work for free, so I tell him "No, you have to get paid something. Tell me what you want for today..." I end up paying him what we agreed to in the first place. You can't do this type of negotiating in the USA. It does not work. But here Milroy and others just take it as it comes and are happy no matter what. They let us go on and on until we get weary of ourselves.

At 5:00pm I tried to get a three wheeler home to my apt about one kilometer from Milroy's shop. But the damn 3 wheel drivers would not give me a ride for 30 cents, so I told them I would walk. Usually they break down and accept the fare. But not this time. You see at 5:00 there are plenty of people getting off work who will pay a little extra to get home faster from the bus stops instead of walking. But me, I was determined to show these guys they were not going to get me to pay 40 cents when I normally pay 30 cents, no way am I going to pay them an extra 10 cents just because it is rush hour. So I walked expecting one of them to come get me, and one did but they waited till I was half way there. The driver said "OK, 30 Rupees." But I replied "OH no I am half way there so now it is only 15 Rupees". His answer was to drive off with an empty 3 wheeler rather than take me take for 15 Rupees (12 cents).

Maldives,

Got back from Maldives today. Male means brother. When at a restaurant wanting the waiter you say "Male" If you see someone on the street and you want their attention say "Male" Male is the capital island in Maldives. There are over 1000 islands. The furthest is Maratura where the new factory is being built. It is 45 kilometers from Male and is the outermost island in the Atoll. Maratura has 2000 residents and will be my home for the next 10 years if I go along with the multi millionaires. The problem is that island is remote. It takes a speed boat one and one half hours to get there. Within the range of the close islands the waters are calm similar to Biscayne Bay. But between the island and the rest of the atoll is a channel. That channel is about 3 kilometers wide and the seas on a calm day are rolling 15 foot swells. On a rough day like the one after we got there we had to turn back. The swells were a choppy 20 feet. Seneca the Maldives business man along for the trip in order to inspect the tuna packing barge commented "I hope we all know how to swim" I had to reply "It doesn't mater if you can swim" then I pointed out the 15 foot shark shadowing our boat as we slowly made our turn back to the island. Richie a very nice man who buys tuna, who is from Taiwan, was the only one besides me who thought that remark was amusing. They tell me I will be king of the Maratura. I think they are right. The owner of the island Mr. Munroz and his brother have houses there. Everyone on the island has great respect and shows courtesy to the brothers. It is the brothers who own the island, run the generator plant, they own the ferries that go back and fourth to Male and own all the stores, as well has build the homes for the natives. They run Maratura but live in Male. I asked them "When was the last time you visited your island" They answered simply "2001" OK, that right there told me no one ever goes there, even if you are a local Maldivian. So I see why they say I will be king of the island. Actually that sounded kind of neat. After all I am a loner, and I like to be king, so it fits into my general lifestyle. When we finally were able to navigate back to male I told the millionaire that in addition to the \$200,000 they are spending on the production line, they also need to spend another \$250,000 on a mini community with a canteen and comfortable surroundings or else they would not be able to get anyone to stay and work there. At first they replied that the locals will be grateful for the job and not mind the remote location. I informed them "Yes,, this is true. Also you can leave me out here and I will like it because I will be king. But no way will you get the skilled personnel you need to stay here. Personnel like a book keeper, stores manager, draftsman, engineer, skilled welder. These skilled workers will say forget it unless you pay them a very high salary in addition to having the comforts of home available to them" The millionaires looked at me, not pleased with my remarks, but then agreed that I was probably right and then the smiles broke out and they all said "OK, Todd says we can do it".

Every dish in Maldives is made from Tuna. I am sorry, but all you people out there have never had fresh tuna. I had never had fresh tuna until now. Even the tuna in Sri Lanka is not as fresh as here. The second night in Maratura the natives went out of their way to prepare me an American dinner. It was spaghetti and meatballs with tomatoe meat sauce and cheese. And a salad. The meat sauce and meat balls were tuna. Yes tuna. It melted in my mouth and tasted like it wanted me to love it which I did. I cannot describe the flavor except the flavor wants you to be happy. The cheese was goat cheese that was out of this world, literally.

I knew I was back in Stupid land when I got off the plane and went thru immigration and the clerk asked what I was doing in Sri Lanka. I told him I was a consultant and the red lights went off and all the superiors were called in to figure out what to do with me. Eventually they let me in with a 14 day visa, and cancelled my 6 month visa. They asked many questions and I am glad I learned how to deal with them. There are two things you do. First you realize they are really asking for a bribe (do not fall for it or you will spend all your money giving out bribes) the first thing I said was "I am not answering any more questions, I will get on the next plane out of here" Then they calm down and let you go. If that doesn't work, then next thing I do is tell them I am calling the United States embassy and requesting asylum until I can get out of here. The main idea is to not talk to whoever the official is because sooner or later the response will be "We have a problem" That is when you had better say you want to speak to the embassy

You see they desperately need money here and want foreigners to bring it, but the middle men who are the officials try to bluff you I into thinking you have to pay them something to get by them. This really sucks and I am totally sick of it. At ESM had made my lifestyle in a way where I never had to deal with the assholes. But getting back into Sri Lanka reminded me of the BS

VJ the minister of special projects in Sri Lanka is the tallest of everyone with black hair and looks like a VIP because everyone listens to what he asks or says. He is sitting in front of me to the left on the speed boat ride. Adjeel is a young man who is the minister of Maldives. A very important and influential power broker in Maldives who is VJ's friend and is now my close personal friend who will be my contact here. You know, it's good to be king. Adjeel is facing me sitting in front of me in one of the speed boat ride videos. You can also see VJ sitting in the ferry ride from the airport to Male. VJ has piercing blue brown eyes. When he looks at you, you know you are important to him. Then sometimes when he talks to you he does not look at you, that is when he does not like you and is using you. After I figured that out the next time we talked and he started to not look at me I waited for him to stop talking and said "I don't like what you just said" With a little anger in his voice he said to me "What is it you do not like?" I replied "When you talk to me without looking at me I know what ever you say will not be good for me." He then looked to me in silence for about 5 seconds that seemed like an hour and replied "How is this, now I look at you when I speak. Now stop this nonsense. We need you or we cannot do business".

The Minister and Me,

My close personal friend VJ the Minister went to Matara to start on his new boatyard there near the fisheries harbor. I spent the night at the Sunset Inn which is right on the beach. They have air conditioned rooms for a bout \$8.00 per night. If you go there you better be used to no power, cold showers sometimes and sometimes only hot very hot showers, sand in the lettuce, , mosquitoes, and no A/C. they have A/C but it has not worked for a long time, so the A/C is opening

the windows. Then you use the mosquito net, but that restricts the airflow from the ceiling fan. Still the atmosphere and environment were paradise. The food is very good. They have a lot on the menu but when you ask them for something the waiter, Matre D, bellman, busboy, cook man says "we do not have now" So you ask "What do you have?" "Anything you want" Eventually you give up and ask for whatever they recommend which is always tuna or cuttlefish and fries. I traveled by train from Colombo. The trip is 145 kilometers and takes 4 hours. For the first 2 and one half hours you are packed in like sardines, then after Hikaduwa the train is half full and you can go around and meet people. It is a lot of fun. Once in Matara I took a 3 wheeler to the minister's house. He was on his way to give a speech. I met him as he was leaving. He told one of his assistants to take me around and see Matara and the land where to build the new boat yard. That night I stayed at the Sunset Inn everyone was very interested in meeting me. Turns out the minister had a big party there the night before celebrating the new boatyard and everyone wanted to know my plans and where I was from. I am constantly being asked "Where are you from?" and answering "USA" They meaning everyone, always reply "I like USA" I was relaxed then the power went out as it usually does, so not even my A/C fan worked, but you get used to this. That was not as bad as the next door hotel decided it would be a good idea to burn all their trash right under my window, soon my room was full of plastic and trash smoke so I could not breathe. Normally in the USA you would have a shit fit, but here you just go outside and hope it goes away, which it did. As I looked at the pile of burning rubbish under my window, I was picking out a spot to sleep on the beach. I tried to sleep there but a little hermit crab kept crawling on me. Then it started to rain hard that put the fire out so I went to my room finally. I woke up at dawn to see a really nice day emerge. I sat around the hotel til about 11:00 am then called VJ and asked if he could get someone to take me to the train or bus station to go back to Colombo since my work was done. At first he said OK, but then a driver came by and took me to his mansion where I hung around all day drinking tea and catching up on my lost sleep. About 5:00pm there was a lot of activity. I asked about it the assistants told me there was a movie crew staying at the mansion who were making a series episode of a popular program called Marissal a weekly kind of like a Sri Lanka Dallas. There were several Sri Lankan movie stars around the mansion. I just sat in a big chair being sure to be in their way so sooner or later they would have to acknowledge my existence. But like all movie stars they were only consumed with their hair and makeup, totally ignoring me no matter how I tried to be a nuisance to them. I could not help but think "You may be movie stars here, but in Hollywood you ain't shit"

There is now a new star of the show, she is a beautiful young girl who everyone wants to talk to. Before this girl another woman was the star and was very jealous that the fans were forgetting about her and now only recognizing the new girl. The older actress even went so far as to go to one of the local clothes shops and bought a shit load of clothes and handed them out to the public, but even then the public did not recognize her as a star, they walked right by her dropping the free new clothes to get a look at the new girl star. That was it the older woman who used to be the star threw a fit saying there was no water in her room at the mansion so she hopped on a bus and left the movie shooting location. That was when there was a big panic for the producers to go back to Colombo and find another pretty actress. I immediately stuck my nose in and showed them my screensaver pic of Nilu on my phone, saying Nilu will be in your movie, let me call her. Of course they ignored me as if I was not there. VJ just laughed asking me if Nilu was a movie star. I answered "To me she is" Then VJ took me aside and we had a take out lunch together. I being sure to keep my mouth shut unless an opportunity to say something came up. Then VJ disappeared for the rest of the day. And I slept in my room. At about 7:00 VJ had his team wake me to tell me VJ was going to make some political meetings then we were to drive back together to Colombo. When VJ says we are going to drive back together he does not mean in the same car. He has a motorcade. One Hyunda sedan then a military jeep with plain clothed police inspectors in it holding machine guns, then a presidential vehicle. Last followed by another landrover. I always get to ride in the presidential limo jeep and you do not know which vehicle VJ is in until the last minute. It came time for the motorcade to leave. VJ said to grab my bag and get into the presidential jeep, VJ got into the Hyunda sedan. Just as we were leaving I noticed the servant had stupidly forgotten to put my camera in my bag. I said "Stop, I forgot my camera" The jeep stopped so I could get my bag out and look for it. As I was looking thru my bag, the chief inspector called on the radio, saying "The minister has left, the minister has left, what the fuck are you not behind us?!" The other inspector replied on his radio "Mr. Todd cannot find his camera" I thought I would hear something like. "Forget the damn camera" But the chief inspector said "Well, help him find it!" We finally found it in a drawer the servant had put it in. We got into the limo sine jeep and headed out of the neighborhood at 100 KMPH. On the way a police inspector asked me "Dinner?" I said "No, No dinner" He replied "Fasting?" I said "No, just no dinner" He asked me if I wanted to have a meal with them on the way. I said Yes that would be good. A few kilometers and we pulled into a very nice large hotel with a huge banquet hall. The drive just opened my door and said "Get out, and go in" So I got out and walked towards the grand entrance. As I approached the glass façade and doors I saw it was filled with elderly gentlemen. I stood at the door trying to figure out where and what I should do. Then I spotted VJ he was the main speaker at this event at this banquet hall. Since I was late looking for my camera I did not go in with him and he had already started his speaking to the crowd who applauded his words. I stood at the entrance to the banquet hall not knowing what to do because all the seats were taken. Then VJ broke from his speech to announce my arrival saying "Come Todd Sit in front, this is Todd, he is from the USA and he has come here to help us" Then everyone applauded my appearance. I sat and listened to VJ's words I say listened to his words and not his speech, because when he speaks in a forum he does not sound like giving a speech, he sounds like he is talking to each individual present. After the Speech VJ told me to have some food and dinner with him. VJ sat down for about 5 minutes greeting the men in attendance. Then came to me to say "Todd I have a little matter to take care of so you stay here with these nice people and eat your dinner then I will send for you" OK I answered. Then everyone there came to me to tell me what good friends they are to VJ and what a great man he is. For a while I did not know what the event was about, but later the owner of the hotel told me it was the full moon Buddhist celebration a monthly gathering of all the important people of Matara. A man began introducing me to the men. One was the mayor of Matara, one owned many car dealerships, and another was the owner of the Matara bank, who I quickly asked if I could get a loan. Another was a retired general, and on and on all the important people of Matara very happy to meet me. After I ate and mingled with the crowd who could not speak a work of English the driver told me it was time to go. This was about 11: pm. We drove down roads that got worse and worse and farther and farther from civilization, until we arrived at a seclude beach house where there was a party going on. My jeep was at the gate and the party was in the yard of the house around a big table. I looked for VJ to see if he cared that I had arrived. I was surprised to see him looking around from his chair distance away looking to see if I had arrived and when I was getting out of the presidential jeep. He was definitely interested in having me be there at this party. I got out and approached the party as usual the drivers and security stayed behind and just point me in the direction to go in and I go in that direction until VJ says something to me. This was a party hosted by very wealthy Italians who were very nice and we had a nice conversation for many hours as one of them translated what VJ or I would say. The party was at their beach house right on a beautiful beach. At the party were the beautiful actress and the producer. VJ had escorted them there to get away from the BS of the rest of the film crew who were distraught about there has been actress leaving the scene. Normally when there is a pretty girl around VJ asks them if they would like to marry an American. This time he was serious with here and concerned for her. VJ talked about giving this girl guidance and protecting her form producers who ask favors in the movie business. Then one of the Italians said "You just want her for yourself, right?" VJ laughed saying "{What would she want with an old man like me?" But the girl really admired VJ and I would not be surprised if there was something else going on. I mad sure to keep my mouth shut and let VJ be the star that he is. But there were several times where I had conversations about western civilization, which VJ does not know about or care about. I had to walk a fine line of being polite, having fun talking to some westerners for a change in a social setting and not cutting VJ out, which he was at times. These Italians own a resort in Punza, a very popular resort off Italy cost. This apart lasted till about 2: am then we left for the 4 hour drive back to Colombo. The driver says they only drive at the dead of night. We arrived at VJ's house and he had his driver take me to my APT. this was big change from telling me to take the bus home.

The bottom line,

If you are big business and have millions to spend on manufacturing in Sri Lanka, then you won't understand. If you are like me, a hand to mouth entrepreneur, then I have summarized the only plan I found after 11 months of pure struggle and research. First off do not expect any honor, respect or loyalty. When I came here I was told and re-assured several times that if I brought in orders and/or made boats for the USA market, I would be king and get respect and be put on a pedestal. Two words come to mind after I did just what they asked... Bull Shit! I brought in orders from the USA. Guess what? They were incompetent in delivering the orders. They are very good at promising results to take your money, then after that it is just a series of problems, delays, and incompetence. My orders I eventually had to get through my China supplier who delivers in a matter of days with no problems, no delays. Here one has to freak out to get even the smallest job done. Then it is completed weeks late. Then try to spend your money working along side managing labor and you get some measure of accomplishment. Then when you have to leave the details of completion to management it drags out indefinitely, or until you freak out at them. Then after you place the orders and pay and finally get the orders shipped, you wonder why you are still being ignored riding around in a 3 wheeler, when before you were told if you made these orders you would have your own vehicle to use, be treated like a king and so on. What ever happened to that, they even go so far as to show you the vehicle they have for you, only to see someone else using it after you ordered like they wanted you to.

Then there is helping them with technology and improved production. They say they need your help because the need training in making a better product for export so their investors will order more. The promise they will tack on a little extra in the prices for you if you help them improve. Well let me tell you that is another Bull Shit line. After helping them with modern technology and then showing them the correct efficient production means their investors stop by to see the fantastic new product made in half the time and built better and built under budget. You say to yourself, "Great at least I will get a little something out of this" But no. The investor comes agrees the product is superior and costs less to produce in less time, but the investor does not care about your efforts. So then you turn to the ones who said they will cut you in for a commission suddenly forget you helped them and go even farther by saying it is too much trouble to build the efficient way. They say and do these things after the investor sees the superior product at less cost then orders 50 units of 6 to be built each month. Naturally you would feel good about the help you gave since you will be getting something out of it. But now they forget all about you and have no intention to build the efficient way, they only used you to get the investors money. Then they will do to him what they do to everyone else. Take the money with many promises, then will not give one shit about doing the job correctly or efficiently.

How do I know this? Because this is exactly what I have gone through for the past 11 months. They say "Todd you get USA orders and we will give you a vehicle to use, a driver and you will have authority here at ESM" Bull Shit! I put in orders for USA and I still have to hire a 3 wheeler to get around. As far as respect, maybe a little, but no more since I arrived.

Now about the Australian boats. This is the clincher. It takes ESM 3 months to build one 22 foot boat as the one I built in 1 month. The boat I made is superior to theirs in design and construction. I built it under budget and have all the built in accessories one could want. The boat was completed last Friday and is being loaded on the ship for export on this coming Tuesday. No big deal I thought. Then Guess who just happened to fly out and be at ESM first thing this morning at 8:00am Monday morning. None other than the cheap bastard Australian billionaire who I mentioned before as cheap bastards. Is that a coincidence or what? He arrives just a few hours just before we had to wrap up the boat for shipping. What timing? What a coincidence. I arrived and met chairman who arrived when I did. Boy was chairman in a good mood. We found the Australian already in export admiring my work with the backstabbing Sudath (It is not his fault, you have to be a backstabber to be a good salesman) I met the cheap son of a bitch and then they all left, ignoring me. They all went upstairs and finalized the order. The order is 50 boats just like the one I made, made the way I made it, and including the trailer I designed and made at Milroy's steel shop. Milroy is the only decent Sri Lankan I know of. He is a hard, honest smart working welder. They had their meeting then everyone left except Sam. I waited down stairs with my masterpiece for a call to come upstairs so they could negotiate with me in supervising production of this mammoth order. But no, nothing. Finally I went upstairs and saw Sam. I said Sam don't you need me to supervise the construction of this order? You promised me a cut if you got an order to build the boats my way, and I cannot assure you they will be built my way unless I am here supervising production. Sam just said "We need you for USA market, we can handle this ourselves" At that I asked, but you are going to be using my technology and superior technique. Sam and Sudath both told me "Your way is too difficult, we will do it our usual way" Sam then said "Before we start this order we need to build new molds" Ah Ha, now is when they will say they need me. "OK Sam so do you want me to build new molds?" Sam answered "No, Mr. Dudley will supervise this" At that it all made sense. I have wasted my entire time here thinking I was doing good work. All I have been doing here is providing a front for ESM to con investors into handing over their cash. I am not upset about them using my techniques and experience because they are too stupid and cannot duplicate it. I know because I see what goes on in production. You spend time training a worker how to do a job the right way, then as soon as you turn your back, they are doing it the old stupid way again. Besides my ways take maintenance of tools and equipment. They have not taken any time to maintain any of the equipment I brought and now it is standing useless and broken. In desperate need of maintenance and repair which they know nothing about and refuse to learn.

Second eye opening experience is the women. Yes they are beautiful, BUT I finally realize there is more to life than just that physical thing. After 5 months with my steady girl Nilu who I have spent a lot of money on in clothes, dental work, feeding her family, buying furniture she has yet to learn one word of English. When Atula is not around for her to talk to she uses the cell phone I bought her to run up, the bill talking to her friends. And now she tells me She through Atula that I make promises and don't deliver. That she needs money so she is going to Singapore for a year to work unless I pay her \$300.00 per month. \$300 per month is a bargain, but you should at least be able to have a conversation. If you add it up, I already spent more on her than that. As far as the false promises go that is more BS. I thought I was blessing her. Yes, blessing her. I believed god was blessing me with the money I was making so I could bless some of these people with the things they would never have if not for me. But no, instead I hear it is not enough and I break my promises. To be honest there is one promise I broke. I promised to fix Nilu's house so it would be more livable. I backed out when I found out from the neighbors that it was not Nilu's house it was her lazy good for nothing brother's house, who is really not her brother. She does not understand that I am not about to pour a couple thousand into fixing a house that she may be kicked out of. So now my only reason for staying has vanished. Nilu is like the rest, it just took longer for it to show up. Then there is my close personal friend the minister VJ. He has yet to mention paying me anything for working for him. He says he will pay me a salary, but he has not said how much. Actually and in reality his proposition offers me great opportunity as he agrees Sri Lankans are stupid and I will be in charge, no one else. I could make my USA boats and to hell with ESM I am meeting with VJ tomorrow where he says he will lay out the time table for commencement of his projects. One thing I know that I had to figure out for myself and told him is that on a calm day the channel you have to cross to get to the remote island factory location has seas that are rolling 10 to 15 foot swells. During Monsoon season which is coming in May the seas are impassable 15 to 20 foot chop. I asked someone while in Male,

"How do you get back and fourth from that island during Monsoon season from May to November?"

They answered "You don't" See I am not so dumb. I know I will be stuck out there for several months, far from civilization on Gilligan's Island. Yes I know it is still a dumb thing to agree to such a term of isolation. Occasionally they have a sea plane that travels there with supplies. I can see it now, having a lookout on

top of a tower shouting down to me "The Plane, The Plane" just like on Fantasy Island and I can be Ricardo Montalban . Then there is a practical plan VJ has. And that is to build a shipyard on his property that is just a couple blocks away from the fisheries harbor, where countless broken down Emerald seas Marine fishing boats need repairs. This location is perfect for building boats and I get to implement my improvements to the traditional designs, as well as build my boats for the USA, and the new designs for the local market. ESM has gotten a bad reputation since two of their boats had accidents at sea recently. The fishermen are looking for a better boat and VJ has asked me to design and build them with me in charge. Actually I could not ask for a better opportunity. I think the only reason VJ is finally ready to act on his ideas is because he sees I have been here for this length of time trying to do something and he now believes I will stick it out. I think the reason he was reluctant before was he did not know me that well and thought he did not want to get involved in a project just to see me take off back to the USA and forget about it. He sees now that I stick with the sinking ship.

The FOOD:

The bottom line about food is that the food is worth it. All the dishes are curry and chili peppers inclusive. At first I could not eat it anything because it was too hot or spicy. Then When I did eat I would have to drink a gallon of water to wash away the burn in my mouth. Later I found bananas, yogurt and milk remove the hotness. Now I eat all the curry dishes hot as can be with no regrets. I can eat a curry and chili pepper sandwich for breakfast, chili prawns for lunch and Curry Deviled Beef for dinner and it does not phase me. I don't need to gulp water to wash away the heat. In fact once you get used to the spice and heat you see it brings out the flavor of the dish. I can eat curry breakfast that is hotter than hot and not even need to drink water. The curry and chili peppers are really thirst quenchers. There are two restaurants that bring me meals one is the Savannah and the other is the pan. At first I dreaded eating there and picked through the food for the less hot and spicy bits. Now I enjoy every bite. The only time I get a reminder of how hot it is when I bite into a whole chili pepper that grabs my taste buds for a few thrilling minutes. The best part is you can have a great meal at these places or have them deliver for about \$3.00 per meal. A meal that fills you up. I cannot imagine how I used to wolf down a Whopper or Big Mac or Pizza, or how could I have eaten a whole sirloin steak by myself. Here the meals are big but the portions are small with mostly vegetables, curry sauce and rice or noodles. I have lost a lot of weight here. It took almost 11 months. I call it the Sri Lankan Diet. With this diet you eat as much as you want, but the catch is you have to be in Sri Lanka where large portions of fatty meals are unheard of.

To be continued,

In the introduction I describe the reality. However the fat lady hasn't sung yet. The opera started February 2005. It started with the Minister, who lost interest when his party lost the election, and then a private company asked me to help them because as they said "The business with the minister was politics, and now he is out, so your business cannot depend on him" Well I got news for this guy. At least with politics you know where you stand. With politics it is yes or no. With you private business men one day it is yes the next day no, the next day we shall see, the next day a meeting, the next day and on and on, meanwhile nothing gets accomplished.

So now my business with Blue Star is concluded. No way in hell would I volunteer to do business with them in the future except to order a boat and copy their design. Call the paddy wagon and have me committed if I change my mind on this and I am counting on you to follow through if I go back.

Now I am back with the Minister I started with in the first place. The one with a vision. True. He does not want to pay me anything, but if I cared about money I would not be broke all the time then spend big earnings like water. I guess it is an old habit to let money fly from my pocket. I think it is a habit I have for giving all I have away to the first person who has a good sob story for it. You may wonder "He has not given me any money" Well that is only because you were not there when I had it, you were there after I gave it away. In any case my disregard for the value of money I think is why God has chosen me for this journey. True, some day while all of you out there are retiring comfortably on your lifelong savings and careful planning I will probably be living in a cardboard box under the freeway. But today I am not so there! The point is he isn't paying me and I don't care. I venture to guess 99% of those who bother to actually read this dribble are saying "This guy is nuts, who in their right mind would not think about getting paid before starting a intense venture of this scale with someone, let alone a third world politician" But for the 1% of you who do understand and appreciate the magnitude of the magnetically fabitastic splendiferous opportunity let me say this. "We have a position for you in our organization!"

Let me say now. Yes it is true the Minister lost the last election and our deal fell apart, dropping like a dead horse. But guess what? The Minister's friend is the president who won the election and has convinced my close personal friend who I have stood by when others said he was nothing after he lost his power, to join his cabinet and become the Minister of Special projects for the next 12 years. That's right my friend who everyone said was washed up is now backing on top. Let me tell you what the minister of special projects is. First of all it is a new post invented by the president. The Minister of special projects is in charge of approving every project in the government. If you want to build a school here, that is a special project and you need his approval. If you want to expand the airport, that is a special project and you need his approval. If you want to build a new hotel or bridge, or canning factory, or start a new company, or pick your nodes guess what? That is a special project that needs his approval. So this means that my friend who I have been touting about to deaf ears at ESM and anyone who would listen to an American is now one of the most powerful men in Sri Lanka. All this happened quite unexpectedly and suddenly. This great series of events that unfolded for him since I have been here even caught the minister off guard. But isn't that how God works? Both great events and disasters happen catching us off guard. True this is the minister's good fortune, and not mine. In fact mine has been a more like the adventures of a crazy shit house rat, as grandpa would say, while trying to do business with ESM. But that is all changing now as I pack to move from my cradle apt of comfort. One thing I will say. Even though ESM is totally insane that is contagious, at the end of the day I go to my apt and relax in complete privacy and comfort. With VJ it is always an adventure. No time for sleep. Sleep is the last thing you want he wants you to do. And comfort? Yes as long as you know the meaning of relative, and I don't mean family acquaintances.

You tell me the next move you would make given the history of this journey. First a Powerful man in Sri Lanka Government calls you to join him in business. Then he lost the election and all hope. Then a private billionaire invites you to join his company, but you find out the billionaire does not care about the business, that in fact he is just in it for the amusement and nothing more with no intentions of making things work, rather to just have an American hang around for a while. Then you give up when you see the billionaire is just having fun with you and you are really going nowhere with him. The your friend who brought you there in the first place has suddenly and permanently risen up back into power having even more power than he had before, and now since he has known you so long has a

measure of trust in you, now says to you "Let's do some thing" What is your next move? Do you A. lie the 99% of you want to say, How much are you paying me, I need to get paid, I better make a lot of money or it isn't worth it.

OR B. the 1% who see God who say "I will go with the flow; God will provide for me, he always has. Have I had to starve or be without since handing my life over to his control?"

Those who choose A would not have survived to get this far even to have the chance to ask "How much am I getting paid, because it better be a lot."

So here I am leaving ESM and going with the first one who brought me here who is back on top where he was when we first met. With even more power than he had before. Now tell me God! I am not doing something here. All I got to do is go with it and he will bring something my way. This time I vow not to make the same mistakes I made before. All except the one bad habit I have of losing money. I have not figured out how to beat that one yet as well as my other bad habit of biting my nails to the bone. Enough of my ramblings. I meet with the minister again tomorrow where he will lay out the time table for his two boat yard projects he wants me to head up. Then I hope to return to the USA to visit my boys who I love dearly.

If you let them,

Here there are four classes of people. The wealthy, the upper middleclass who have nice vehicles and nice homes. Then you have the lower middle class who have decent livable home, but no vehicle, or maybe a three wheeler or motorcycle. Then there are the poor. These poor live like the commercials you see on feed the children. The strange thing is that these poor class people are the happiest, generous, caring, genuinely friendly class of people you will find. This is the trap Satan has set.

When the middle class ask you for something you can clearly see through the transparency of their greed as the only motive. They have all they need and are not lacking. But the poor do not ask for anything and give to you freely what they have. This is what creates the problem. The problem is not generated by them, but by you. The person who wants to help these poor because they are so good natured and friendly.

What happens is after they invite you to dine with them and they go out of their way to make you feel comfortable on soft cushions, while they sit on wooden benches. They feed you the best food prepared and presented as if you were in a gourmet restaurant and see to it that you eat alone, while they eat only rice. After experiencing this time and time again, it is only natural for a person to want to help them just a little. There is the rub. To help them just a little, like giving the family a 25 kilo bag of rice they thank you and are all smiles. You see they are dressed in rags and have no shoes, so you buy the family some new clothing. They smile and say thanks. But what happens next is completely unexpected. You visit the family a week or so later to see they have fed everyone in the village the rice you bought because all the villagers heard about you giving them the rice and being in a poor village they all share whatever they get to survive. Then you visit them again in another week to find them this time starving because they are waiting for you to buy them another 25 kilos of rice which they will dish out to all the villagers so it won't last a day. And the clothes? They don't wear them. They only wear the rags they had before. When asked why, the answer is they do not want to wear the new clothes because they might get damaged and they do not know if they will ever get the chance to get new clothes again.

So now you say to yourself I need to help more, so you buy more and tell them to wear the clothes this time and to not give all the rice away. Well you just made problems for them. What happens is the villagers see them wearing new clothes and keeping the rice to themselves and bitter jealousy takes hold. Before you know it the other villagers are against the family you thought you were helping and alienating them from the rest of the previously tight community. Great job. You just ruined their happiness. Don't try to blame the other villagers or the family because remember they were genuinely happy and content being dirt poor before you came. Now you have a whole set of problems. The other villagers hate you and make trouble for the family. This problem will take months to settle down.

Then there is the other problem caused. When you take a dirt poor family and give them a boost up a notch from dirt poor to just very, very poor by fixing their roof, installing running water and a shower and sink, and maybe supplying them with a gas burner so they don't have to scrounge for firewood, they want you to keep bringing them up. Once they get a taste of the better life, they want more, and more and more until they bleed you for everything you have. It is now your responsibility to provide for them so they can maintain the better lifestyle. If not sooner or later the plumbing will leak and break, the roof will leak again, the shower and sink will fall into disrepair and they will be back where they started having only you to turn to for help. And you must repair and continue maintenance on the improvements or they will come crying to you. Because they do not want to go back to being dirt poor again and why should they. They did not ask for your help, you in your selfish motives of wanting to be sanctified put out a short term solution to solve permanent everlasting problem. Again, thanks a lot.

Take Nilu for example I bought her over \$400.00 in clothes (She does wear them, only because I make her, but her neighbors are very jealous) I bought her some gold jewelry, but she never wears it because she knows the others will be even more jealous. So what is the point? Then I buy her family food, only to see it vanish in a day as they feed the rest of the villagers nearby. Then when they run out they are starving again, looking to me to feed the entire village which I tried to do but cannot afford to continue. Then I bought her a cell phone because she needs to talk to me and for her emergencies, but now I have to pay for all her phone bills. Then I give her about \$100.00 per week for all her needs but the next day she is broke because she gives the money away to her family members to help them pay their debts and bills. So I stopped giving her money and now she says she is going to Singapore to work because she needs money. When before she was living content on pennies a day, now she says she needs at least \$500.00 a week to be my girlfriend. She says now the neighbors quit being jealous and now tell her that if she has an American boyfriend that she should have a vehicle, a big allowance, gold, and a lot of riches from the USA.

I had to put a stop to it so I told her. The only answer here is two options. One Marry me and live with me and go where I go and be with me all the time and get away from those idiots, but also you have to leave your family because they have to take care of themselves. All, I will give them is a bag of rice each week. If they give it away I don't care. The only other alternative is to leave me. Because now I fixed your teeth so you have a very pretty smile and will have no problem getting a husband.

She did not flinch saying she will marry me. So now for the past few days I have been alone asking myself what the hell I got myself into. Then again a guy could not ask for a better companion. She is kind, affectionate, keeps quiet, and cooks well. From that perspective which is shared by 100% of the men in the USA I am doing OK.

Why I like Sri Lanka,

It is because you can be the arrogant jerk you really are and get a way with it as a way of life. They look to Americans as if they come from the land of OZ. The USA is so far removed and so hard to reach it is like paradise; a dream to these people. They still cannot believe we actually went to the moon. So whenever someone finds out I am from the USA they are always impressed. If you are from Germany or Australia that is good, but to be from the USA they see you as a god, or at least a very smart person. So when people realize I am not from Germany or Australia, but rather from the rare USA, the first thing I tell them is "We sent men to the moon at least 4 times 30 years ago and soon we are going to send a man to Mars. That's right Mars. And why do we in the USA go to the moon and mars? It is because we just want to." By then everyone in my presence has just had their impression of me having superior intelligence because I am from the USA reinforced. So if you are from the USA you are allowed to get away with just about any rude overbearing act of tyranny.

For one thing you cannot burn bridges no matter how hard you try. One episode I remember was when I had a crew of workers and one of them named Sampath. He either had brain damage or he was lazy. Since he could do the work when supervised I felt he was just a common lazy worker. Every time I was in the work area he would be working as hard as the others. But when I would leave for a while and come back, I would see him sitting on his rump or standing around pretending he was working, looking around talking, anything but the task at hand. After 2 weeks of this blatant disregard for doing the work given to him, I told the GM to replace him with another worker. The next day there he was farting around while the other workers struggle to make up for his laziness. They others said nothing and let him sit around and do nothing. Again I caught him farting around doing no work, and again told GM to replace him. GM said to me he will have a talk with him and called him to the carpet (actually it is not carpet it is red painted cement) in my presence to chastise him for not working and being lazy. Sampath just made excuses like he did not understand my orders (BS everyone else understands and the work is self explanatory), he continued with more excuses that reminded me of the lazy good for nothing crack heads back home. Again the GM said to give him another chance. Well 10 more chances and another 2 weeks of no production. I finally had one of my fits. I called GM down to sneak a peak at Sampath standing around doing nothing while everyone else was hard at work. Sampath has been with ESM for one year and knows damn well how to do the work. The GM and I watched for about 5 minutes until finally common sense and the fact that I had been paying the salary for this bum for the past month of no work and no production took over my calm rational demeanor in dealing with this issue. I walked in and Sampath saw me and immediately got off his ass when he saw GM behind me, and pretended he was working the whole time. I shouted "Get this god damn lazy bastard out of my export work area now!!" The GM said "I will talk to him" I reaffirmed my position saying in a loud voice "Bull Shit, I am sick and tired of this crap, get him out of here NOW!!" No one paid any attention to me; preferring rather to just watch me go ballistic. Finally I said "No wonder you cannot export boats you don't give a shit when you have workers who don't work. Now get this piece of shit out of here NOW!!" Still nothing finally I got into Sampath's face, pointed to the door and said "Get the hell out of here NOW!!" Finally I got through and he walked out and GM followed saying to me he would get a replacement worker for me the next day.

The next day came and I had calmed down not even thinking about freaking out at the guy. When I walked into the factory grounds I could not help but run cross Sampath working in another area. I walked by expecting what you would expect in the U.S. And that is a disgruntled worker. But no, I tried to sneak by Sampath but he saw me he looked at me and smiled saying "Hello Mr. Todd, How are you?" I looked at him as if it were a snide remark, but snide remarks are not found here. Sampath and I are friends and he and I say hello and smile whenever we see each other. Not due to any forgiveness on my part but because of the nature of Sampath to be genuinely friendly to me even though I ripped him a new one and threw him out of export calling him a lazy good for nothing etc... He has shown me nothing but friendship. I cannot figure it out.

I like working. I like making boats. In the USA there is no way I could afford to make boats. I like having the freedom to put my designs into reality. I could never do this in the USA given my financial status. There are times here that when you get all the petty issues resolved that you can definitely manufacture good products at 1/4 what the cost in the USA. This makes it all worth it. Then when the stupidity and lack of common sense is drowning sanity and logic. All you got to do is freak out like I do and they will adjusted to suit you. The problem is there is an endless daily confrontation of stupidity that must be dealt with in order to set the stage for manufacturing. But once you straighten them out on one thing a totally different unexpected stupid mentality appears. Yes it is a struggle but the end result is tremendous profits. So far I think I have eliminated 75% of the stupid arguments. Mainly by telling everyone "I don't give a shit what you think, do it the way I told you or get the hell out of here".

You must understand. Sri Lanka is an ideal social environment for people like me who are manic with a slight psycho schizophrenic disorder in them. And really who does not share that diagnosis. You, certainly not. Or are you just good at hiding it. This is an enabling environment where you can be who you are. Like the army says "Be all you can be" Here you add a little "Be all you can be, even if all you can be is an asshole" It is no wonder that one day I say I am leaving, this place, I hate it the people are stupid idiots, you cannot get anything done and is a waste of time. Then the next day saying this place is great I am staying. If you like to ride the roller coaster at the carnival then you will like this place to. The difference is at the fair the roller coaster gives you a physical experience and here the roller coaster is a mental challenge in discovering the workings of your mind. I am not referring to the roller coaster of depression, rather the roller coaster from sanity one day to insanity the next. Kind of like the dream we have where everyone is doing crazy stuff and we tell them to stop but they do not listen and keep doing crazy stuff, then the next part of the dream you are flying above the clouds

The next reason I like it here is because you can get a very pretty girlfriend half your age, even if you are twenty. Then if after your girlfriend goes home, you happen to run into another pretty young thing, you can feel free to have fun with them as well. And if the first girlfriend finds out they don't give it a second thought. No jealousy, nothing, they don't care. They just show you affection when you are with them. No consequences. Consequences are only for societies that condemn this behavior, but here it is the man's duty to be a dog.

The next thing I like is the food. They can do more with taste and presentation using a potato and some rice than most gourmet restaurants do with Fillet Mignon, pheasant under glass and all the other crap in small portions to barely wet the appetite they spend hours on making into statues of food. When you do get a big meal it only costs about \$1.50. I can take Nilu and a translator to dinner at the Pan and have a really big dinner for about \$11.00 including tip. I also like the rent. I pay \$45.00 for a 2 bedroom house right on the beach. It takes me less than 100 steps to get knee deep in the surf. Earlier I said I paid \$50.00 a month for the house, but the Rupee keeps getting lower compared to the dollar so you get more bang for your buck. Now the Rupee is \$1.09.9 per one USD. When I came here in 2005 the Rupee was .95 per one USD.

I like Matara. You cannot get more exotic on earth.

Transportation Comparison:

3 wheeler:

1. Open air exposes you to bus and truck exhaust, horns, engine noise right in your face.
2. Very noisy
3. Can drive anywhere; in between lanes on the sidewalk, in oncoming traffic
4. Costs more than the cab service
5. Bumpy as hell because the wheels are so small
6. most drivers know at least one sex girl

Cab service:

1. Usually cheaper than 3 wheeler, unless you get a crooked driver who will charge twice 2. the going rate
3. Can't drive on the sidewalk
4. One in ten have A/C if your lucky
5. Less noise and a smoother ride

The Bus:

1. Very cheap, \$.50 cents can take you 50 kilometers.
2. Crammed in like a Sardine
3. Don't have to give up your seat for old people
4. Sometimes they blow up
5. Not usually any pretty girls onboard

Check Points

The following is the conversation in an average day between two police men at a check point.

Policeman 1. See any terrorists driving by?

Policeman 2. I don't know how to tell do you?

Policeman 1. No not really.

Policeman 2. Hey let's stop that guy driving that truck and see if he is a terrorist.

Policeman 1. Maybe he won't have his ID on him and we can hold him for just cause until he forks over a bribe.

Policeman 2. Sounds Good, Whistle blows to signal the driver to pull over.

Policeman 1. Well does he have ID?

Policeman 2. Yeah, he does.

Policeman 1. Well let's see if he has any bombs in his truck as long as he is stopped.

Policeman 2. What does a bomb look like?

Policeman 1. I dunno, but if something looks strange that might be a bomb

Policeman 2. No bomb, you can go.

Policeman 1. Gee it is hot out here, I'm bored.

Policeman 2. Wait a minute I think I see a foreigner riding in a 3 wheeler with a sex girl. I think we can get a bribe out of this one , Whistle blows signaling to stop. Policeman 1 and 2. talk to driver and send him to the machine gun nest to verify ID.

The foreigner is asked for passport.

Foreigner- God Damn son of a bitch stupid ass policemen pull me over everytime I am with Nilu !

Policeman 1. What is he saying ?

Policeman 2. I dunno, I don't speak English

Policeman 1. Ask him his country, if he is from Germany we got him because they are all child molesters or fagots!

Policeman 2. He says he is from the USA

Policeman 1. Uh OH, does he have a passport?

Policeman 2. He has what looks to be an ID and a photocopy of a passport.

Policeman 1. Be nice and tell him to sit back down in the 3 wheeler, lets see if he is with a sex girl.

Policeman 2. Saying to foreigner's Sri Lankan girlfriend- Why are you with this man?

Girlfriend- He is my boyfriend.

Policeman 1. I don't believe her look in her purse, look for condoms, look for anything a sex girl might have, then check out her ID and give her an intimidating stare.

Policeman 2. Everything checks out, she is legal and no condoms

Policeman 1. There must e something we can use against this foreigner to get a bribe. Who does he think he is having a Sri Lankan girlfriend.

Policeman 2. I got it ! Then Policeman 2 says to USA foreigner- We have a problem.

Foreigner – There is no problem, she is not a sex girl, she is my girlfriend and we all showed you valid IDs

Policeman 1. What did he say?

Policeman 2. I duno

Policeman says to foreigner - You just have a photocopy of your passport and not the original. This is a problem

Foreigner _ God Damn it I am calling the USA embassy.

Policeman 1. What did he say?

Policeman 2. I dunno, but I heard something about the USA embassy.

Policeman 1. Oh shit let em go.

Policeman 2. Have a nice day sir, we are just poor policeman so bring us a bottle of Arrack next time you come this way Yes?

Foreigner- No Way, Every check point I pass stops me when I am with my girlfriend and I ain't going to pay every God Damn check point in Sri Lanka every time I want to go somewhere !

Policeman 1 What did he say?

Policeman 2. I don't know, but I don't think we are getting a bottle of Arrack

Driver – as he returns from the machine gun nest – Hey Mr. Tal, you have change for a twenty, the guy with the machine gun want me to give him a bribe and all I have is a twenty.

Foreigner – No Friken way !

Driver goes to and returns from machine gun nest with ID in hand.

Policeman 1. Well what do we do now?

Foreigner pulls out his cell phone and says- Put me through to the USA embassy

Policeman 1 and 2 say OK bye have a nice time with your girlfriend, maybe you will marry her

Driver gets in and the 3 wheeler with the foreigner and his girlfriend drive off.

Policeman 1. Hey blow your whistle, stop this guy coming our way in that red Nissan.

Policeman 2. OK

Policeman 1 to driver of red Nissan- Give me your license. You can get it back when you pay the \$50.00 fine for making a U turn.

Driver of red Nissan- But I did not make a U turn, I turned onto this road from the intersection.

Policeman 1. Yeah, well it is illegal to turn right from that intersection.

Driver of red Nissan_ No it's not everyone does it, look there, three cars just turned on from that intersection.

Policeman 1. that maybe, but it is illegal.

Driver of red Nissan_ show me where there is a sign that says not to turn from that intersection.

Policeman 1. They are getting ready to put up a sign soon, so give me your license until you go to court and prove your case. Or we can solve it here.

Driver of red Nissan- drives off without his license.

Policeman 2. Wait a minute here comes a 3 wheeler with that guy who did not have ID yesterday when we stopped him. He promised to bring us a bottle of Arrack next time he came this way. Stop him

Policeman 1. But he is legal his boss came yesterday and brought his ID remember.

Policeman 2. I don't care, he better have our bottle of Arrack.

The usual,

VJ gave me cash as incentive for my part of his project. I just gave it back to him. The reason I gave it back is that I saw it was in reality a yoke to which to put around my neck. What started out as a positive move on his parts had changed into the same old bad business practices. What seemed to be a step forward was actually a trap door into the stupid insanity and having to constantly prove you are right to deaf ears and eyes. I am telling VJ I will not meet with Ilfan anymore. Ilfan I see now is VJ's new Sal De Silva. A guy that is hell bent on getting things as cheap as possible then complaining about it, then back out of the transaction at the last minute, thereby making the entire multi day negotiations a waste of time. I see this is the future of business with VJ. I do not think VJ is like this. I think VJ has no problem paying. I think the problem is with these scumbags who second guess every deal made and set up any venture so that no one makes any money. I know from my business dealings that if the people you need are not paid, they don't help you. I do not mean buying something off the shelf. I mean when you need a contractor to get a job done that is out of the ordinary; you either pay them so they can make a profit, or they lose interest. I am talking about custom fabrication of steel, and fiberglass boats. If you want to build a custom thing, and then decide to modify it or change the design midstream, you had better be prepared to pay for the contractors time in re-design and re-working the job. If not, the contractor like any other same person would say "Screw this, I ain't working for free" But that is exactly the way these Sri lankan business men treat the contractors. And that is why contractors who are competent are so hard to find. Unless one is sent by God, then you are not going to find one who will be of any use. I am blessed because God has sent me great contractors as long as I get them separately and with no help from ESM. I see VJ's position. He needs a contractor and it is Ilfan's job to break balls and get the job done as cheap as possible. That is fine if you are making coconut hair brooms, cement blocks, or other no brain required work. But my trade is highly specialized, yet Ilfan thinks he can treat me like a Sri Lankan factory worker. Too bad. VJ was really getting along. I think he likes me. I went on a speech with him in Matara. I sat behind him with the Police chief and VJ's brother. After VJ gave the speech and the people applauded, he turned to look at me as if getting approval that he did a good job. I just nodded. That night I spent at his house in Matara. The next morning I awoke at 6:00 am. I went out to the balcony overlooking the courtyard to see VJ was already awake sitting in the courtyard seemingly waiting for me to get up. The first thing I said to him was "That was a great speech you gave to the people yesterday. I Even thought I did not understand it, I could tell the people really admire you." VJ just smiled then said to come down for breakfast. That is the VJ I know. But then Ilfan his new business manager sticks his nose in and ruins the good times we have by talking dollars and cents. In reality, I am the one who should be concerned with money, but I over pay contractors every time for the very reason I mentioned. If you want custom work done, and done right, and in a hurry you better make friends with the custom fabricators. If you think you can make friends with custom contractors without being generous you are wrong.

So now I do not know how to proceed with VJ. First I know this is a dead end game and will lose money that will be blamed on me. On one hand I feel like saying childish things that will expose my loathing for the Ilfan type who are hell bent on preventing anyone from making any money. But then I have gained a little wisdom. Instead I think I will say "I am starting a project for Norway and will be tied up for the next few months" If there is one thing I have learned is that it is pointless, futile and downright ignorant to think you can change someone's point of view(period). You can show them you are correct by proving the laws of physics. You can prove your point through mathematics. You can even prove your point by demonstration, but in the end you will not have changed their point of view or belief. In the movies a man can come to a far away place bringing new ways and the people bow to him and are grateful. That is only in Hollywood. In

reality you show them a better way and they go back to the old stupid, every time. You demonstrate your way will save time and money; they are not interested because they only do what they know. They are not interested in learning anything. Mainly because you are there only for a short time, then leave. Meanwhile after you leave they have to deal with the same conditions as before, dealing with the people as before. So it is no wonder the third world never will advance. It is not so much that they do not want to it is because it is not worth it to do better, there is no reward, their lives are the same with or without your new ways. So why bother to do things better. If they did things better and more efficiently, then more would be expected of them. Would you want more expected of you? Of course not we all think we give our best all the time and no one can tell us we are not doing things the best way.

Getting back to VJ. I will not try to talk to him about the right way to do business, because that would be a waste of time, as well as proving I am right. So what to do. I think I will read more of the book of Isaiha and go from there. Usually when I read the bible before making move, I end up making a move that catches everyone off guard. I have learned sometimes it is better to lose than win, and by losing I am actually winning. I think this applies in many cases in Sri Lanka. You have heard of the win scenario. I will call my Sri Lankan scenario The Lose Win strategy. First off you must see some important realizations First you will make NO money by doing business with Sri Lankan unless you are or have a Sri Lankan working for you. Second you can make tremendous profits as long as you are constantly dining the backs of the workers, and generous with the contactors. Third do not get swept away with ideas coming from a Sri Lankan I think that just about sums up, this entire experience.

My Peeps,

Tonight I am spending with my peeps. Atula, Nilu and other friends I have made are like my family here. Actually, they are my family here. I realized this when I returned from Matara on my last trip there. Boy was I happy to see them after that bad experience. The people in Matara are no different than in Wattala. As a matter of fact they are even more grateful for every dime you give them because there is no industry there. So everyone is even more dirt poor than in Wattala. Atula and Nilu are my family because I spend all my time at the house when I am not working. We sit around and talk about our hopes and dreams, and other small talk. Then there are the other friends, three wheel drivers who will not let me walk if they see me on the road, my workers who will not let me lift a finger to do any work because they tell me over and over that I am their master and the master is never supposed to do any work, The coconut rope factor workers who smile and wave at me as I walk by, the outside skilled contractors I made friends with by paying them twice what they normally make. Which by the way is still just a fraction of what they would get paid in the USA. But now I am leaving my new family. In the sea side we are apart from Wattala which is called a village. Everyone knows everyone else. Everyone knows me and is always hospitable and friendly. How could this happen. I did not come here to make good genuine friends and get a devoted sincere loving girlfriend, all of which make me very sad to leave behind. How could this have happened? I came here to work only, but as a by product I made lifelong close ties. Sam is my dear friend who will bail me out of any bad situation no matter where I go in Sri Lanka or Maldives. And my workers, they all shed a tear when they heard I was leaving. You know you cannot buy that kind of friendship. I don't think it even exists in the USA. At least I have never come across it. I mean friends that tell you they will help you if you ever need it. Friends who are by your side supporting you when the insanity of the Sri Lankan ways are tearing you apart, when things are going bad. Friends that sit with you in silence until you are feeling better. How could this happen? I only came here to work on making boats. How could I have let myself make lifelong bonds of love? No one told me this would happen. No one warned me my heart would be broken when it came time to leave. Why would I have even thought about such a ridiculous idea as a consequence of my stay? I wouldn't. No one would. It caught me totally off guard.

As far as VJ is concerned I think he realizes he fucked up. He has not called and is waiting for me to call him. That is how he is. He tries to treat me like a Sri Lankan worker then I say "No Thanks, I do not want the deal" Then there is no more contact. Until I call him at which time he says "Todd, I will treat you as you like. Now come over my house for dinner and we will discuss things" I think now is like those instances. I have thought hard about what to tell him. I think I will tell him simply "If you want me to be involved I have to be in charge of purchasing instead of Ilfan" If he is receptive and asks why. I will then follow up with "I have much more experience in this business than he does" If he is not receptive and fires back with something else I will simply say "I cannot do business if you do not trust me with your investments in these projects" I think that just about sums it up. Either yes or no answer is required anything else and I will refer back to either one of my answers. If he insists on discussing the matter I will remind him that for six months in 2005 we tried to do business with Sal his last business manager and it soon became obvious I was not going to make any money on any deal he was involved in. The same goes with this situation. Instead of buying my boat and showing me good faith you let Ilfan talk you out of it just to save a few bucks, again showing me I will not make any money. If he still has objections I will tell him bluntly. "VJ you are having the same problem Zahid Jafferjee has with blue. And that problem is that you let ignorant people tell you how to spend your money. And all that does is make it impossible for me to do what needs to be done to be profitable"

First Week Back.

It is my first week back. At first I did not think they expected me to return, but see now I was 2 days early. First I emailed my arrival, but no one met me at the Airport. I called Sam and he sent a driver to get me. When I got to my Apt it was a mess! The roof had been leaking and there was an inch deep of water on the floor, and the power was out. The water and wet conditions made the place damp and moldy in addition to the dirt. It had been raining for weeks before I arrived. The first couple of days were rough, but they fixed the roof and cleaned the place up and now it is nice again. I saw Atula my friend and he was as broke as always having his power cut a few days after I arrived. I sent for Nilu who did not seem happy to see me at all, she just obliged me. Then I learned a new thing. Do not buy Sri Lanka friends expensive gifts; they only pawn them to feed the family. Before I left I bought Nilu a nice gold chain and a nice Aqua Marine pendant. She pawned them. She does not expect me to get them back, and I don't think I will. Why should I as soon as she needs to eat after I leave she will pawn them again. Sad, Yes, but sadder that I threw the money away for the jewelry in the first place. At least the money I spent to fix her teeth and fill her cavities she cannot pawn. I bought them all cell phones, all pawned. These people have a way of surviving and being happy living in poverty. When you try to make their lives better it only makes them thirst for more to no ends. All I did was ruin them, they got used to me taking them to dinner, buying them clothes and stuff. Now that I am back they say "We need more." I learned a lesson not to give anything they don't already have. After Nilu left I told Atula I did not want her anymore she makes me feel like crap and does not make me happy. He said OK. I find new girl. I knew he wouldn't. Instead he talked to Nilu when she called him to ask why I was not having her over. He told her she does not make me happy anymore, that we all have problems and I only liked her because she made me happy, but now she pawned everything I got her and acts like she is too good for me. Atula told me that Nilu promised to make me happy again. We'll see I am too broke to spend any money anyway so let her and Atula think twice about bleeding me dry again because now I have cooled things and stayed away from them both.

Everyone I did business with or bought tools or equipment from is treating me different. Before when I went to buy tools I had to bargain to get a decent price. Today I went to a hardware supplier and he gave me 25% off the final bill without me saying a word. I asked him why, he told me it is my special price and appreciates my business now that I am back. They even gave me a 30 day warrantee on cheap Chinese power tools which was unheard of last time I was here.

Then my Steel fabricator who I paid \$40 a day to make Stainless Steel things and trailers for me told me he would do the same work for \$25.00 a day. Even ESM gives me a break without me bitching. I get make boats and stuff at their cost. An issue I had to argue with them before. I used to have to say "Your people are incompetent and cannot do the work unless I hold their hands the whole time" This time I mentioned the costs and Sam just nodded his head at my request to build at their cost. He did not even mention the administrative cost which was a big pain in the ass issue with chairman. Now they are preparing part of the factory just for my projects, separate from the Australians. They did not even flinch when I told them I wanted them to clean my new area up and resurface the floor and build me a new office with A/C. Then the real surprise came when Milroy, my steel worker and I took a 3 wheeler to Colombo to get an axle made for my boat trailer. It was the first time I had to cross a check point on the main bridge to Colombo. Well the authorities stopped the 3 wheeler I was riding in. Right away I said to myself "great this bullshit again" They said a few words to the driver for his ID, and then they looked in back and saw me. Instead of asking me what I was doing in Sri Lanka, where I was going where is my visa etc... they took one look at me and waved us on all the way through the rest of the way without a word as if I was someone important. All in all Sri Lanka is very happy I am back and is treating me with the respect and courtesy.

I called my buddy VJ the minister and he invited me over for a special dinner, but he had to leave early because his position called him away. A few days later I called him and he said to come over. This time I called first to be sure he was there. He wasn't and thought I had arrived at his house. He told me to wait there for him. I told him that I called before I left to be sure he would be there. I think this disappointed him. He is used to having everyone wait for an audience. I know he is just really busy with state matters in his position as most politicians have no time to spare. I was disappointed because he did not mention the bottle of Black Label I sent him on the day he was to meet me at his house. He says he wants to discuss things, but I do not know about that, everyone is talking about his new boatyard in Matara, yet he does not have time to meet me about it. He might have been persuaded by the shit head business managers he has to get Sri Lankan managers to build and run his boatyard. If so then I really do not want any part of it anyway as it will fail, and I do not want to be around the minister when his investment goes down the crapper. He says they need me in Maldives, but I am not going back without a cash advance. I gave him my full support with his projects and told him I will make the best boats ever seen here and will be on board with him 100% and forget about ESM. I said and meant this in appreciation for the trip to Maldives. OK, so I have settled that account of the trip. Now if anything is to be done I do not need to go anywhere to see anything because I have already done that and seen it all. The time has come for the money. And if he the Sri Lankan back stabbers convince him that they do not need me, and then OK, I owe nothing. If VJ invites me to go to Matara. I will go only for the sightseeing and the great atmosphere (Maybe I'll get to meet with that great tall half Japanese beautiful sex girl again and this time pay the \$20.00 instead of letting my driver take a beating) Or maybe not. In any case I will go where the minister wants me to as a friend no expectations. I think he would rather have me as a friend anyway. Hanging around to talk to whenever he has time. Besides I think I might have enough projects to keep me busy anyway.

Then there is the "New Partner" When I first came back to ESM Sam, Chairman, and everyone else was all exited about a European who was buying 51 % of ESM for a million dollars. Chairman bought asked me to come to his office and have a meeting with him. Chairman bought a pizza, which is very nice, but whenever chairman buys me a pizza it usually means I aren't getting shit out of any deal I am going to help him make. I think the pizza is my pay check. That is OK because he takes very good care of me here paying for my meals, transportation, comfortable lodging, security, 24/7 crisis support and bottled water. As I ate the pizza I anticipated the Euro to arrive thinking. This is not going to make me rich because I am eating pizza. I was right. The Euro came was very nice well dressed and friendly. We all met for about two hours, then chairman left us to discuss the new factory layout. After we talked I got the feeling this guy is full of crap. For one thing if you have millions to spend, you do not talk about it like this guy. He told me he has access to millions of Euros while he offered me a job with generous pay. OK, right there I knew he was full of crap. I have been around enough millionaires here to know that the ones who have the millions do not talk about it. Instead they say they have "No Money" Like Chairman and VJ. Actually VJ doesn't talk about money at all and if you bring up the subject he gets mad and calls you names. So the next day chairman asked me how the meeting went and what I thought of the "New Partner" I said to chairman "I think he is full of crap. Tell him to fork over the cash and quit dancing" Chairman thought that was funny and was surprised at my opinion. The next day the bullshit Euro trash asked me to tell the minister he was buying into ESM and to arrange a meeting. I told Euro Trash flat out "I need to see my contract and retainer first" Euro said he would meet later and arrange this, but that was a week ago and not a word. Yap I may have offended him? Maybe I did, but he isn't Minister and Chairman knows better than to ask me to do something without paying me a pizza first. Here it is a week later and I asked Sam this morning how it was going with the "New Partner" Sam said the new partner is having money problems and had gone to the embassy to ask for a million dollar grant. Oh boy, now I know the Euro is full of it! I wasted no time in rubbing it in saying "I told you people the guy is full of it, and you are getting exited about nothing!" To go to the embassy and ask for a million dollar grant is like going to the wizard of OZ and asking for a brain. There is no such thing outside of la la land. I know I pounded the pavement for months in pursuit of a grant, thinking OH boy, look at me grant me some money cause I want to help the poor Sri Lankan. Don't you embassy people see the great opportunity you have here before you that will solve the economic depression here. Guess what? The embassy knows. The embassy knows that other than medicine and basic education no one in their right mind is going to finance a Sri Lankan pipe dream the Sri Lankan will only pawn what you give them. Buy tools and they will pawn. Give them a nice job and they will bleed the employer dry. Only a Sri Lankan with Sri Lankan money of their own can do business here and make it work. Not to say you cannot have a profitable business, you can as long as everyone involved is a westerner or at least well trained in western thinking. I say good luck to the Euro trash, here's to you. Now watch him get the grant and make me look like an idiot. That's OK I am used to being made a fool of here. But even Carlton is talking to me in a semi positive way. I think he may now believe a toilet with running water is actually possible. When I first got back and the apartment was in chaos and no one had prepared for my arrival I said to Carleton. "If I did not know better I would think you all don't want me back because of all the trouble I got everyone into with chairman. And all y complaining" Carleton said "we Sri Lankan can take a beating and still be friendly" I said "Are you glad I am back or are you one that wishes I would stay away" he replied "I don't care one way or the other, it is really not that important to me whether you come or go." Great at least I know where I stand. No one gives a crap. I think Chairman and Sam are glad I am back, but I do not think I was coming back. I think they are glad I am back because today Sam told me they ate partitioning part of the factory off just for my projects. And not out back in the woods either. I am getting a prime piece of the factory building. They are refurbishing the area this month. I have been getting many calls from people who say they are going to buy a boat, we shall see. Last time I heard that I collected thousands in deposits and no one followed thru. Good thing I write on the contract the deposit is non refundable.

First month back.

A couple weeks ago Carleton had his clocked clean at the bus stop at Elakanda Junction. He was pummeled by a disgruntled worker. Since then Carleton has been very nice to me and does not find fault with me anymore. Remember Percy? he visited ESM today he was happy to see me, or at least seemed so. He is now working for a German NGO heading up nothing less than a technical school for modern boat building. Is that a laugh or what? He is happy and I am happy for him. But feel sorry for the students. A closed mind living in the Stone Age cannot possibly bring modern concepts to the industry. I think the Germans hired him as a rep; they cannot hire a foreigner to train for political reasons. I wish him the best. Percy made it well known to me that he had very generous pay, had plenty of time on his hands and is still looking for someone to do business with in the USA. I wonder if that was a hint. I just changed the subject. Chairman has dedicated part of the factory just for my projects. Even so I will probably not do any serious jobs here. I have a customer from India who ordered a sophisticated sport fisher 31 feet and another from Louisiana ordering the same type of sport fisher. The same boat I built with help at Stapleton's for a decade. No way is it possible to perform brain surgery with cavemen as the support staff. So what I will probably do is

Import the sophisticated completed boats into ESM from China then export them to the customers as a Sri Lankan product.

Sounds crazy but for the past year many people have contacted me knowing I am working with ESM and think this new manufacturing arrangement in Sri Lanka is a great opportunity. My alternative is to tell the customers to forget it. But then they may lose interest in the interest of this new idea of building boats here. I get 2 or three calls a night from people who think it is great I am building here and have placed or are about to place orders. I can't let down my public. Today I did just this. a customer in Norway bought two boats from me in the past week just because I told him six months ago I am building boats here and the prices are low because labor is cheap, land is cheap, no environmental issues etc.. All the things that make one think on the surface this is a great new opportunity. Little do they know what I know now? You cannot break the stubborn ignorance and nothing gets done unless you are standing over the job. And even then there are many screw ups because no one speaks English and chairman refuses to hire a translator for me. So today I showed him I brought \$20,000 into my account from Norway, and chairman was all smiles, until I said this money is paying for a boat from China since your people are incapable of timely performance. Chairman said "bull shit, we can do the job" I said "Oh you can? Then tell me where are all the things I asked management to do for me while I was in the USA" Before I left the Norway customer said he was sending the money in May for me to build his boats so they could get them in the summer. Summers are very short there, if you don't get them a boat by July the summer is over and you have to wait till next year to sell boats. Before I left Chairman Sam and I sat down to plan this out. I gave them just a few simple things to do like the first was to gather information on obtaining a CE certification for boats built. You cannot import boats into the EU without CE certification. Next on the list was request for engines for the boats I was to build on my return. Next was a list of suppliers so I did not have to go thru what happened before. Last time I had to wait three weeks for an answer to order simple marine equipment. Which was too late in getting the info so I sent a boat out without the equip and the customer was not too happy about it. So on the list was a request for suppliers incase one did not answer in a timely manner I could have a list to call. I have to have them do all this because no one speaks English. It is nearly impossible for me to buy anything without miscommunication. I tell a supplier I want a hammer and I get a saw blade. This after the supplier confirms that he understood my order. Then makes excuses why there was a screw up. No more of this is what I told them. Or I said there is no point in me returning. Well they had no list of suppliers; they had done nothing as far as they had agreed to do to make my production work. Still for one month I did not say anything. But then I got a call from Norway asking if the money had arrived to the ESM account as they said they were going to do in March. Actually I was hoping they would not have sent the money and rather be like most customers that say they are going to send money then never do. But when Norwegians say they are going to send money in two months, they actually do. So there I was with the money and ESM totally unprepared, I had no choice but to either give the money back and tell them I was wrong about everything and look like a fool and probably lose a good customer or find a solution. The solution was to import the boats from China into Sri Lanka then export them to Norway as a Sri Lankan product. This event turned out to prove to chairman I was right about them being idiots and needing new management. Only by hitting chairman in the pocketbook does he pay attention. He did not lose any money, but he saw an easy \$20,000 slip thru his hands. Now I have another customer paying \$55,000 for a sophisticated 31 foot boat. No way am I going to let this one get all crazy.

Sam was mad that I told chairman nothing had been done to prepare for my return. But then Sam took out the list I gave him before I left and saw that he had not done anything I had asked, so he saw he had no one to blame. He saw that it was not me he should be mad at. Instead I turn his anger at Dudley who only criticizes Sam to chairman. Meanwhile I say to chairman that Sam is your only hope and to dump Dudley ASAP. I explain to Sam that we both want the same success and the only problem is the translation and if I had a translator all our problems would be solved. I really believe that is 95% of the problem. After all you have lazy good for nothing workers and assholes in the USA companies as well. Sam is my friend and confidant. Good news. Dudley has turned in his resignation effective August. Now Sam says I should be Managing Director and he seems half serious. OR maybe it is a joke. In any case I showed chairman \$185,000 in contracts for the next 90 days and a \$350,000 contract for the next 12 months. This got his attention. These are signed contracts with European, Indian, and USA dealers who know the financing and buying world. Chairman knows it is not a pie in the sky. I feel good about it because I received many thousands in cash deposits just to agree to accept negotiations in the contracts. I charge \$10,000 just to agree to build for these global dealers who are exited about Sri Lanka and the new found boat building environment. So it is up to me to make it happen. Now at meetings with chairman when he says "OK, I will have Sam do this and ESM will do that and that I need to explain myself better, and do all the paperwork, and running around myself" I say to him,

"I think there is a misunderstanding. I am not here to discuss ways we can work together. I am here offering you an opportunity. Do you want to build these sophisticated boats I have contracts for, or do I go to China and make it easy on myself"

Chairman says every time "I want the business" Then he again starts on the downward spiraling arguments about how I need to explain myself, do the costing, paper work, labor management, find suppliers, find parts, order parts pay for parts etc.... all over again. So again I let him finish and I repeat my self saying "I think there is a misunderstanding. I am not asking you to find a way for us to get along and work together. I am asking you if you want the opportunity to build these boats or if you do not want the opportunity I will go to China and save myself a lot of grief" Up until the Norway fiasco they screwed up the circular discussions would always repeat and no progress was possible. But this time chairman said "Yes, I want the business. But you are telling me I have to do things your way" Again I repeated myself saying. I am not telling you to do it my way I am offering you the opportunity to build these boats and if you do not want to then I will go to China and save myself a lot of grief. Finally chairman was cornered into an answer. He said "What? Are you saying that it is your way only?" I said "Yes, it is my way or the highway" Chairman answered "That's how you Americans are." I said I know, we went to the moon four times over 30 years ago. Those that disagreed hit the highway, and we went to the moon without them?" Now I have business that I have waited and struggled for many years I am not going to put my future at risk for the sake of trying to work things out when I speak from a years experience that it is impossible to do things the Sri Lankan way. Chairman went silent and I took the opportunity to make a timely exit.

Then VJ, my close personal friend the Minister met me at his house the other morning to discuss business. He explained that before he came back into power he was doing business as a private person. He went on to say that now that he is back in power for the next 6 years the government is his partner in developing

the Matara fishing industry by starting a huge boatyard building boats for Maldives and local fishermen (his district is Matara) Before he was keyed up about building in Maldives. Now he says that he is back in power that he has put Maldives building aside and that he is starting a boatyard specifically for the local Matara fisherman by executive order. The land is to be three times the size as before close to 10 acres on the harbor that the government is spending millions on developing issuing grants given to them from the tsunami. That was when I had my opening to tell him the problem of me being involved I said to him what the fact was "I like the idea and am excited to be working of it. But there is no way your business managers, or any Sri Lankan business man will allow you to have me, a foreigner, running your boat yard" He looked at me not surprised that I had said that. He replied "Yes I know this is what you think, but this is not how it will be. We are going to build these boats using your USA MIC code and serial numbers that is what the government has told me."

It appears the government or maybe the countries that donated the millions for developing the boats for the fisherman know what I know. And that is if you put a Sri Lankan in charge you are asking for nothing but wasted money, failure and excuses. Then again there may be some German company or some other European company take this opportunity from me. My relationship with the Minister being that I learned not to ask for pay. Or even remind him he promised to talk about paying like he did several times. Yes several times he had me trek to Matara to stay at his house for the purpose of discussing my salary at the new boatyard. Not only my salary. But I asked him if I could bring my steel fabricator and builder to Matara for me to meet to show him I was 100% ready and onboard to get the boats built now. At that time he said "Yes bring your team and we will discuss the construction with my architect. We will also discuss Salary for your team so we can start immediately" Well after a few treks to Matara on the premise to discuss pay, the subject never came up. Instead we spent our time going over plans with the architect and listing and pricing tools and equipment. Not once did the subject of salary come up although that was the purpose we came as he had requested. I see now that was a test. I did not remind him or ask him about salary, and I told my team not to mention it either. I think this builds trust. After all what would most people do in this situation. They would say "Excuse me Minister but you said we were going to discuss salary, so what is the salary?" True most people would have said that, but I am not most people and instead keep the obvious silent and let the Minister do the talking. I see that no one around him ever speaks of money. Besides I am too busy to work with him anyway, but I am not going to say anything. Besides it is not everyday one gets the chance to build a strong friendship and trust with one of the most powerful men in Sri Lanka. Another thing I have learned. Rich people do not talk about money or what they need. And people who do talk about money and their needs or demands do not get invited to friendly discussions. In general I would be honored to help bring a benefit to this country. They might even make a bronze statue of me and put in the town square. The last thing I said to VJ as we parted was to remind him of my one demand to work for him. And he remembered what that was even before I said it. He said "...and don't worry we will be having a picture with the president soon enough. This is not a big thing you asked me to do".

I watched the movie 6-6-07

Critics review of the movie Ben Hur with Charlton Heston.

Lesson one learned from movie; Don't go on the roof when the governor is driving by.

Ester: When Ben Hur came, back his house was a mess, leaves all over the courtyard, broken windows. Instead of embracing her he should have said "You have been living here for years since I have been gone, the least you could have done was clean the place up a little"

Health care: In the valley of the lepers the Romans lowered down bread and vegetables. Just shows even the Romans had better health care than the US

Lesson two: When Pontius Pilot commends you and makes you a roman citizen, it is best to take it and say thanks rather than to say "You ruined my family, here is your ring back"

Question: The rich Arab was honored to have Ben (a Jew) drive his team of horses at the chariot races, so why can't they get along now?

June 07

This has been a great month. The Indian customer appeared and contracted has given me the opportunity to exploit all my talents in making a western style boat that I had not made since the 33 footer design I made and sold with Raleigh Stapleton in the 90's until 2004. Funny how the year he decides to retire and sell the building is the same the tsunami hit and began this adventure. One door closed and I wondered where I would find a rare old timer boat builder to hang with now. The answer was nowhere. True it had been two years of BS, frustration, lost elections, billionaires who refuse to spend their money on development of their new hobby, but things started to change. I don't mean the change where I made boats here before. I mean since I returned in May.

As soon as I returned I discovered first had to clear away the people I met here from before who pretended to be my friend. Atula who I thought was my friend presented me with a bill for rent of his house during the time I was gone. OK, a simple misunderstanding of language, maybe but it seemed like extortion. I had no lease with him he knew it was temporary, but Sam said pay him off and stop him from ever contacting me again. I agreed. After I paid him off I had no more beach house so no where to meet Nilu so I stopped seeing her. Well the next in line to extort the foreigner was Nilu. Since Atula had been warned not to contact me, he had no way to scheme further extortion, I thought. But then Nilu called me, I had her call Sam to relay the message in English. She said she wants \$500.00 from me because she passed on a job offer in Singapore just to be with me. And then came the bombshell. She told Sam she was pregnant. Sam said "I no believe this case" I asked why. Sam told me he did not believe she was pregnant because she refuses to meet me or Sam, and she refuses to go to a doctor

and verify her story. She says just pay the money. I do not think this is Nilu saying these things. I think it is Atula getting her to lie. Maybe he threatened her I do not know. Nilu told me he has told her to tell me lies before, and before I chose to ignore her warnings. All in all Nilu has been nothing but kind, loving and honest with me. Still Sam says if it is true or not it is better to pay everyone off from before and start new. I said to Sam "That is fine when it is not your money." Sam said "Just call it stupid money" at that I said to Sam "OK, but you pay half because this whole thing is your fault. I am supposed to be your guest; you are supposed to be looking out for me. You knew about these people when I met them and you did not warn me all the poor people around here are criminals and extortionists" Sam agreed. Now the wreckage of the past is clearing away and now I know why all the tourists are rude and say get the fuck away from me all the time. By the way I went to Colombo Saturday and I have never seen as many tourists as I see here now. The tourists are in Colombo and in the south. No tourists come to Wattata anymore.

A dealer in Palm Beach called me and said he has sent an LC and contracted to supply 4 to 6 boats per month for the next 12 months. Then my Indian prospect from 2006 suddenly appeared with \$20,000 US cash to start a \$55,000 job for him. His company is gamefishindia.com and he and his partner run a sport fishing business in Andaman Islands. Google that place, it is very interesting. I plan to go there when the boat arrives at Port Blair in October to show them how to operate and maintain it.

Chairman has been meeting with a Greek, Swedish, and German businessmen. They plan to join forces to pump millions into ESM and produce high quality boats for the European market. Chairman says to me from time to time "You know Todd when my plans come together you will be quite happy. For a while you will be travelling and living out of your suitcase". Today Heran the business broker handling the deal called while Chairman and I were discussing our agreement to fill orders I brought to ESM. Chairman was talking to Heran and turned the phone to me and said "Heran send you his greetings" Chairman looked at me for a response so I said in a semi loud firm voice to Heran "Heran, where's my money?" Chairman laughed. Something is brewing or chairman would not be continually travelling to meet the business men in Greece and Sweden.

My friend the minister has plans to build a huge boatyard in Matara with the government backing. The government ruling party of which he is the Minister of Special Projects is developing the Matara fishing industry there. The thing about VJ is his plans keep getting bigger and bigger, but nothing ever gets started. I am meeting him at his home Monday morning. As usual he will be too busy and speak with me for just a few moments, or he will have to leave at the last minute on emergency state business. Either way I am not going to do what I did before which was to call ahead of time and ask him if he is there before I leave. I see know that is insulting to him. If he is not there when I arrive his secretary calls him to say I have arrived. Then his secretary hands me the phone and he tells me he had cannot make it at this time but for me to have lunch and hang around the house and wait for him. Before I would say no, I have work to do, call me when you know you have time to spare. That strategy just makes him angry at me. Because when I called him weeks later to tell him I am still Sri Lanka awaiting his free time he says to me "Are you happy? You must be happy so how can we do business if you are with blue star?" I answered "I am always happy" He laughed and invited me over then next morning. When I got there he was finishing breakfast, had a hangover from a big state celebration party the night before and could barely find the strength to meet with me. I was impressed, most multi millionaire powerful government officers would have put me off, but he met me even though understandably brief. This meeting he was still a little angry with me for not taking his invitation to make myself at home and wait for him whenever he was late for a meeting. He said "OK, I do not feel well. Now I am starting plans for a much bigger boatyard in Matara and will need you to help us. Give me your number so I may call you." Well he already has my phone number and email. So that was more like him saying. Don't call me I will call you. That was two weeks ago. In the meantime a business man from Maldives and a Business man from India came to me asking to build 60 foot Safari boats. Safari boats are mini cruise ships. Just nice looking profiles with state rooms, a galley and a sundeck. They use them for tours around India and Maldives. I told them to call my Friend Mahinda who is planning a boatyard capable of this type of building. ESM is in no way prepared to build this type. Naturally I called Mahinda to tell him people wanted to build boats at his planned boatyard and what was going on.

No sooner had Mahinda answered the phone when he cheerfully greeted me and told me to come to his home in the morning the next day, and he was happy to hear from me. I learned two things from Mahinda. One If you talk about money with him, he gets mad and gives the cold shoulder. If you do not accept his hospitality, even though it means stopping everything you are doing just to hang around at his house he gives the cold shoulder. This time if I get to his house in the morning and he tells me his servants will prepare a meal for me and for me to hang around and wait for him, I will do just that. I think even though he will eventually have the boatyard. I think in the meantime he wants me to hang around slowly becoming Part of his organization. Through the past year I have seen his organization. All parts are run by his friends. One runs the beach hotel I stayed at in Matara. One runs the marine engine supply company for the commercial fishing boats ESM buys from. One runs the Lighthouse restaurant in Matara. One runs the new hotel he just built in Matara. One runs the only gas station at the Fisheries Harbor in Matara. One runs the Maldives Tuna businesses in Maldives. And there are more. When ever I go to the Ministers house one, or a few of these partners are always hanging around his house waiting for him. So I think the smart thing for me to do is play the part he wants me to play. I think my part is the boatyard. If he would only quit talking and planning and do something.

My apt:

Everyday I find baby frogs in my kitchen. There is no way in or out, so how do they get there? Not to mention I am on the fifth floor. No frogs anywhere else. They just appear in my kitchen. I used to open the window, catch them and throw them out, but I got tired of that so now I got frogs living in my kitchen. Sometimes when it rains they croak in the middle of the night so I have to get up, open the kitchen door and yell at the frogs to shut up, which surprisingly they do. I think the frogs are in the rain because they only appear when it is raining and they are always very small. For some reason they vanish before they get to be adult size. I keep my kitchen window shut now because a while back I came home from work to find a 6 foot green lizard in my kitchen. At first I did not mind because he was eating a frog. But then realized I cannot let him stay here just to keep the frog population in check, his terds were all over the place. I approached the lizard with a broom to show him out the door and let the rest of the factory deal with it but the lizard had other ideas. He defended his space by whipping his long tail at me. I put up with this a few times then told the lizard. "OK, frogs don't try to hit me so I put up with them but no way am I going to let you stay here" I then attacked him with my broom until I held his head to the ground, grabbed him behind the head lifted him to the open window and dropped him out. Next I called the cleaning staff to sanitize the kitchen.

June,

In June my friend the Minister of Special projects Mahinda Wijesekera called me and invited me to visit with him at his home in Matara. He said it would just be the two of us.

That Saturday his driver picked me up and went to his Colombo home. We had squid for breakfast. Normally I don't like curry and squid but I get real hungry and stuff like this is sometimes all there is to eat/ it wasn't half bad. It was just us two having a quiet breakfast. Afterwards we got into his car and we drove the 135 kilometers to Matara.

I got car sick real fast. The driver who was supposed to be one of the best would speed up to 55 then slam on the brakes for a chicken crossing the road, then speed up to 55 again only to slam on the brakes for a car that pulled out. Constant speeding up just to slam on the brakes. Add to this that even the good roads have pot holes everywhere. It was an agonizing ride. During this the Minister read the newspaper. It was hard to stay quiet and not tell the driver he was an asshole and to slow down. I asked him why he drove so fast and he said to make time. But a slow moving farm tractor pulling a garbage trailer made about the same time we did. At the Ministers house it was quiet. Not the usual hustle and bustle of people conducting government or Tuna business. It was quiet. That night we went to his light house restaurant and had a nice dinner. Later Minister said "We go upstairs and watch a movie" We did, when the screen projector had technical problems he called on his music director and his assistant. Together they played the accordion and bongo drums and the Minister broke out in song for the next hour. Here is the minister singing. He asked me to join in but I did not know the words or the music.

The next morning we went to survey the property for his new boat yard. The property sits on top a cliff overlooking the beach with its 5 foot aqua blue surf curling into shore. One side was a great view of the Matara coastline. On the other side was a great view of the fisheries harbor with all the colorful boats and the lighthouse. On the property in the back is a huge house that is 150 years old. The owner says it was the governors would reside when the British ruled Sri Lanka. The next day we drove back, but with a different driver. I couldn't help but ask the previous driver if this new driver was as talented as he was behind the wheel.

Monday went back to work at ESM where I have a job building a custom 34 foot sport fisher that is coming along nicely. Things have changed a little at ESM because instead of talking shit behind my back the mysterious voices who I do not know said only once that I was wrong. But after the boat took shape and the customer handed over 50,000 USD the chairman told them to shut up and help me or be fired. By the way chairman informed me that he is scaling down ESM and focusing on exports only. He added that all the people I object to who are probably the ones who say how wonderful it is that I am here to my face then talk shit behind my back are leaving. So far 25 employees are laid off which is expensive because here an employer has to pay severance pay of 12 months salary when dismissing someone. And firing a worker is not allowed.

It all sounded good. Then I got a call later that day from chairman who said "Todd we have to talk about your expense account" You see when the job from for the Andaman islands came through Sam said they were going to end my allowance for my local living expenses because now I had money. Bullshit, how dare them. All along they have been telling me that if I would just bring in an order I would be treated like a king. But it is just the opposite. They promised that if I brought in an order that I would have a driver, a vehicle and on and on. But instead they cancelled my allowance. Usually I would snap out with an email to chairman full of complaints, but this time I asked for wisdom to handle this differently because complaining by email gets me nowhere. I think chairman knows if he pushes my buttons that I will lash out with a complaining email, then the next day feel guilty and go along with him. This time I just thought of what to say when he came to talk about my cancelled allowance. Well the next day that is just what he did he started out by saying the usual "Todd as you know I had to scale back operations and ESM is losing money so now that you have money from this order I am canceling your allowance because I have no money" This is his button pushing that usually works and he talks me into being a sucker. This time was different. I said I understand, and I really appreciate, hospitality and the opportunity, however if my allowance is cancelled I cannot afford to stay here and will finish this Indian job and return back to the USA. Chairman's jaw dropped he proceeded to go over how much money he spent on me, how much money my apartment at the factory cost him. Before he told me the apartment cost him a little, but this time he said it cost him a lot, so I had to ask. How much does the apartment cost you? He answered "A lot!" He went on the usual about having no money, what a great opportunity this is for me, how this is a once in a lifetime chance etc... Finally he stopped and gave me the floor. I repeated myself. Without my allowance I cannot afford to live here and must return to my home in the USA. At that he interrupted me getting mad like he likes to do. He likes a good shouting match in the board room. But I kept my cool. He interrupted me and said loudly "Todd, you must make up your mind, you either join ESM as we are or you can leave, But you must make a decision now! Ok the moment I had been waiting for because he always says to me when I get mad at the ignorance here that if I did not like it I should go. So this time I calmly said, "I have made the decision you asked for and I have thought long and hard about it. My decision is to finish my responsibility with this job and go home to the USA" At that the chairman who is only 5 feet tall, stood up quickly gave me a mean look, then slammed his paperwork and books down on the boardroom desk and yelled so the entire office would see. "ZGOD DAMNIT I WILL NOT BE BULLIED IN MY OWN COMPANY. YOU WANT TO LEAVE THEN GET OUT NOW!!!!" At that I turned calmly to Sam who was also calm and asked if he would call me a driver to take me to the airport. Then chairman calmed down just a little bit and said. "We will discuss this more after lunch" But I said "Lunch was part of my allowance so who is going to pay for my lunch now" chairman said "you have money go buy yourself lunch. I replied "I have no money for lunch so I won't be eating today" Then chairman broke down to his usual jolly self and laughed telling Sam to order me the biggest pizza he could get. Chairman put his arm around me and said don't worry we are fine, this is how we talk business in Sri Lanka. I said yes maybe but look, my hands are shaking because you scare me. I held up my hand and shook it slightly to look as if I was afraid. Later Sam brought me a great pizza and assured me my allowance would continue.

Tahere chairman's son comes home for the summer. Taher is a very nice guy. He is 19 years old and very nice for a rich kid. I will be taking him for a ride up and down the canal in the 19 foot boat I built before. We cannot go to any lakes or out in the river or sea because the Navy will blow us out of the water, so I stay in the Dutch canal which is not so bad because there are some nice lagoons to see.

I miss the boys. When I finish my work I really am heading home for goof. I have had enough of the local criminals and 3 wheel drivers. The criminals want to extort you and the 3 wheelers want to say they took you 35 kilometers when it was really only 10 kilometers. A person gets tired of the constant attempts from everyone to take money. One gets tired of constantly being asked "Where is your country? Where are you going? Please sir 20 Rupees I am a poor person who needs to eat. Please sir 1000 rupees my son has a chance to go to a good school but I am short 1000 Rupees (\$10.00 USD), please sir I need my tooth pulled, please sir I am sick and must see the doctor and on and on" It is so bad I only go from my apt to work and back. Only in Colombo can you get away from the shit heads. Colombo is cool. It is like Coconut Grove only bigger.

I have MTV here with local news that is translated to English and often see my buddy the Minister giving speeches to the Parliament.

The Minister's office of Special Projects had its opening day last Monday. They had a ribbon cutting ceremony. All the newspapers and TV stations were there. Also there were a lot of other ministers. About 60 news people and support staff followed minister around as he talked about the new ministry of special projects he was in charge of. I just sat in the hallway and enjoyed the view from the 28 floor of the north tower of the world trade center. Yes they have their own world trade center in Colombo and the minister's office takes up the entire 28 floor. Once as the minister passed with the crowd following he saw me sitting and turned

to ask me how I liked his offices. As he turned everyone else turned to see what he was saying. I answered "I like it, so which one is my office?" He laughed and the parade continued down the hall. Then I stood up and hung around the back of the crowd when I heard "Todd, Todd, where's Todd?" Then an assistant came to me and said the Minister wants me. I went up thru the crowd to him. He was talking to the Minister of the BOI who will probably be the next president. His father was to be president but was assassinated by the LTTE. I thought I would be introduced but the Minister broke off his conversation to say to me "Todd, look! at all this food, I want you to have as much as you want" At that I had a great lunch. Then went back to my chairman in the hall. Then I heard again "Todd, Todd Where's Todd" The assistant came for me to sit in a chair near the minister while all the TV cameras were on him as he gave his speech. You may have seen me in the Sri Lankan newspapers.

Other than that, oh I nearly forgot. Atula the criminal has been speaking for Nilu saying she is pregnant and need money to "wash out the baby" Atula talks to Sam because I refuse to talk. Sam God Bless his heart has offered to handle this situation for me and deal with this bloody fool. Atula says Nilu is pregnant, but says she will not go to the doctor to prove it. So I said through Sam OK fine I will give Nilu some money anyway because I like her, she is honest and I want to help her out. But I will only let Sam give the money directly to Nilu. No way in hell am I giving it to Atula. Well this was unacceptable to Atula. So he did not call for a while. Then yesterday he called saying Nilu wants the money for the abortion. Again I say fine bit I want to see her. But Nilu will not see me nor will she go to the doctor. By the way according to Atula's time schedule she is six months pregnant This would show Nilu does not want to see me, not because she is in on the scam, but rather she wants not part of it and will not see me because she will not lie to me. I know this because when this all started I called her and asked "Nilu baba?" She said no and laughed her cute good natured laugh. Baba means baby, or pregnant in Sinhalese. By the way do you know what Alibaba means in Sri Lankan? It means Elephant baby.

Back to the extortion scam. Atula ratcheted it up by saying Nilu's family was going to the police if I did not pay. Like I said I don't mind giving Nilu money but she will not come get it. It is Atula who does all the talking and says Nilu will not see me and to give the money to him. So Atula finally agreed to bring Nilu to get the money, yet she did not show up. Next Atula told Sam that now that was settled that Nilu likes me and wants to marry me. And asked if I was going to marry Nilu because she missed out on a job in Singapore because I said I would marry her, and now that she passed up the job that I needed to marry her or pay more money. So again Atula asked Sam if I was going to marry her or pay. I had Sam answer for me "I am not marrying nor am I giving any money to the woman that killed my baby!" This seemed to shut him up for the time being. This is just one example of the constant plotting and scheming from the local shit heads around here to get money from foreigners. By the way I only go from ESM to my apartment. I also sometimes go to the local Publix that just opened down the street. Now I know why foreigners do not acknowledge anyone's existence even their own race. So now I am the same way, totally ignoring the entire BS. By the way when I get asked "What is your country? Or where is your country? My answer is always "Far away" If they ask again I say "Why do you want to know" If they start guessing like saying Australia? Britain? Germany? I say "close enough" When they ask me where I am or where I am going I answer "Why do you want to know?" This tactic has worked.

Nilu and Atula,

I was pissed at them for extorting money from me but now I see it differently. I understand now. It is like this. I come from a throw away society. Where I come from people get together for a while then when they get tired of the situation they break it off completely with no looking back. Here it is not like that. When I rented Atula's house and got Nilu for my girlfriend I saw it as a temporary set up to pass the time. But they saw it as me, an American, adopting them as my family. I see now they were right in their assumption. After all I bought them all the things they wanted and needed. Here when people get together it is permanent. There is no breaking it off. When there is a problem you tell the person what they have to do to shape up and they do it and the relationship goes on. An example is when Nilu was acting bored with me and as if she had something better to do, I told her that I support her and feed her family for the reason that she makes me feel good and makes me happy. I told her she had better act happy and make me happy or I would get a second girlfriend to make me happy and she could just do the cooking and cleaning. At that she immediately put on a smile and regained her cheerfulness and made me happy once again. When I confronted Atula about the fan that disappeared during my absence he confessed and promised to get it back. Those two were simply showing they were human. And did something unheard of where I come from. They admitted their mistake and made up for it to please me. But I expected perfection. Then when I cut it off completely I see that cutting things off was unheard of. They did what I asked for. When they misbehaved they came around and made up for it. But I had no forgiveness. Those two were an asset and now I am without them. It was my error in not seeing that they were human. I did not see the virtue in them. The virtue being they loved me as a father and had nothing but good feelings for me. True they wanted me to support them, but there is nothing wrong with that as they were starving before and were now providing me their companionship, loyalty and help. It was a bargain. Where else can you have a house, a body guard and a girlfriend at your disposal for about \$300 month?

The lesson is that here you can do what you want, and the locals accommodate you then when you get pissed that everyone is so insane because you think they are taking advantage of you, you realize they are only doing what you asked of them. I see now a lesson I could only have learned here doing what I have been doing. The lesson is that if I get to do what I want and get things my way. I will end up being pissed off at the people who gave me what I wanted. If I get what I want, I will find a way to turn it against me. Is that human nature or just the nature of me as an individual? It is like the Genie in the Lamp who grants three wishes. The person who makes the wishes is always worse off after making the wishes he thought were the things in life that would make him happy

This lesson hit me after when I had Sam pay Nilu and Atula their money. I had Sam and Abey witness that this would be the end and they were not to contact me anymore. I did not want to see them as I saw this as blatant extortion. Sam and Abey were with them in the office at ESM after hours. I was in the office next to them. Afterwards Sam sent them to say goodbye to me. As they came back to see me I expected Atula to have a smart ass expression or Nilu to have a smug look. But instead as they came down the hall I saw they were crying and had to hide their tears as they said good bye to me. This hit me hard as it was totally unexpected.

How to get a free diamond ring

You don't have to pay to get a nice size diamond ring. You can get one for free. How? Simple, just go to a place like the luxury Bentota Resort in the south. Then sit for lunch in the outdoor restaurant near the pool. Then wait for a rich couple to sit down nearby and start drinking. Soon they will be drunk, then they will start a fight. Then the man will say something really mean to the woman and walk out. This is the important part. Watch the woman carefully because she will take off the diamond ring the man gave her when they were in love, put it on the table and walk out too. Now just reach over or better yet get up yourself and accidentally bump into the table and pick up the ring when no one is looking. Since the resort is nearly empty no one is there to see you pick up the ring, you will get a free diamond ring since the woman doesn't want it and gave it back and never wants to see the man again and the man walked out because he does not want to see the woman again and he does not know she put the ring on the table. The chances they will ever get back together and wonder what happened to the ring a negligible. And that is how you get a free diamond ring.

07-20-2007

I bought a motorcycle. It was just an idea so I would not always have to depend on a ride back and fourth to ESM and would save the money on 3 wheelers. So I bought one. No license, so I do not ride on main streets. Boy you would not believe the relief and how much my state of mind has been put at ease. I see now what a stupid thing it was to go on this long without my own transportation. It is great being free from the mercy of the criminal 3 wheel drivers and the bumpy as hell rides since their shocks are gone. And even the private cab services try to rip me off. For example when I take a cab to Amma Street (which is like an international home depot neighborhood) that I know it is only maximum 12 kilometers back and fourth from ESM but the criminal cab drivers try to say it is 35 kilometers. And they can prove it. They show me the odometer at the start then show me the odometer at the end of the ride, and sure enough it reads that 35 kilometers was traveled. No they do not rig the odometer. What they do is when they drop you off at your destination and are told to park until called to pick you up they actually drive around incircles until you call them to pick you up from being parked. When I first got here I just went along with it because I did not pay, ESM paid for my cabs. But now even though ESM still pays, when they pull this I say to them "You are a criminal, I am not paying. You must collect from the GM." Bold yes. Their response? A grin and nervous acknowledgement they will negotiate the fare with the GM. The other day I went to a singles party at a Catholic church where there were a lot of foreigners and Sri Lankan. The only one mixing was me. I flowed back and fourth from the whites to the darkies but then I blew it. As a "fun" activity they had us take a 100 question temperament test to see our strengths and weaknesses. Well it seemed harmless so I went along with it. A turn out my temperament is choleric and sanguine. Sanguine is good but when they told me I am also choleric which means easily irritated, I said Bullshit and walked out.

I am being set up to meet a school teacher from Kandy by her sister. She says she is no beauty queen. I told her that is ok, just as long as she does not look like a horse. She is coming to Colombo in a week and I will be going on my first social visit with the decent people here not associated with the minister or ESM. She is 40 never married and looking for a husband. They say she is a hard worker. Yes, that is #1 with me; I will definitely put her to work on my sex life. But I think they meant house work. Who cares about the house work as long as the sex is good, right? I'll do the house work until I take the sex for granted and treat her like shit, then she can clean up the accumulated mess from me ignoring the house work I promised to do if the sex was good.

Today there was an emergency meeting with Chairman, Abey and Sam. Missing was Dudley. As I walked by the boardroom I was called in. It was announced that ESM was broke and the local business was a loss. Remember me saying to Chairman and anyone who was in ear shot that if ESM did not change production designs and technique that they would go bust in one year. Well here it is One year later and it has come to pass. This ran thru my mind as chairman talked about how there were no local orders and they were losing money on the boats they do have on order. Knowing me you would think that I would not waste the opportunity to rub it in and say "I told you so, but no, you would not listen to me, instead you let Dudley run you into the ground all the while allowing him to condemn every idea I suggested to improve this place etc..." Knowing me you would think that I took this situation as a sign for me to give a speech. But I did not. Instead I looked around and saw that all the ones who condemn my ideas to the trash bin were gone. Carleton Dudley's henchman was now without his general since Dudley has left company. Now he is friendly to me and caters to my needs. Smart man.

The way it has worked out is this way. A year ago chairman wanted to get into USA exports. He brought me here for a month or two. The henchmen tolerated me as they knew I would not stay long. But then to Chairman's surprise and peasure, and the henchmen's surprise and irritation, I was not going back. I was there to stay. Kind of like when Ellen said to me when I asked her how is it in Washington her reply was "Don't think you are coming to bum off me". Here at ESM they did not see what Ellen saw. So like an unwanted relative who comes to visit and does not leave, I remained here. I am the only one who understands it like this. They all think I am a businessman looking to make money. In reality I am simply looking for a free ride and found it. So naturally when I struck it rich why would I ever leave? This did not sit well with the henchmen, especially when I whispered in their ear I was just here for the free ride, and for a year they did everything they could to get me to leave short of violence. But now they are gone.

I talked to the Minister today and he invited me to Matara for the groundbreaking of the new boatyard. Finally something is happening. And without the business managers like Sal making sure I got screwed no matter how generous I was. I think the Minister finally made up his mind on my last visit when we sang songs, watched a movie and hung out together. Before when he invited me somewhere he was always busy, but the last visit was just fun time. I see this is how they do business here. They see if they can trust you. They do not rely on contracts. As I have seen contracts are meaningless here. They change contracts as they feel. However they do not change contracts in ways to rip off money, it is always to make things easier. So business is not by contract, but by meeting after meeting coming to verbal agreements. I see this with Chairman in his style. Now I see this with the Minister but in his style. I believe he trusts me as he said there would be no business managers between us and the business managers told me they have nothing to do with it. Before I told Minister that I knew from experience at ESM and with Sal that his business managers would never stand still and let him do business with a foreigner let alone put me in charge. But now the minister has broke ground on a factory that will cost him at least \$500,000 USD. He must have put a lot of faith in me and I am up to the opportunity. It is like a dream come true. The natural response is "Oh no the worst thing is to do business with a Sri Lankan" Well I aren't stupid because I am not doing business with them, they are doing business with me. I am not investing anything other than my time and experience. The Sri Lankan are good businessmen and are good partners, but you must understand the priority with them is to get you to invest (sink) your money into their business. Why? It is not because they are greedy and want to take from you. They really want to do business and have a partner. But the biggest fear from Sri Lankan business is that foreigners will leave for good at the drop of a hat and they will be stuck in a business with technology they know nothing about. That is why they are hell bent on you putting all your money into their venture, because they want to make sure you do not leave, not to rip you off. I see that here everything is long term, business, relationships, everything is permanent; life long commitment is their intention. But where I come from it is every man for himself bail out at the first sign of trouble. I understand now the

lesson in economics about Japan and Asia business culture. In Japan they stick with a business plan even as it fails.

When they start a business and the business succeeds they stick with the plan. When the business environment changes they do not change the plan. When the business suffers because it has not adapted they still stick with the same plan. They stick to the plan even when it fails and they go broke. Not so in the USA when the plan has difficulty it is abandoned for a new plan or abandoned completely. It is the same culture here as described in economics, they stick with every plan. In relationships business, everything. So when the Minister made plans bigger and bigger for the past two years I figured it was just talk. Especially when his plan required me to invest money I did not have. (Remember I am just a freeloader). But it was not just talk he was making his plan, and seeing if he would take my commitment as my investment. After all their entire main fear is that the foreigner will abandon them. There are countless examples of Sri Lankans being ripped off by foreigners promising gold then delivering dirt, and then escaping with the Sri Lankan loot. These cases are documented. I see now the weekend of song was the conclusion of his decision. It was his way to tell me he had accepted me as a partner with my commitment as my investment. It is a big leap for him. A leap no one in the USA would take. Like Chairman used to say before he realized I was like a fungus you cannot get rid of "Todd, you may leave at any time and leave ESM, and I would be stuck. Ending up with egg on my face." This brings me to God. Just before the tsunami Raleigh Stapleton announced he was selling the factory and retiring. OK sounds harmless, I will find another place to build boats, or focus on school. For 2 years there were many who came to him saying they were buying the factory, but all were full of crap so I figured he would not retire. Especially when he told me one day when I asked him if and when he would retire, his answer to me was "No, I will never retire; I will probably drop dead working on a boat." But then one day two criminal Cuban brothers showed up and bought the factory.

The next day the criminals were at work clearing the decades old workshop to turn it into a storage warehouse. Well that was the end of that. It was then that Taher, Chairman's son called me to ask if I remembered ESM when I visited a year and a half before. You know the rest and here I am building boats my way. And now in charge of my own custom production section at ESM. And best of all only friends are left at ESM. Then to make it beyond the wildest dream the Minister has come thru with a 3 acre new factory to build the new designed Tuna boats for Sri Lanka and Maldives. The Minister is not interested in Exports, he makes his millions from shipping Tuna all over the world. And this works out great because Chairman says he is giving up on the local market and focusing on Exports. By the way while at the meeting today Chairman finally asked me to implement the re-design of their 43 foot fishing boats. Finally! They said to have the support from the community of fishermen that the engineering professor from Maratura University would come to ESM to discuss my designs. I had already discussed my improvements with him months ago when he brought his class to ESM for a few days field trip. I felt like I was wasting my time explaining logic to another moron because after I finished showing him the improvements he did not ask me to come lecture at the college. Last week Chairman and Taher asked me to meet with the Professor to discuss improvements, but I told them that he is probably another Percy with a club membership to a Naval Architect organization that my dog could join and get credentials as a Naval Architect if he paid the \$60.00 annual membership dues. I said I will not be insulted and criticized by another Sri Lankan moron again. This time in the meeting Taher and Chairman brought the Professor's credentials showing a BSC degree in mechanical engineering and a PHD in Naval Architecture from Miramar University in the UK. I wonder why they brought me the credentials. Usually when I say someone is full of crap, they defend the person who is full of crap. But this time they went out of their way to show me proof the guy really does have an education from a Western university. I take that effort to assure me as an act of respect to gain my participation in actually improving the boat designs. Hard to believe after all the BS I have put up with from the henchmen. By the way all the BS unfounded illogical criticism came to me in the form of written letters Chairman would present to me, but no one EVER told me who actually was behind the criticism. When I said it was Carleton or Dudley, Chairman denied it and said "Dudley likes you" Well maybe he does but that is beside the point. By the way the last time I saw Dudley he came to ESM for a few minutes. Why he came I do not know. All he did was walk around the 5 acre factory. And guess what? As soon as he walked through the gate I approached him as a "friend" saying Hi how are you? He said to me "Why don't you go have some tea?" I said "I already had some tea, I want to see how you are doing" I then proceeded to follow him around the factory no matter where he went. When he would turn to see if I had stopped following him I would think of some comment to make like "Nice whether we are having, or How about them tigers, the army is finally winning the war" I saw he was uncomfortable so I left him.

I remember every time he saw me he would invite me to his house for dinner then turn to Carleton and say "Carleton, schedule tomorrow night to bring Todd to my house for dinner" This invitation repeated at least 20 times, yet I never was taken to dinner. I bet right after he told Carleton to bring me to his house he would later tell Carleton "Don't you dare bring him to my house!"

Back to the re-design, before Dudley nothing I ever said about the crappy 43 foot boat construction was ever listened to. That was because that was Dudley's baby. But now he is gone and Chairman has gone out of his way to get me to help them improve the design. Chairman has offered me a % of the sales. Great! I know that when the design is improved ALL the fishermen will flock to ESM to buy their boats. After all every Sri Lankan Boat Company builds boats the same stupid way. And why do they not change? Because no one they trust has showed them how. Remember they will not let a foreigner change anything without big investment because they accurately believe that if they take advice on something new to them from a foreigner, the foreigner will leave and not care about the outcome and they will be worse off than if they just continue with the technology left by the British 60 years ago. So to allow, and even to now ask for my help is an incredible achievement and milestone in them accepting me as a real way to bring about good things here. They no longer fear that I will start something then abandon them as so many have done before. This abandonment goes back to the British when they left. When the British left, they abandoned everything. What had been an organized methodical society was had been abandoned leaving a power vacuum, an education vacuum, and these people have been doing the best they can as they know how ever since. It is kind of like abandoning a child in the wilderness, they do the best they can and never trust anyone again. But they now all trust me. Imagine that millionaires putting their trust in me.

There was a show on Sri Lankan TV in English today. It was a show about how neighbors should try to get along. It went to different neighborhoods and apartment complexes revealing neighbor disputes and arguments that previously I knew only existed in white trash trailer parks. The show went on to talk about a solution available that is voluntary mediator service office by the government. Here is an expert from the show from the announcer... "Here we are at the Nugegoda apartment complex where there has been an ongoing dispute between neighbors for a long time. This is Shamine, a woman who says she has ongoing disputes and problems with her neighbors" Then the camera shows the woman Shamine, thru the front door of her apt. "Her faced is blurred because she does not want to lose her job". Shamine showed how her mail box had been vandalized many times and paint had many times been thrown on her door. The woman had a camera installed to catch the perpetrator who was throwing paint on her door. Sure enough someone came by and the surveillance camera showed them throwing paint on her door the night before, but the perpetrator had an umbrella that hid their face so you could not make a positive ID. Yet something about the person looked familiar. Maybe it was the long legs and sandals with a daisy flower on the front. Shamine, the victim of the vandalism went on to complain that no one likes her. When interviewed the neighbors say that Shamine throws water on clothes that are hung on a rope strung across the community hallway to dry, Shamine denied ever doing such a thing. So the neighbors put a surveillance camera to catch the perpetrator throwing water on clothes hung out to dry. Again the camera caught the perpetrator, but again the perpetrator had an umbrella, yet again you sense something familiar from the video footage, maybe the same long

legs and sandals with a daisy flower on the front. Then the camera and interviewer cut away to say the victim Shamine called the police because while they were making the show someone had again vandalized her mail box, and again the perp was caught on camera, and again the face concealed by an umbrella, as the victim showed the footage to the police in her apt on her TV. And yes you could make out the same long legs and sandals with a daisy flower on the front. Near the end of this part of the show the reporter came on to finish the segment standing in front of Shamine's apartment. The camera looking thru the front door at the Shamine standing in her doorway with her face blurred out. The reporter knew the woman was there and proceeded with the report on this case of neighbors in dispute. The reporter...

"We have investigated this situation and we know now that the neighbor behind me who is having these problems has a mental illness that came from when she was young. There is no explanation for her mental illness. It may have been a traumatic event in her youth, but we do not know. We hope she gets the help she needs"

As the reporter went on about the woman behind her being nuts, you could make an observation. The long legs and sandals with a daisy flower on the front belonged to Shamine the victim the show had come to interview. Next on Sri Lankan TV was the news, Top story. The opposition party is challenging the elections that took place a year and a half ago. The opposition says not all the ballots were counted. Next story, the opposition has proposed a law banning any more switching of parties. They say that if anymore members switch parties there will be no more opposition party. It showed Parliamentarians in session arguing. Actually it was one Opposition member shouting at the members who switched parties and calling them traitors. One of the ones who switched parties replied to the member who was shouting. "You are just discontent that the party we switched to does not want you to switch. If this party we joined wanted you would have joined and you would not be shouting."

Did I mention the Minister invited me to the ribbon cutting ceremony at his new Ministry? His new office is the entire 28th floor of the world trade center in Colombo. The world trade center is the twin buildings you can see when you see pictures of Colombo. By the way they call a lot of things here after the USA, like they have MTV. But nothing like the real MTV, it is obviously made to copy the attitude of the youth culture. But it is not a bad channel to watch. All the talk shows from the USA are last years shows, or sit com shows that died in their first season.

The Minister invited me to the ribbon cutting ceremony and party at his new headquarters the formed Ministry of Special Projects. When I got there I was greeted by all his friends simply as "Boat Project" that is all the English they knew. So my name with those people is Boat Project. All the TV stations were there including MTV. All the newspapers were there all the cameras were on the Minister behind his new desk overlooking Colombo Harbor. His people were sitting around him and I stood in the hallway until someone came and got me and sat me to the Minister's right side. So if you saw the Sri Lankan news the other day you saw me sitting next to him. After a speech in Sinhalese he got up and went to the main greeting area where they had a nice buffet set up for the party. All the cameras and people followed him like a parade through the new offices and hallway. I stayed in back in the hall as the minister gave another speech to the crowd and cameras. Then he stopped in the middle of his speech to call me "Todd, Todd where are you Todd?" I got up and made my way through the crowd to the minister. He turned to me to say "Todd, look at all this nice food. I want you to have all you can, so eat." This I did as I heard a couple of the people in the crowd says "Boat Project, Boat Project"

After a few more minutes speaking in the main greeting area he again walked back to his grand office with the parade behind him. This time I was sitting in a chair in the hallway eating from my plate. Minister stopped the parade and turned to me asking 'How is the food? Good?' I answered simply, yes, very good. He smiled and went on to his office. As the parade followed I heard from the crowd "Boat Project, Boat Project"

“THE MINISTER’S DAUGHTER’S WEDDING SHOULD COME HERE.”

8/11/2007, by the way here when you write the date 8/11/2007 they think you mean
Nov 8, 2007

I finally found out my position here at ESM and the Minister. They all see me as a customer. Like a casino treats a gambler with comps. Only I don't gamble and they don't make money from me. I just tell them this is a long term business, and they believe it. This week I went to Colombo port. I had to get security clearance form the Army first. I went there to try to talk to the crane operator.

You see, many times I had shipped boats to St marten by putting a 33 foot boat on a flat bed container, then the crane operator puts the flatbed container on top of the stack of containers in the middle of the ship. Since the 33 foot boat is 10 feet wide it does not fit in the standard 8 foot wide container. So logically they put the oversized load on top of all the stacked containers. True it adds a little extra for insurance and handling but it is an economical way to ship large boats that are too big for a standard 40 foot container.

Well wouldn't you know it? Here they say, and also in China which surprised me, that if you have an oversized load you have to put it on the deck then pay for all the space above it where the other containers would be stacked. But since the boat is open and exposed they cannot stack anything on top. So they charge for the space above the oversized load. Ridiculous! But even two people I know in China say that is the way. Now for the problem, to ship the way I have done many times costs about \$6000. The way they tell you they have to do it cost \$60,000 since you are paying for empty space that would normally be a stack of containers.

Since I could not get the idiots to see the logic and the fact that it is done that way in the USA, I decided the only way to get them to do it is to talk with the

crane operators and tell them how it is done in the USA. The chief crane operator was at his crane 15 stories high as these cranes are. I had to take the crane elevator to the top and knock on his door.

Behind me was a 15 story drop with just a slim railing to prevent my freefall. In front of me wasn't the crane operator having his lunch break looking at me wondering who the hell I was. He asked in broken English who I was. The operator was Japanese. All the crane operators were Japanese. Either because the Japanese operated the port or someone knew it would be a big mistake to put a Sri Lankan in charge of the mammoth crane operation. By the way they have a dozen mammoth loading cranes, all 15 stories high. The Jap finally smiled and let me in and asked in broken English who I was and how I got clearance to get in and what I wanted. I told him with a straight face.

"I am the crane inspector and we hear that you have been drinking on the job"

He looked at me with a blank face for a second then we both laughed. He told me to sit which I did. The only seat left was his that had a window in the floor and looked straight down to the concrete below. I told him (his name was Arimoto) my problem and the idiots who could not understand the logic. He told me who to see in the main office and we straightened the matter out so I could ship oversized boats the way I did before. Now I think I am the only one who has the connections to get this done the right economical way.

Well I am back to Larry Flint again, except a much more well informed Larry. Today was like most other days except it was a Saturday. On Saturday I go to Colombo. I worked till 5 pm. On my Indian 33 foot monster sport fishing boat. It started out as a \$51,000, and now is close to, or just under \$100,000 that's ok. In the USA when a customer wants to add features to a boat it starts out friendly, then they think you are swindling them, before you know it they threaten to sue, and you get out of the job breaking even if you are lucky.

Here they got moneys to spare, when they add an extra I say that extra will be \$1200 more. Then they say I don't want my budget to spiral out of control, so me being used to the shit head cheapskates say OK, I will do it for half, and send them the add-on invoice, only to get an answer like "I already agreed to pay your first price" Well OK, lesson learned? No I cannot figure that one out with out my greedy nature taking over so I bill them only half, then they insist on the full add-on

. A nice change of attitudes here with the wealthy. I worked on the 33' till 5pm. Actually I only stayed till 3pm then went to get my usual driver Lakmar. He is a pro at finding entertainment. Only one time was I a little angry with him. Two Saturdays ago he took me for a Chinese massage, and I say more. He left me there, and that is when they doubled the price. There I was without a driver in the middle of Colombo at 12 am. I don't worry about violence or being robbed because several times I have been out in the middle of the night in what would appear to be a bad neighborhood, only to be cheerfully greeted and helped out with a ride home from a stranger.

Yes at first you think No way am I going with this guy. But their nature here is to be hospitable. The way they rob you is by telling you they are sick and need to see the doctor, or have not eaten for days. If you fall for it they are like flies. But if you come up with your own sob story like "I lost my passport and wallet and have aids" then they genuinely are concerned for your safety and well being because they figure you are worse off than they are. So there I was at the Chinese massage and my driver left me. Well when the price doubled from \$15.00 to \$30.00 I could have left, but I let them take advantage of me. It was a good massage if you know what I mean. Well worth \$30.00 and probably \$200 in the USA. After the massage my driver was still nowhere to be seen so I hired a 3 wheeler for \$1.00 to take me to Bally's casino where the foreigners hang out. That was a drag since I do not gamble and do not drink. After all I gamble every day enough as it is by being overweight and smoking and don't want to jeopardize my winning streak. Then Lakmar called and asked where I was and he then arrived to take me home. So I was a little pissed at him for a day.

But like a good Sri Lankan we never hold on to stuff like that. We let it go. Today Lakmar called and asked if I wanted to go to Colombo tonight. "Sure" I said "but you better not leave me again, those Chinese girls are ruthless" We straightened that out and went to one of my favorite spots, Majestic City where you can buy every movie ever made on DVD for \$1.50 and excellent picture quality if you know how to pick them out. After getting my movies I went to visit Shikra a nice elderly woman who wants me to marry her sister's daughter. The daughter's name is guess what? Nilu. Turns out Nilu is a common name for Sri Lankan girls. I met her Wednesday when I visited Shikra for tea at her house in Colombo.

A very nice Sri Lankan home. Nilu did not say much and I only stayed a minute or two. It was only a meet and greet. Today Shikra called me to say she had finally found a picture for me to keep of Nilu. Since I was headed to Colombo I told her I would stop by. This visit was different. Her Aunt told me Nilu owned property and a house. The Aunt asked if my mother would object if I married her. Of course my answer was "Oh now my mother wouldn't mind, she would be happy for me to finally settle down with a good Sri Lankan wife." I only said this because Nilu is slim and not bad looking. Besides how could I say to these home traditional culture people that I just wanted her for sex then I would abandon her when I leave here for good in a few months.

I don't think that would have gone over very well. And besides Nilu is not a bad looking girl. Did I already say that? Well it is hard to find a slender woman who is not in her twenties. Nilu is close to 40. And did I mention she has a house, property, AND a dowry. Yes, the Aunt threw that in. During this conversation the Aunt showed me pictures of Nilu that were taken at a studio not more than a day or two ago. I think that is a signal.

But she did not let me keep the pictures and said they were for me. I guess she meant just for me to look at. It was getting late so I called the driver and left. Lakmar suggested the Chinese place but I opted for the Karaoke lounge. Sounds innocent right? Well think again. Karaoke like "actress" really mean something else. A karaoke lounge is where you go to hang out like a playboy. It is an empty bar playing music. You then pay \$5.00 and take a seat. Within about 2 minutes girls start coming in and filling the place. They start dancing with each other and others come in and sit close to you. Before you know it the bar is full of very pretty girls dancing and hanging all over you. That is when they start asking you if they can have some ice cream. Yes that is right I said "ice cream" after about an hour of lounging with several real beauties eating ice cream the entertainment begins.

And no it is not like a strip club where there are a bunch of drunks and other men hanging around. This is your own private party. OK Nuff said, the party lasts until you want to go and get tired of buying ice cream. The hours of fun ends up costing about \$60.00. The Karaoke bar is right on the beach at and sometimes the girls bring the party to beach and skinny dip. It is all great fun if you're a guy like me who had no fun for many years. And no there is no sex involved. For that you have to go upstairs and pay another \$60.00 with the girl you choose. I thought about this and realized this is just how a whore house should be run.

Well I won a small victory today. I have been seeing an absolute BEE A YOO TI FULL Sri Lankan girl 27 who is smart, has a good job, and is educated. As usual someone comes along and spoils it whenever I start getting along with Sri Lankan beauties who are not sex girls. They say things like He is a foreigner and foreigners are no good. Yeah so what? But yesterday she called me upset because her step father who is German says I am from the USA and no good because I have only been here a year and a half. Then I remembered meeting him last week and he told me he had been here 15 years and had married Uma's mother after being here only two years.

I think her step father wants Uma for himself. Uma's mother just goes along with it. This smacks of the BS the henchmen have been dishing out to me since day one so I wrote and emailed Uma a masterpiece of writing that turned the tables back in my favor so now we are getting married. At least that is what she thinks. I actually just want a really nice piece of ass while I finish my stint here then abandon her and all the other beauties I am seeing.

Now I am not a bad foreigner for thinking this am I? But you will admit there is some truth in what I told her. She says she does not want to marry a Sri Lankan because they are lazy bums and only marry if there is a big dowry. I told Uma I don't want a dowry, I told Uma she is the prize; I should be giving her a dowry. I know, I'm a sick man. But as Gordon would say "I aren't in no Jail, and I aren't in no mental hospital" I must add, there is no law on the books I am breaking here, so I aren't worried about jail, and Actually It might be nice in a mental hospital for a while. Her photo is at the bottom of this page.

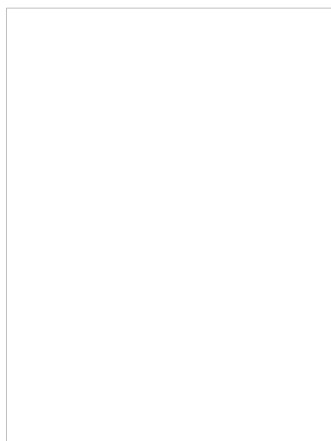
Hello Uma,

Thank You for the great evening. I was thinking about how you said proposals come then go for no reason. I do not think the proposals leave because of a dowry. It is rare beauty within that makes a man want to marry and you have this. I think maybe other people are making these proposals go without you knowing?

Since I have been here a while I see how some Sri Lankan say one thing and then do another thing against the first thing. They will always say "Find a husband", and then they will always say "That man is wrong for you."

Why? People who are not like you, or people that are unhappy on the inside are jealous of what you have that cannot be bought. You could have any man you want, but they cannot, they are stuck. No one will say "do not find a husband" but secretly they may do things to scare away proposals. Then when you are old they will blame you for not finding the right husband.

Remember no one is jealous of an ugly or old woman. Women want most to be able to have any man they want like you can. They do not want you to know this until it is too late and you will be unhappy and stuck like they are.



OK

Kim called me today from the hospital and we talked. She asked if I had a girlfriend and I said no. Usually she does not believe me, but this time she did for the reasons in this journal entry. Kim says she was 6 months pregnant. I asked did she see a doctor. She said the doctors told her she was not pregnant. So I said to her maybe she is just getting fat. She told me why she thought she was pregnant. She said she had a one night stand with a Christian who told her that if she slept with him he would marry both her and Jesus. But the next morning when he woke up he said Jesus was going to get him and she has not seen him since. Speaking of Jesus.

I watched my DVD about the life of Jesus again. I always watch it when I am bored or am in doubt. This time while watching I had a revelation. I knew it was a revelation because whenever God reveals something to me it is always a most simple insight and understanding. As I watched the movie it came to me that the whole entire complete all inclusive point to the New Testament and Jesus is Faith. Unwavering belief in something.

Even though there may be no scientific basis or the belief is against logic. It is the singleness of the belief that is the theme. True they say to follow in the footsteps of Jesus you carry your cross. They say that because we all have problems. But the answer is always faith. That is why he says have faith like a child, because a child does not know about all the reasons certain things do not happen or work out. Like when he approached the boat walking on water. He asked one of his disciples to join him. The disciple did walk on water to join him, but then for that split second the disciple remembered men cannot walk on water, he fell into the water. It was his faith that was the point.

The wine at the wedding, I don't see how that has faith. I just think everyone wanted to get drunk and he obliged. Feeding the 5000 he said for everyone to pass the food around. Now is it just me or does anyone else think that if you lived 2000 years ago and were going to a rock concert in the middle of nowhere and you knew there would be no restaurants, no concession stands wouldn't you bring a picnic basket with you. Maybe as the basket with the two fish and bread was going around those who were stupid and did not bring food for the day and had no food ate from the basket, then the ones that were good planners and brought food added to the baskets as the baskets went by, ending up with more than they stated with.

But the whole point of the life of Jesus was revealed to me as being faith. Did you notice that in all his miracles people were always better off health wise, especially the ones he raised from the dead? I see now that the belief and the faith will help you live a healthier life. I did not see anywhere where there was a miracle and then someone got rich. That showed me to never ask God for success because you can only get good mind and spirit. That explains a lot. I always pray to God to help me succeed, but all I seem to do is fail. Sometimes I think the best life for me is to be a career shoe salesman and live in a car. So what about the ones that win the lottery? The answer is someone has to win. If no one won the lottery there would be no lottery.

I turned off my phone and you will know why by the end of this journal entry.

I hired a translator who speaks several languages, is a Sri Lankan and educated in Sri Lanka customs and tradition. He showed me how to get a nice girl. Before I tell you his advice which was right on the money I will tell you that what I have been doing with girls is nothing short of a pain in the ass. I found out Sri Lanka is a caste society. One caste is the families from Kandy. These people think they are descended from kings and feel they are royalty. So what if they live without power, running water, and eat with their fingers. They are considered amongst themselves as royalty. They are all Buddhist Gove which means extremely conservative. These girls are extremely loyal and worship the husband regardless if rich or dirt poor. I personally like the part about being loyal to a dirt poor husband.

Then I remembered Uma saying to me when we first met that she was Buddhist and Kandy Girl. Now I know she will be extremely loyal as she said she would be. But then the problem, she says only after her friends meet me and like me will I meet her parents. When I first met her she said she wanted to run away with me, and now I know why she said that. You see, first, a BG from Kandy girl has her man meet her friends, then sisters and brothers, then will meet the parents. This process takes 2 months. BUT then after all that and the man finally meets the parents and the parents do not like the man, then the girl will say goodbye to the man. Then I remembered Uma saying right away that she will run away with me. But as with all impulses, reality sets in. The other day she said I will start and meet her friends, then brothers, sisters then her parents. But then she said something that puzzled me until my translator explained to me the customs. Uma said I will meet friends brothers sisters then the parents, then if the parents say no that we will still be friends.

Now I know from my lessons that the children will never go against the parents, so on one hand I think to forget about her because I will be wasting my time due to the fact her parents already say they do not like me because of the age difference, and I am a foreigner. Forget the fact that her real father ran off from her mother and now her step father is a German (I think turned into a Sri Lankan) So forget Uma? I don't know. She does say she wants to keep everything a secret, meaning she is still open to the idea of running away. She said not to worry because if she marries me her parents will get used to it. Plus I think Uma is like Kim, I think she is touched. And that would explain a lot about her. She reacts just like Kim reacts minus the bugs and the aiming. But one thing, Uma is Bee A OO Ti FULL and 27, how many chances does a fat 47 year old American get? Now her case falls into the complicated category which I am used to. Because that is what I am familiar with.

Now thanks to my translator he showed me the answer in one word "Orphanage" Right on the money. These orphanages here I found out are loaded with BEE A uOO Ti FULL girls. In fact these convents and orphanages are overcrowded and the girls are as old as 28 years old. When I foreigner comes along the Nuns line up the girls and you take your pick, all you have to do is make a small contribution to the convent and you get whichever one you want. The nuns need the space. The girls have no parents to interfere and make things a pain in the ass. And the girls treat the man like a king for rescuing them. Also my translator is putting ads in the Sinhalese paper that the poor families read.

He says the poor family will beg me to marry their daughters and make sure their daughter behaves. In return they ask for a bag of rice and some dried fish once a week so they will not starve (not a bad deal). This was the arrangement I had before with Nilu and it was a good arrangement. The problem with Nilu was that I could not see her without Atula hanging around having to buy him cigarettes, meals clothes because he found for me Nilu and felt he was in charge of her. I think with the orphanage convent and the poor families and the experience I have now that my translator will find me the right girl. As far as Chairman he wants me to meet with the girls that have light skin and speak English, but those are the ones that are a pain in the ass. Chairman says stay away from the dark skin poor ones. But the dark skin poor ones are beautiful and are not a pain in the ass, they are grateful for everything. Chairman says this because he is in the cast system as a rich Muslim He is not a Moore Muslim, Moore Muslims are the devout Muslims, chairman is a liberal guy, and you would not even think he was a Muslim. A Berger is light skinned and has British descendants they are pseudo westerners, but really Sri Lankan.

All the different classes or castes stay separate from one another and never mix. Unlike the USA where anything goes. So now I understand why people react when I talk to one person one way and talk to another the same way. You are supposed to talk to people depending on their caste. Finally with my translator I am understanding better. Now I went to an orphanage today and met with 8 BEE A YOO TI FULL girls 23 to 26. All of them would win any beauty pageant. I feel sorry for them because nearly all the girls there had lost their parents from the tsunami. Maybe I could take them all home. One could be the cook, one could be the laundry girl, one could be the maid, and one could be the.... Uh, I don't know I will think of something.

Chairman says do not marry an orphan girl because she has no parents. But I told him it is the parents that are always the problem; they NEVER will accept a foreigner. Not because a foreigner will run away as I have been told but rather because a foreigner is not in their caste. The excuse about me being a foreigner and will run away is BS, they are lying; it is because I am not in the caste. Poor girls have no casts or are at the bottom and will never be accepted to a higher caste so they will never marry outside poverty. I talked to Uma and told her I already know a thousand beautiful girls who will not marry me, and I am too old to run away, and she will not get her parents approval, so we might as well forget it. But she is not giving up. She is driving me crazy and that is what women are best at. I am seeing her and her friend this weekend. I told her no it won't work out, but she will not take no for an answer. Then she got mad at me. Let me tell you there is nothing more enjoyable then having a 27 year old beauty angry at you. It is really fun. You know how some beautiful women try to yell at you but they are so delicate and fragile they can only muster a squeak, that is Uma, She squeaks at me when angry. After she calmed down, I ask if she was angry at me and she said yes she is angry, and why did I ask. I told her that it is good she is angry at me. She asked why, and I must be crazy to think her being angry at me was good and she started again. Asking why I looked happy when she was so mad. I was having the best time of my life saying, yes dear, yes dear. I am sorry dear; you are right dear etc... when ever I could get a word in edgewise between squeaks. Then she calmed down and asked me to tell her why it was good she was angry at me. I told her it was good she was angry at me because that meant that she had feelings for me and someday her love would be as strong as her anger. At that she melted. Here you can have an exiting beauty or you can have a beauty who will worship you. Hmmm, which do I prefer, the worshipping beauty or the exiting ones.

I know what you're thinking. What about the business and the oats and the designs and the relationships with the management. Well that is all good. I have many orders and am making a steady income.

Before I get into the latest adventure I must tell you about Uma. She is a real darling. She knows she is stuck in the traditions of the caste, but she secretly does things with me that completely go against the traditions. Here a girl never leaves the home until they marry. It is common to see 40 year old girls living at home still waiting for a husband living by the rules of an adolescent. Whenever a marriage proposal comes to court the girl they only approve of the marriage if the girl is ugly. If the girl is pretty like Uma and other girls I know, the parents NEVER approve of the proposals. So these pretty girls grow old into their 40s living at home because according to the parents no one is good enough for their beautiful daughter.

But they will gladly let me marry the ugly ones, as they have offered in the past. In fact a few weeks ago I was invited to a family to marry their daughter. Don't get puzzled. I only go because I have nothing better to do and like being entertained and fed nice dinners. When I go to these invitations the daughter is in her room and not allowed to come out while I am there, Instead they show me pictures and ask if I am interested. In ALL cases when I cringed at the ugliness of the 24 year old daughter the parents would say I could marry her right away and that they would buy a home for us and provide a nice dowry.

BUT in every case where the daughter was BEE AA YOOO TI FULL after showing me her picture and me drooling with lust they always make excuses like my favorite ones. One time the parents said "We like you, but you are not tall enough" Well I am 6'1" and tower over most everyone here. Then my favorite was when after visiting three times, first to meet the father, then to meet the mother, then to meet the sister they finally called me to tell me they wanted to be honest. I said "Go ahead shoot" They said "WHAT?"

I said I mean what was it you wanted to tell me. Well their reason was that even though their daughter is educated and speaks English she does not like to speak English so it would not work out. So the next time I went for one of these invites and they showed me a picture if a grotesque, fat cross eyed daughter I acted like she was BEE AA YOOO TI FULL just to see if I was right. And sure enough when they saw my eyes pop out with lust they made up an excuse why it would not work. Now this brings me to Uma. She is probably the most intelligent beautiful young woman I have ever encountered in my entire life. Yes she is gorgeous and that is natural, but her intelligence is unsurpassed. She first told her parents about me the time we met and right away they objected without even meeting me because she is in a very strict Buddhist casts from Kandy and they are the worst parents of all when it comes to exploiting young naive girls. But Uma wants to be exploited, good for her.

It urns out that the beautiful daughters are guarded even more than I have been told. You see these beauties are NEVER allowed to leave the house for very long. Unless their parents know exactly what is going on and approve. Uma only meets me for a few hours on Saturday mornings. She has to be home in the early afternoon and is not allowed to go out on Sunday. I know because she always calls me an hour after I drop her off, then two hours after that then in the early evening then in the late evening. Come to think of it these calls are getting to be a pain in the ass. Like last night I turned my phone off so she could not call me. She called me at work and was angry because I turned off my phone. She squeaked at me "Why your phone is off yesterday. I try to call you, why you do this?" Now how can a guy get out of this?

For some reason people do not lie casually like in the states. So much so that I stopped lying. Actually it is very refreshing to be truthful all the time. But what was I to tell this gorgeous creature that I turned off my phone cause I did not want to talk to her because I was sick of her parents not letting her see me? Of course not so I said the battery was dead. Getting back to how girls are never allowed to go out if the parents suspect they are seeing a foreigner. Uma like I said is smart. She obeys her parents, but at the same time figures out ways to see me for just enough time that her parents will not get suspicious. Like now she breaks our time up in two parts. First she sees me in the morning from 9:30 till 1:00 then goes home for two hours and sees me again at 3:00 till 6:00 so what do I do between these times. I do what any other red blooded American man would do in this situation. I see other beautiful girls who want to get married but can only get out for an hour or two at a time. It is a very entertaining time. And guess what the girls do not mind. Really they know I run my ad every Sunday and they know I see other beautiful girls in between and the do not object.

In fact they encourage it. They all say do not take the ad out because if after a few months when the parents find out they may have to just be friends with me so they cannot expect me to see only them since they do not know if they will be able to get away with marrying me. But the all say that when the sex starts that I have to stop seeing other girls. Oh yea sex. It does not bother me they are teasers because I can always go to the karaoke bars. In fact the girls tell me to go to the karaoke bars to get relief o I will not be exited when the next beautiful girl comes to see me. If I was not living it I would not believe it either. So someone come over here and you can see for yourself.

Earlier in my journal I mentioned that foreigners are not trusted because they come to sell Sri Lankan on miracle cures to modernize the country, and then leave

with the cash and Sri Lanka ends up being a sucker. This is why I have had so much resistance. It is because I will do the same thing.

Well, a few months ago Chairman on his own without discussing the issue with Sam or me decided to buy \$100,000 of high tech composite material from a German company that convinced him that it would enable ESM to be successful in the export of quality boats. The whole scheme started when Germany sent a non profit company to teach the boat builders the right way to build boats. I was suspicious and advised they should stay away from the Germans. After all they tried to take over the world not too long ago. I told them why are you now letting Germans tell you what to do when you have me here and will not even listen to a little common sense?

They changed the subject. Then recently Chairman informed me the high tech material had arrived and all of ESM was to now use it. I said fine until I realized the material increases my building cost four times and eliminates any profit. Then they had a meeting where they showed me a letter from the assholes who criticize me for thinking it is possible to make a toilet with running. The letter presented to me was just like all the other BS over the past year. I said at the meeting I am tired of this and this has been going on ever since I arrived. Chairman said to not bitch and just answer the critics. So I did I asked if I could be frank and I was given that permission so I answered the critics in three words I said "This is all bullshit" It turns out that when the

Germans were coming chairman he was asking questions about what they thought of my methods. The Germans say I do not know what I am doing and am completely wrong about everything. That in fact if I am allowed to continue I will certainly ruin the name of Blue Star. This sounds exactly what a Sri Lankan would say. When I heard this I realized that I was making the German rip off scheme difficult for the Germans so naturally they had to discredit me. Then the critics say the Germans say I am wrong because I don't panic if a little air gets into the a few tiny spots of the lamination. They also said that putting two 800 layers back to back was wrong and any boat made like that will come apart, there by again ruining the name of ESM.

That is when I realized the Germans were doing what I had learned about why they do not trust foreigners. The Germans were in the process of ripping ESM off. Then I remembered the non profit agency training the boat builders. It dawned on me that it was more than a coincidence that the non profit teaches to use high tech materials then suddenly mysteriously a German company appears to have all the high tech material for sale. I think too much of a coincidence.

The meeting went on criticizing my ways according to the Germans. Then I turned the tables. They said the Germans say my boats will come apart because maybe some of the fiberglass may not be 100% saturated. So I said yes I guess you are right, so if that is no good then it must also be no good if sweat drips into the fiberglass, right? They all agreed, and it is very bad if dirt gets in right? Again they agreed, and if hair strands fall in the resin that is bad too right? As I asked these obvious questions I noticed them realizing these are the things that happen routinely at ESM.

Workers sweat over the work so sweat gets in the resin, they do not wear hair nets so hair gets in the resin. They cut and grind fiberglass right next to where they are using resin so dust gets in the resin. All this they could not deny, at the same time there were guilty of letting this be the standards they go by. The same things they dared to say about me. So then Chairman interrupted me to counter my offensive saying that from now on he will make it a rule that all workers will now wear head bands to keep the sweat out of the resin.

I answered him saying that first of all they were unaware of this until I just now mentioned it, and secondly they only pay the workers \$50.00 a month and the workers could give a shit about preventing their sweat from dripping. A nice victorious silence fell. Asitha said that the Germans say I am wrong for using 800. At that I raised my fist and said screw the Germans. You see Asitha can say things like that to me because he is my friend, there is no animosity. In fact he only said that so he could get me to freak out. Why did he want me to freak out? Because while I was raising my arm saying screw the Germans Asitha was taking my picture with his phone camera and passing it to abbeey the accountant as they both laughed and showed the picture to me. I had to laugh too, and I made additional faces for the camera. Then chairman said Stop this nonsense. After I made my point I explained to Chairman that the high tech material is great but you have to train the workers extensively, pay them more so they will care, rebuild and sterilize the entire 90,000 building and make all new molds and put air conditioning in the entire facility, buy the \$100,000 in new state of the art equipment needed to make the application practical and on and on.

Then Chairman said I had to use the material because he just spent \$100,000 to be the distributor. He was convinced that all Sri Lankan boat builders would line up to buy this great material, forget the fact it is 4 times as much as the material that has been used for decades. He thinks that suddenly all Sri Lankan boat builders will see the light and he will make a fortune. Let me ask you. Do you think the Sri Lankan boat builders will be flocking to buy this new super expensive material to build their shitty looking outdated inefficient, unstable boats? Of course not. But Chairman already committed to the purchase and agency. After the meeting Chairman told me he was not worried because he was going to Norway to announce ESM was now, overnight, a state of the art facility for the sole reason that he has this high tech material.

This entire scam is a perfect example of why Sri Lankans do not trust foreigners. It is because foreigners sell the ignorant Sri Lankan a magic potion to join the modern wealth of the world overnight if they just pay for the magic. And as always they get screwed. This brings me to where I come in. I have discovered a new hobby that is very satisfying and fulfilling. That new hobby is to say after ESM realized they have been screwed that I told them so, and they should have listened to me and they would note in this mess. I cannot count how many time I have been in this juicy position. This time it is the Pinnacle of my "I told you so" lifestyle here, All in All very entertaining. Below is the letter I sent to Chairman that brought the beginning of the end of the con game.

Hello Zahid,

Critical issues with Si Tex:

It is only practical if you apply in a surgical environment

- a. workers must be well trained in the use of the surgical environment
- b. Workers earning 5000 Rs will not be motivated to take all the critical precautions required for the practical applications
- c. If you promote to informed customers the use of Si Tex they will not be impressed without visiting the and verifying the work is done in a surgical environment, as well as verifying the workers are dressed and have the appearance of being well trained. It is not impressive to see workers in rags and old sandals working in a dirty environment with decades of resin caked on the floor 3 inches thick, cob webs all over, windows broken etc...
- d. Surgical environment requires expensive non atomized spray systems. And this requires regular vital precise maintenance.
2. Without the proper environment, personnel and equipment it is pointless to use Si Tex.

3. Si Tex and materials like it are used in mass production of boats and components that are exactly the same. Used in aeronautic components, high dollar yachts.

4. Everything would have to be done in the small spray booth you have and that is not nearly enough room to make all the boats, the production schedule would be hopelessly backed up.

5. Then there are the molds. If you have the surgical environment then it would be completely illogical to use the beat up old molds you have now. Using Si Tex and materials like this require that you have molds in excellent condition.

In conclusion, to use Si Tex there must be the proper conditions. If the entire factory is made to be a surgical environment, the workers still need extensive training, and the pay is not enough for anyone to care. The workers will need proper clothing. There must be proper equipment. After all that it only makes a high dollar product if the molds are new.

Without proper planning there will be no saving in resin not, the resin will still be spilled all over from using rollers and brushes. Dirt and moisture in the castings, wasted gel coat from applying with a brush. The spray gear I brought is in disrepair because no one cleaned it as I instructed many times. If workers cannot or will not clean a \$1000 gel coat gun, what do you think will happen with a gun that costs \$10,000?

The Germans forgot to mention these critical points. If they say it is fine to use in the filthy ESM environment as it is, then they are certainly taking ESM for a ride to nowhere.

Sincerely,
Todd Allmand

Shit!

I met Uma for dinner tonight. I asked her if it was true about what I learned about Buddhist Govi culture and tears rolled down her cheek as she nodded because she knew I had discovered that her parents would never approve. The one obstacle I cannot overcome is because it is her first marriage and no way in Buddhist hell will they permit her first marriage to be with a man who has already been married. The fact that I am 20 years her senior, fat, and a foreigner are all things I am sure I can overcome.

I used the line that always works so well. The line that reminds everyone the USA is the greatest country in the world. I said "Uma, we Americans went to the moon 4 times. If my country can go to the moon and back, it gives me hope that maybe someday your parents might change their minds." In the back of my mind I knew the only problem was her parents and to be quite honest, even though it may reveal the Adolph Hitler in me I thought "If her parents were dead, we could be happy".

You know I still think there is something different about her. You see when ever I meet a proper girl for the first few times they are always conservatively dressed, and greet me with a handshake, nothing more. Uma was no exception. But tonight it was different. She wore a miniskirt with a very low cut top which was very revealing. From the way she was dressed and then greeting me with a kiss on the mouth, I don't think she had any intention of allowing her parents to stop her from marrying an American. WOW!!! I thought "Things are progressing nicely." After I broke the news that I knew about the culture and she admitted that she could not go against her parents. I realized if I had not said anything, she would not have mentioned it. When we both realized the truth it was too late, we had already ordered dinner. "Shit" I thought "It's too late, I can't stop the waiter" When she said to please still be her friend. At first I remembered what that means in the USA. It means goodbye, have a nice life, seeya etc... But being here and being routinely surprised at the sincerity and permanence of personal relationships I decided to go along with it.

So naturally when I got home I wrote her this masterpiece of literature below by email.

Hi Uma,

It was wonderful to visit even for a short time. To be your friend now will bring me joy whenever we meet. Before I could not be a friend to a girl who I wanted to love, your kindness has changed my heart from stone to feather. I am with you now and always.

Yours Truly,
Todd

Makes you want to cry huh?

By the way I see now the use for my writing talent. In the USA love letters are a thing of the past for two reasons. First, everything is email now. She can't save the love letters in a shoe box. She can only save them in her "Saved Messages" folder, or print them out along with all the banner ads. Second a smart man will never write a love letter now with all the stalking laws. I can see it now. The prosecutor says to the defendant "Is it not true you threatened the victim by stating your love will never die, you cannot live without her. I say to this court this is an obvious veiled threat to the victim. The defendant clearly states in evidence presented the words ... die... cannot live, what else can be derived from such statements. I ask this court for the maximum sentence. I plead to your honor, how the victim can feel safe as long as this obsessed twisted man can be allowed to walk the streets"

To keep things interesting I had to put in a little drama after she asked me to be her friend telling her that it would pain my heart too much to see her as a friend when after all, I had fallen in love with her at first sight (You can't get away with that line in the USA). She replied "Do you want me to delete your phone

numbers from my cell?" I said "You may be able to delete my numbers from your cell, but I will never be able to delete your phone numbers from my heart" These girls have never heard romantic stuff before and it melts them every time.

It's like being a lone wolf in a herd of sheep. Normally all they hear is "When we get married you will clean the house never go out, do everything I say, be a subservient wife and be happy or your parents will scold you" Still I wonder what is going on in Uma's mind. She knew this would happen yet she still was getting looser and looser with me. She knew it was wrong to dress like that. Her parents certainly knew it was wrong and I am sure did not approve of her leaving the house like that. Her parents arranged for a driver they trust to spy on her to bring her as well as pick her up. Her parents must know she is up to something. So maybe she can get away with stuff after all. Still I was pissed I had bought her clothes when she knew her parents would not approve of a future between us. I thought about that then blurted out "You should have told me this was not going to work out BEFORE you asked me to buy all those clothes!"

When she heard that she really began to sob. I consoled her saying "OK, it is alright Don't cry, just return the clothes and give me back my money" Again these people suckered me into feeling sorry for them. Then it dawned on me; I spent more on Uma in one day than I spent on Nilu in six months. I realized Nilu was really a bargain and I should not have complained, OH me OH my I miss Nilu. Now I know by now mother has about had enough of hearing this crap. But I am bored and what else is there to do? No one is holding a gun to your head to read this dribble. Dribble, dribble, dribble, bla, bla, bla.

Back to Uma which I am sure by now you realize I am obsessed with. I am a master of always being wrong about second guessing what a girl will do. Like when I dated a fine girl in the USA back in 1999. One day her phone calls stopped when for the three weeks prior she had been at my beckon call. So like a true idiot I called her. Once she knew it was me she said "Don't you know that when a girl stops calling it means they do not want to see you anymore" After hearing that I was in shock and replied with the first thing that came to mind telling her "Sorry to bother you, but I just found out I have an enlarged prostate and have to have surgery tomorrow, and I am scared".

Well that resuscitated the relationship for the next few days until I told her I had made it up, which promptly put me back at the end where I was before. I thought she would have found my desperation romantic or at least amusing. Uma may never call me again and after my lesson from 1999 I certainly will not make that mistake again. But if she does, you can bet I will be on board if just to explore in depth the interpersonal relationships as a research project which I will keep you abreast of with every sordid detail.

But Soon I will be meeting a woman 30 years old and again BEE A YOO TI FULL. She is a widow with a daughter and is an outcast from society because her husband died. So I don't think she will have issues. Then there is the Muslim girl, that's right Muslim. We met for dinner and I asked her if she was going to chop my head off on video then send it to CNN. She replied "What did you say?" I said "I ASKED YOU IF YOU LIKE THE SOUP?" She said "Yes" Her parents are divorced but I bet there some bullshit objection somewhere waiting to ruin my happiness.

I talk to Kim today she said no one will help her get ID and if she gets picked up she will get deported. She is wondering where they will deport her to. So now she is going to the FBI. I told her when she goes there to ask for J. Edgar Hoover. She asked what does he look like I told her he will be the only man there wearing a dress.

I knew there must be some unique business opportunity here and now it has presented itself. Maldives is a sovereign country with its own territorial fishing waters. The two places famous for tuna in the Indian Ocean are Madagascar and Maldives. I saw earlier when I visited Maldives I noticed tuna fishermen come in with so much tuna and no way to refrigerate it that what ever they don't sell on the docks that day they throw overboard to the sharks. The boats that bring in these tuna are 65 feet and made of timber.

Investors in the tuna fisheries business are now pouring millions into building bigger fishing Dhoni boats to meet world demand. Only if you are a Maldivian citizen can you get permission to fish the waters so exploitation by every other country nearby is minimal. This shift to build fleets of larger Dhoni made of fiberglass instead of timber began about 2 years ago. Just about the time I arrived at ESM.

Here I thought God timed the tsunami, but God had timed the demand for Tuna to trigger my opportunity. While in Maldives I saw two boat building operations one was the 110 foot Dhoni boats still made of timber, and the other was a fiberglass Dhoni under construction. These were the first of the new larger 110 foot class of tuna boats. By now I think they are very near completion. I remember many Maldivian telling me they could make and have made the next generation Dhoni boats. I didn't think much about it. I knew the Minister was always planning to build them in Maldives but as it turns out the labor in Maldives is three times that in Sri Lanka, materials are very hard to come by and building space is very limited since Maldives is over 1000 of small islands.

So getting materials to and from is hard and expensive, also other things like fresh water, electricity are complicated and expensive to maintain. That brings me to the new opportunity that was presenting itself to me for the past month but as with all golden opportunities we do not see it right away, and instead pass on it. Then it dawns on us that this is an opportunity and then grab it realizing we almost missed it.

Now I know why the minister has been planning and planning but not taking action. He has a multi million dollar tuna business selling fresh tuna all over the world, but he does not have a clue on building boats. That is where I came in. He knew about this shift in Maldives to larger Dhoni made of fiberglass. After all he is the biggest supplier in the Indian Ocean and knows every detail of the market, but he is not about to tell me. But the picture has been developing slowly to now I know why he has been planning a boatyard near the sea .

He buys all the tuna Maldives can supply, which is not enough. He also buys what he can from Madagascar. All this has been brewing for the past couple years. Now it is time for these 85 foot to 110 foot Dhoni boats to be built. Guess who fit nicely into the multi millionaire community puzzle. Yes that is right and guess who put the pieces together so it fit so perfectly? Yours truly. They want me to build the boats.

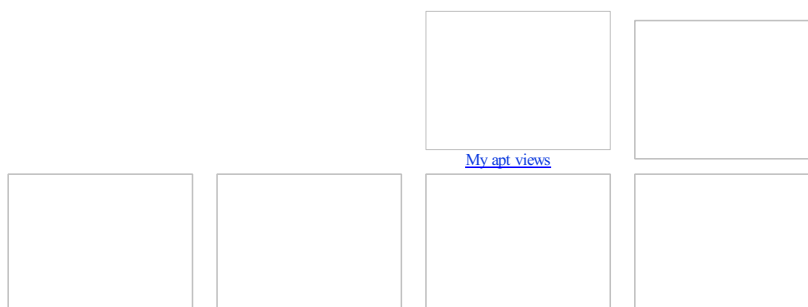
Sudath the ESM salesman came to me today to ask me again if I was interested in bidding on a job to build five 107 foot tuna Dhoni boats. I told him the same thing I told him before "If they want me to do the job they have to pay me a retainer of \$5000. I do not bid on jobs" He told me that they want me to do the job as long as the price is within reason. I said "OK, that is different" You see a month ago ESM received the specs and blueprints to bid. I saw them but ESM took

them from me and hid them because as you know they think I am trying to steal ESM. But after a month chairman decided to pass on the project when he realized ESM was incompetent. That is when they brought me in asking if I would give them a commission. I asked "What, I do not even have the job?"

Madevian customer acknowledged he likes the idea of an American doing the job. Today the Minister invited me to his house. We discussed this business. He was going ahead with land in Matara, but now there has been a snag. The owner of the property is not really the full owner. The property is owned by a big family and when they found out the man was trying to lease or sell it they went to court with an injunction. Now the other family members say the price of the land will be much more. After discussing this the minister told me he is forgetting to build in Matara and instead going back to Maldives this week to look into an island closer to male since the first island we went to was too far from the airport and the port.

He says now I will be going to Maldives by October. Then by December we will start building these large Dhoni boats. By the way Uma's parents are sending her to Matara this weekend to see her uncle who is looking for a husband for her. Fat chance, Uma loves me, or at least the dream of marrying an American. Wait till she finds out that Americans are not all they are cracked up to be. Wait till she finds out that some Americans are white trash.

By the way I now have an order for six boats to guess where? Give up? Uganda, that's right, Uganda. They are being shipped to Mombassa then over the road to Uganda. The destination is Lake Victoria. They asked me if I would fly there and help them install the engines when the boats arrive. You know no one in this part of the world knows how to hang an outboard engine.



Before I get started, yes I know some women lose their looks after 40 But I don't care, by the time they are forty I will be wearing diapers.

Now for the new entry:

Uma Who? I don't know anybody by that name. What are you talking about? You were obsessed with her for the past couple of weeks and couldn't stop talking about how BEE A YOO TI FULL she was. You even put her photo on the journal. Oh yeah, that Uma, to be honest I forgot all about her when Sharomi came calling to tell me she is in love with me and will make all my dreams come true. In fact she says to me "Welcome to the wonderful mysterious journey into my love with much passion"

Yeah that's right. Then there is Shami. Shami is another one who loves me, the most gorgeous sophisticated mature humorous entertaining woman I have ever met. Shami has the looks like Sophia Loren; she will be lovely long after I am too old to feed myself. Which by the way she has promised to do for me when the time comes, and I believe her. True Sharomi barely speaks any English, but her passion and singleness of mind to posses me is quite remarkable. On the other hand Shami owns her own house and has her mother sister and sister's daughter living with her. I know the last thing a man wants is the mother living in the same house as the couple. But here it is different. The mother gives me respect. Like when Shami and I start talking dirty, mother quietly leaves the room.

A far cry for one mother in law I know who in a very unaffectionate manner calls me an animal saying the thought of me and my wife being intimate makes her sick. Here they all support the man and treat him like a God. That's right. I do not have a photo online of Shami because to be honest I think more about Sharomi who cannot stop telling me how she is in love with me, how her mother and father love me and she text messages me every night saying I love you and you will be mine. I mean really how can you fight that, and really why would you? A man would have to be gay not to love all the attention. Again I wish I could have all of them.

Then chairman reminded me I could if I only converted to be a Muslim. Muslim men can legally have up to four wives and is not that uncommon here. But I don't want to be on the terrorist list with homeland security, racial profiling or something like that. Any way Sharomi lives in Galle. 100 kilometers to the south. It costs \$1.25 to get there by train. I could take the train at 4:00 am be in Galle by 7:00 am Be with Sharomi having fun, then head back in the afternoon to be with Shami for the evening spending time with a mature entertaining, sophisticated well groomed very attractive woman. Shami could easily fit into any high society affair, she is that glamorous.

Oh I forgot to mention with all these women there is absolutely NO SEX. These women are in their late 20's and early to late thirties and are virgins. You heard me right. In fact these women are not even allowed to leave the house at all. Can you believe it? Well I didn't I thought they were bullshitting me. But they are not. They are not allowed to leave the house ever until they are married. I know I said no families would let me marry their daughter because I was married before and am not in their caste, but those are only the Buddhists. The Christians are every bit as strict on their daughters virtue, but these people will fight over an American.

So you see all along I was just looking in the wrong direction. I thought they were all against me, now I see the poor Christian families will sacrifice their daughter's virginity if they think they will marry an American. Sharomi's family told me they were poor and did not mind telling me they only eam about \$25.00 per month. They iron with a charcoal iron; they only turn on one light bulb at night except when I am there they turn on two lights and the fan. This is a real honor. And that is not meant to be funny. While over at Shami's house they were telling me about marriage plans.

Now remember I am just conducting in depth research in the culture, don't worry about what they say in AA that if you hang around a barber shop sooner or later you will get a haircut. As long as I do not have sex with them they have no hold on me. But if I did the family can actually go to court and force me to marry them. This reminds me Sharomi is coming to Colombo to spend the weekend with me at the very romantic Galle Face Hotel. And yes she got a single room with one bed. Now wait a minute I know you are about freak out, but do not worry because the rates are only \$40 a night so that won't be a problem.

Oh, what about her then claiming me and forcing me to marry her? Well excuse me there are worse things in the world that could happen. I mean it would be a catastrophe for me a fat 47 year old to marry a young attractive girl whose family will worship me, keep her in line and all they expect in return is for me to enable them to afford to turn on two lights and a fan on a regular basis. I mean that is really too much to ask, don't you think?

Another thing about the marriages. The tradition is that the family of the bride actually takes the daughter to the doctor to get a medical report to prove she is really a virgin. When they told me they were going to do this I said "That's ok, I believe you" But they insist. By now any red blooded man is hopping on the next plane to get here. Now I know why Arnuff the Norwegian rolled his eyes when I said to him there must be something about this place to make him stay here 33 years. In fact every foreigner I have met other than tourists have been here at least 20 years. You can see a photo of Sharomi at the top of the page. Isn't she pretty? She reminds me of Nilu. Nilu like all other girls who barley knows English says " Oh Oh" instead of Yes, are you speaking to me? Oh Oh means yes in Sri Lankan. Also see the pics of the sunset outside my apartment today, a very nice sunset.

Another thing. These virgins will prepare the best tasting meal you will ever have three times a day for about forty five cents a meal. Yes that's right and is intentionally to make up for sacrificing the sex. I kid you not. The tradition is for the girls to be the best cook around to make up for the sacrifice of the man not getting sex while courting her. Thank goodness the courting is only expected to last as long as it takes to get the marriage license. Every one I have met, all the families except Uma's had me for dinner then they looked at me and asked. "Will you marry our daughter now?" Then I say "I guess so, but to be honest, what about the sex? I mean I am really sacrificing here. And does your daughter want to marry me?" By now the mother and father have left the room because we are talking about legitimate concerns regarding my assurances I will be completely satisfied. Then the daughter says "Just get the license" I say "What if I like weird positions or use prosthetic devices that vibrate" She replies as calm as could be "Just get the license" You know this is really getting hard to turn down. Especially when the man has the right to divorce the woman on the grounds she does not make him happy.

Oh yeah I almost forgot here is a picture of Joy. She is 23 and loves me, wanting to marry and bring her back from Dakar where she is stranded. Poor thing. When I talked to her she said her name was Joy and all I could say was, yes, you certainly are.

Mother did not raise any dummies,

I am a smart guy and figured out a few things. First you will never marry a Buddhist. Second there is opportunity here not found anywhere else. Third I realize the Sri Lankan more than anything else want to have a USA bred child. Yeah, that's right. Everyone except the Buddhist. The Sri Lankan do not want to go to America, they want to be smart like an American. What better way then to have American children. Your probably wondering where this is heading. Quite frankly it borders on Larry. They are not interested in sex here, but will oblige to keep your attention.

Since Chairman put the add in for me in the Marriage proposal section I have been inundated with young lovely women constantly emailing and calling me wanting me to marry them right now. I thought it was because they wanted to go to the USA. But after several meetings with families I realized they do not want to go to the USA, they want to stay here and want more than anything to have an American child. With an American child everyone in their village will admire them and that family would be tops in the social scheme of that society.

Why am I so certain of this? How do I know for sure? I will tell you. First off, all the Christian families living in these villages with virgin daughters told me this in a matter of fact way. They keep their daughters in the hopes of someday to marry a foreigner and the family will turn away Sri Lankan suitors because they know they are as poor as the family. So the family holds out in the hopes a foreigner will pass by. Some of these women are in their late thirties and still a virgin and not allowed to go out of the house until married.

Ok, so these are the villagers but I also got a few responses from married couples young attractive and with good jobs that are considered wealthy. These couples invite me for dinner. Naturally I went as part of my in depth research into the interpersonal relationships here. The first couple of dinner visits were uneventful yet very enjoyable with good food. Then the second invitation was different. I thought maybe this will be some kind of voyeurism. But then who wants to see a fat old man with their young pretty wife. So that was not it. I could not figure out why these young couples were so interested in me until the last dinner I went to tonight it was all explained to me as calm as could be. You see it is like this.

Young well to do Sri Lankan couples have no problem propagating their species. However what they want more than anything is to have an American child for their social standing. Before you say "great all the USA needs is another immigrant" remember these people do not want to come to the US. And if they did remember thousands of disgusting criminal Latin's illegally and legally flood into the USA on a regular basis. So what's wrong with these people coming in? I can tell you one thing. Their family values, morals and honor are far above anything found anywhere else in the world and considered too old fashioned.

Back to the story. While at dinner tonight with this successful couple. The husband 's family owns car dealership and the wife's father a doctor and she in college. They made a request of me. Both the husband and wife first asked if the food was to my liking then came the most remarkable request I have ever heard. They both asked me if they could have my child. They explained they were well off and would provide a great secure future for a child. I said "Excuse me?" You are married. I have no children here. My daughter is grown up. "They both smiled and said they wanted me to father their child.

WOW! If you know me by now you know I could not pass up this opportunity to investigate this as part of my in depth research. I asked "Why me?" they answered "Because you are an American" Then they went on about how it is a dream here to have an American child. I had to ask the husband "You have a doctor for invitro fertilization?"

He said no I want you to father a child for us. They meant for me to sleep with his wife. After I got over the shock, which by the way it is hard to shock me here anymore. I couldn't help but throw in my two cents I said to the husband "OK, but you cannot expect it to take the first time. It may take several tries" He smiled calmly agreeing "Yes we know it takes time" Again opening the door for two more cents saying "It may take months of trying" The husband replied "No I think maybe one month trying" I nodded and answered "Yeah your right, one month should do it" Then the legal ramifications dawned on me and I voiced my concern over my financial responsibilities. They both assured me this type of thing happens here and they have a lawyer who will draw up papers which we will sign. "OK, it will be a sacrifice but I'll do it"

Now about me getting married. Do not think I am a fool. I went to a lawyer with a couple of the girls who want to marry me right away and had them sign an agreement that gives me the complete right to divorce them if they gain even one kilogram. So you see I covered all bases.

Mother will not speak to me since I entertained the idea of marriage to one of these gorgeous young Sri Lankan women. It just infuriates her. But please try to understand. I have been alone for 15 years now. Even longer when you add the months my Ex disappeared before ambushing me in the courts with a divorce. That is one point. The next point is that I am 47 and not getting any younger. I ask you. Who is going to take care of me as I get older? Exactly. No one that's who.

Germans,

I told chairman the Germans just wanted to sell him expensive material and did not care about checking first to see if it would be practical. I told chairman that if they really were interested in ESM doing better they would have come here first before telling you if you buy their expensive material ESM would magically sell countless boats in Europe. It was just a con job and I am the only one who has said this which has infuriated the Germans.

First of all when I heard about the expensive material I had an open mind. Then a few weeks later I was called into a meeting where chairman said that the Germans say my way of building boats is completely wrong and that only by using their material will ESM be able to build good boats.

When I heard that I realized these Germans were full of crap. Because in the USA at Stapleton's when someone had an idea for different methods or materials they always say something like "I see your way and it is OK. I have a way that you might want to try and see if it is an improvement" Never has anyone said to me "You are wrong I am right" If they tried that with Raleigh he would tell them to continue and follow him. Raleigh would lead them to an area of the shop where very loud machinery was running.

Machinery like grinders, saws, engines etc... Machines that were so loud you could not hear what was being said. Whenever I saw him leading someone to these areas where the noise blocked any hope of hearing the conversation I knew that person was someone Raleigh wanted to leave. Which they did, realizing they could not get their BS across. Raleigh was nice like that. Instead of saying "Take your BS and hit the road"

But here it is common practice for a salesman who wants to sell something to say the current product or service is completely wrong and is ruining business, and if you buy their new product all the problems will go away and they will get rich overnight.

Foreigners like Germans say this because they know this is the Sri Lankan mentality. But when chairman told me the Germans say I am completely wrong and ruining ESM business and the Germans are coming to ESM this week to straighten me out. I answered in the only way the Sri Lankan understand saying "Back in WWII we Americans kicked the shit out of the Germans, and this American will kick the shit out of the Germans again if I have to" Chairman replied "Just here them out" I told him I have heard enough and if I see them at ESM I will go to a Colombo Karaoke bar and turn off my phone until they go back to where they came from.

I am not alone in disliking the Germans. Abey the accountant has said to me their prices are four times what materials cost now. Abey is on my side. This issue has brought me new allies that were once the henchmen. Today Dudley came to me while I was working downstairs to congratulate me on a great job at ESM and was impressed at my new technology and hopes ESM picks up on the opportunity I offer. Funny, but just last week he was saying how my boats are unstable, will tip over, and delaminate and when the boats get wet, all the fiberglass will come apart thereby ruining ESM reputation.

My workers, Aruna, Abey and other workers who know me and know the BS I endure from the henchmen saw this and after Dudley left they say to me "Dudley is now your best friend" I nod and say "Yes he has always been my best friend" Dudley is against the Germans for two reasons. In fact Dudley was shouting at chairman for being such a sucker. And it is true. That is one reason. The other reason is that Dudley owns FRP services franchise and has a monopoly on fiberglass materials. He is the master of convincing all Sri Lankan that the only material that is any good can be found only through his sources. He is partly correct. It is easier to let him make a few dollars and worry about the quality of the materials than to buy direct from China. Two months ago I bought direct from China because the price was half what the materials cost locally from FRP, but the hassle was not worth it. The Chinese have every excuse in the book and I already have to deal with enough excuses from the Sri Lankan.

Now to the interesting stuff. Would you believe that some of these "so called virgins" after me to marry them are not really virgins at all? Yes I could not believe it but my translator explained to me that some sex girls may say they are virgins and bring an old woman with them to pose as their mother. I think this has already happened when I met a super nice pretty girl who brought what she said was her mother yet had no resemblance, was completely disinterested in me, could not speak any English and had no questions for me.

I first suspected something when this pretty girl said to get a hotel room for the night and she would send her mother back home on a bus. I suspected even more when that night in the hotel room she demonstrated very proficient skills until dawn that a virgin would never have known about. At the same time this girl makes me feel as if I am the only man on earth. She entertains me to no end. I don't know if it is because she is good at her trade or if she is sincere and it is just a coincidence she is so well versed in the subject of erotica.

To be honest I don't really care. I have never met a girl like her. A girl who only cares about making me happy. No, she does not want to go to the USA. When I gave her \$20.00 for the train ride back to Galle she refused it even though she says she is very poor. This is either a mass conspiracy to trap me into some extortion or kidnapping plot or she is just the nicest girl I ever met and would be a fool to let her go. If I were in Latin America or the mid east I would sway toward the conspiracy theory. But here I think she is dirt poor like Nilu and so many other pretty girls are and will do anything for an American just on the chance a better life might come from it.

After all their lives are cooking on wood fires, no running water, no toilet, no refrigerator, no money, they live in a one room shanty, and no hope of improving their position since their caste prevents them from ever marrying anyone in a class higher than them. Am I wrong to take advantage of this? Am I the only American or Anglo foreigner who has seen this and has enjoyed themselves to the extreme without drugs or alcohol? If you say yes then I am truly a pervert exploitative monster in your eyes. If you say "Why of course not, it is perfectly natural" then you are OK in my book.

By the way the truth is I would get the hell out of here in a second if I did not have the income that is being generated now. But what is a guy to do when you cannot go out without spending \$50 on cab fare and lunch in Colombo, the roads are so bad you dread driving anywhere, you are constantly confronted by beggars and people who see you for the first time ask where you are from, do you like Sri Lanka and then telling you they are your friend and now you should give them some money because now they are your friend and you should give them money because they are poor and you are rich. A person really gets sick of this shit so I never want to go out unless I can entertain the most primal urges that make this shit bearable. Believe me you may see my behavior as shocking, but you come here and stay like I have been for almost two years now and see if you do not turn into a pervert because there is nothing else to do.

And yes there are foreign women here who live to exploit the young men. Go sightseeing you say? Just try it. There is no such thing as group tours here because there are no tourists in enough numbers to justify a group tour so you must hire a tour guide and driver whose only goal is to scam you out of every penny they can. And you have no one here looking out for the tourists. There is no one you can go to in search of a reputable tour service. No tourism authority. Out side of the resorts you are prey to all the beggars.

Even if you did manage to get to go sight seeing with a non criminal driver and tour guide, as soon as you step out of the vehicle the beggars converge on you like flies to shit, either telling you they are starving, showing you their amputated or deformed appendages, or try to sell you a bogus Rolex watch. In the end you will see it was a mistake to think "Oh what a beautiful place I cannot wait to see the sights" Yes you can see the sights if you bring the US Marines with you to keep everyone at bay and fly in a helicopter to avoid the pot hole ridden roads and constant bumper to bumper traffic, the constant honking of horns, the clouds of smoke from the inefficient engines.

I tried sitting in my apartment day after day week after week ordering delivered dinners and feeling as if I were back home. This is the only way to feel comfortable. But the minute I leave my apartment to get something from the market, the BS obliterates my comfortable state of mind. So you tell me what the hell am I suppose to do here when not at work? Hmmm? Let me give you an example. The other day at the hotel with the nice girl who may or may have not been a sex girl posing as a virgin it came time for check out.

The bill was \$43.00 all I had were three \$20.00 bills so I gave it to the clerk and waited for my change. A few minutes passed and the clerk appeared with a new bill, this time the bill was for \$59.85 Yeah that's right. An obvious ploy to rob me. I raised my voice and sure enough the owners came in to see what the commotion was about. I said "This is bull shit, your clerk gave me a bill, I tried to pay it, and he owed me change, but instead inflated the bill so there would be no change. I want my god damn change now!"

The owner took a look at the bill and agreed it was wrong. But instead of correcting it the way it was when it was presented he just rearranged the numbers and inflated it as well. That is when I said "I want the police, now!" At that they corrected the bill to where it was originally and I left. Will I go back to that hotel again? You bet I will, after all, I went through all that crap and now they know they cannot get away with cheating me so of course I will go back. How do I know they want me to come back? Because they asked me to. There are a couple of other things about this hotel that make it interesting. One is that it is nice. The rooms are nice and comfortable and only \$12.00 a night as long as they know they cannot rob you. Three meals a day room service adds up to only \$14.00 including tips for the stay. On Sunday upstairs in the ballroom they have a real life Christian revival with the placing of hands, the healings, all the things you see on Sunday TV in the states. Sunday morning my girl went upstairs to the revival for a few minutes then came down to get me saying "You come, see pastor, he good man with Jesus" So me being saved did not waste a minute going to see him amongst the many others at the revival. There was a line waiting to see the pastor and have him put his hands on them to pray "Thank you Jesus, halleluiah Jesus, Save this soul" while others around prayed out load "Thank you Jesus". Of course I being an American was taken to the head of the line and no one seemed mind.

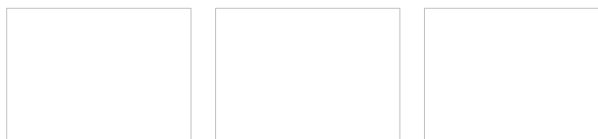
I met the Pastor and he looked at me a little in disbelief that I would actually go along. But I just agreed calmly putting him at ease that he could pray for me. He then put hands on me shouting the prayers with the rest of the crowd. During his prayers Wasanthi (The nice girl who I was with at the hotel) was holding my hand and had contributed \$1.00 for the pastor to pray that I marry her. Well the pastor just by looking at me and her together knew she was a sex girl posing as a virgin shouted the prayers as they do but then almost as if trying not to say it out loud, quickly and quietly, almost under his breath, slid by the prayer

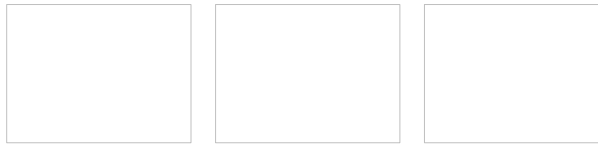
"**Thank you Jesus, Halleluiah Jesus**.... get married.... **Thank you Jesus, Halleluiah Jesus**" then spoke in tongues as they do. The pastor had to slip that in because Wasanthi gave to the pastor's collection box requesting that very prayer. Afterwards I was very happy because Wasanthi was very happy. It makes me glad to see her happy. Wasanthi is always happy. Most girls want me to make them happy. Not Wasanthi, her entire life is devoted to entertaining me and making me have a good time asking me only for a bottle of water and rice curry for dinner. She does not even take the bus fare to the train station from me. She doesn't ask for a cab service to get to the train. And believe me taking the bus to the train station is brutal. Maybe there are these kinds of girls in the USA, but in my life I have never seen one except on TV.

I had a photo lab make this for Yamuna since she wants to get married. But poor Yamuna I will never marry her for she knows too much about sex.

Andaman Boat

This is the boat for the Indian Customer going to the Andaman Islands. It is nearing completion. The final cost with twin 225hp four stoke Yamaha outboard is \$110,000.00 USD The entire design engineering and construction of every detail was done without molds or templates. Everything is hand made the entire deck and gunwale will be covered with Ceylon Teak. More pictures coming in November when completed.





Aruna,

Things have finally changed at ESM. All but two of the henchmen are gone from ESM. The henchmen are the old management from when Dudley Fernando owned the company. Since My arrival almost two years ago I was baffled by the complete stubborn ignorance of the old management. Dudley has been the MD of ESM since Chairman is a garment mogul he knows nothing about fiberglass.

Dudley also is the agent for a Japanese fiberglass company called FRP services in Sri Lanka. Dudley used scare tactics on the chairman in order to keep a strangle hold on his fiberglass supply business by convincing chairman that fiberglass is as complicated as building the space shuttle. One mistake and the shuttle would burn to earth costing lives and 50 billion dollars. Naturally Dudley conspired against me when I told chairman the work was wasting 20% resin due to over mopping cloth and another 20 % lost in large off cut pieces of cloth that were thrown away to the trash heap. This trash heap is a storage room with a leaky roof and by my estimate there must be 10 tons of wasted cloth

All this because Dudley was the one who taught the workers how to do the work. Naturally he made sure his way ensured that ESM would constantly be in need of material which he supplied. And by scaring chairman into thinking fiberglass is as complicated as the space shuttle Dudley ensured his hold on the chairman's purse in regard to material cost. Kind of like milking the cow, or should I say bleeding the life out of the business.

Yes, bleeding describes the Sri Lankan ways best. So when I came to ESM naturally Dudley saw me as a threat to his looting of the company cash. No wonder every improvement in efficiency was met with compete and utter illogical BS. My favorite criticism is the one where I would show and prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that my techniques saves 20% in materials and takes less time, Then would come the condemnation from idiots and thieves.

Since my common sense approach was too much for them they would say things like "Yes it looks like it is a better way now, but in 10 years the boat will fall apart and sink" Their favorite thing to say is that everything I do will either de-laminate or that it is unstable and in 10 years the boat will sink. But now all but two henchmen are gone. And today I had great satisfaction when chairman announced without saying anything that he is pouring hundreds of thousands into the company and my department.

It happened this way. He opened up a 10,000 sq foot air conditioned office for a new design team he just hired. The lead designer is named Pahan pronounced Pah- Hann. He looks like a Yule Brenner from the movie the king and I. He is no nonsense and we have many conversations about new design ideas. How refreshing to have dialog with a college educated engineer about innovative steps ESM is taking. Now whenever Sam sees me the first thing he asks is if I have enough money. A big change from before when the word of the day was always "no money, no money" No Sam says "Chairman has plenty of money; he is a rich man, No?"

It gets better. Today Carleton one of the last dinosaurs who lives to condemn me has been all alone since Dudley left. However Dudley has been secretly calling Carleton to give instructions in sabotaging materials and anything I do. But Sam had been playing detective on guard since Dudley left and today caught Carleton plotting against ESM on the phone when Dudley called on Carleton to give his report on spying. Sam let Carleton have it. I never saw Sam this angry. He told Carleton to get the..... out of his office and never come in again without permission and to never use the company phone without permission either.

Why Carleton and Dudley don't conspire on cell phones is beyond me. Maybe now they will. That was one henchman who got his warning. The second was nearly fired today. As it turns out the other henchman was Aruna. All along he had me fooled. It is like this. Aruna has been supposed to be learning from me on the Indian Boat since day one four months ago. To my face he has been agreeable. There has been a few times where I told him to get off his ass and do what I tell him. When I do this he reacts with tears and confronts me as if to fight. I took it as being young. He is 27 years old. Aruna was hired by Dudley two years before he went bankrupt. I did not know that he is one of the henchmen until the past few weeks.

Aruna is supposed to be junior management, meaning he is supposed to be learning. Chairman put him as my manager to manage my work and learn about the USA. For the past three and one half months he had me fooled in believing that he really wanted to learn. But in the past few weeks I learned that he really is a bum. It all came together from my lessons about the culture here. Remember I said that people from Kandy think they are descendants of royalty and think they are better than anyone else? By the way this is where the Buddhist monks come from and that is why they act like they do. Like the monk on the train.

The rest of real Sri Lankan ignore the pompous BS. Then one day it clicked when Aruna told me he was born and raised in Kandy and all his relatives are there. Then I remembered that one thing I had to correct him on was to stop snapping his fingers when he asked a worker to fetch something. I told him not to do that, and instead ask nicely if the worker would please do the thing. But Aruna snaps his fingers as if the workers are supposed to jump. These are workers who make \$120 per month salary. The least you can do for these poor guys is to be nice.

The snapping of fingers reminded me of the pompous Kandy natives thinking they are superior. Then since Dudley left ESM a few weeks ago Aruna has been without his benefactor that let him do what ever he wanted which was mainly to surf the internet and lounge around ESM with no responsibilities.

I think the stress was too much for him as I saw him come apart and reveal that he was really a henchman posing as an innocent young man wanting to learn. It took me 4 months to discover his secret sabotage. You know by now I am constantly having tantrums about my workers constantly ignoring my simple instructions and causing costly damage to every job I give them. The scenario played out like this. I would describe a simple job to do. By the way if you know anything about fiberglass you know that hundreds of dollars can be lost in 5 minutes of doing the wrong thing, no matter how simple it may be, if it is done wrong

it costs plenty in lost material, lost time and then twice the time and aggravation to repair the damage done by not following simple instructions.

As you know, I regularly scream and have tantrums at Sam and Chairman because my simple instructions are ignored by the workers as soon as I turn my back. When Dudley was there the response was always "Prove you are correct, and they were wrong" By the way having to prove yourself every day then be ignored when you are right was how they dealt with me every day and drove me crazy. But the past the other day exposed Aruna as the fraud he is.

After my latest freak out chairman said to me to write down my instructions and go over them with Pahan and Aruna and have them agree that they understand, then it is Aruna's job to make sure the workers do not deviate from the written plan. At first I told chairman I don't have time to give written instructions for every screw, every nail and every board to be cut. But chairman insisted saying that he had a plan to root out all the saboteurs so I went along with it.

I wrote down simple instructions for 6 small jobs. I went over it with Aruna with Pahan present. Right away Aruna started arguing saying my way was wrong. Something I had not heard from him before. He was beginning to lose control of his secret sabotage. When Aruna argued I said nothing and went on in front of Pahan. Then Pahan took me aside and said do not argue with him I saw he understood the jobs now go away for three hours then come back and we will see what happens. OK, I went along with it. I left and returned three hours later. When I got back to my project I saw most of the 7 workers standing around loafing. This is only natural if you do not motivate the workforce, which is what I do when present.

Yet Aruna cared nothing about getting any work done. Then it hit me like a ton of bricks. None of the work I had instructed Aruna supervise was done. Instead he had ignored my instructions and had done what a two year old would do if you asked one to build a boat. The result was a complete loss of a days work. Then the loss of another day to repair the unnecessary damage caused by not following simple instructions and hundreds in lost resin and fiberglass.

When I arrived to see this disaster I yelled "What the.... is going on? Stop everything" I then asked Aruna what the hell he was thinking, why the hell were the workers standing around and none of my work was done and how why the hell didn't you follow my written instructions. Aruna's only response was to say that I was wrong and his way was better. If I was not mature as I have become I would have jumped him and beat the shit out of him then and there. But instead I calmly went to Sam's office and told Sam to call Pahan to verify the disaster.

Pahan calmly came in and sat down with me and I then flew into my usual rage with arms flailing about and every other word from my mouth being either fucking or mother fucker. Sam calmly turned to Pahan and said "Todd is very upset" "Pahan calmly nodded in agreement" I then turned to Pahan expecting the usual BS but instead to my surprise Pahan told Sam that yes in fact he had confirmed my written instructions with Aruna, and that Aruna argued when given instructions all in a very calm matter of fact way.

Sam then went downstairs with me and Pahan to investigate the unnecessary disaster. It was Pahan that interrogated Aruna, not me. Pahan calmly told Aruna he was wrong and has no excuse for going against the written instructions. Then Pahan gave me the floor at which time I wasted no time in continuing to freak out and curse and throw my arms about directing it all at Aruna. Then Sam took the floor telling Aruna he has no excuse and that he has cost this company wasted time and money, then Sam turned to me and apologized for the disaster. It takes a great man to chastise his management then turn to me and apologize for the screw up. But wait it gets better. Pahan then asked one worker why he created the disaster. The worker said it is what Aruna told him to do.

Pahan asked that the worker why he did not learn the right way from me after all this time. The worker answered "I did learn the best way to do the job from Mr. Todd, but Aruna tells me to do it his way and that Mr. Todd is wrong" Boy does that sound familiar or what? Then Aruna made a feeble attempt to argue with my methods at which time Pahan told him to be silent and leave the area. This broke the threat Aruna had on my very own workers. One by one my workers came forward translated by Pahan that whenever I gave instructions to my workers Aruna would tell them I was wrong and to do things his way as soon as my back would leave.

When asked why they did not say anything before my treasured workers said that Aruna threatened to have them fired if they disobeyed him or said anything against him. So this is what has been going on for 4 months behind my back. It was Aruna telling my workers to do the opposite of what I say. All the while knowing the correct way, but held hostage by a henchman. It all fits. Every time I leave Aruna in charge disaster happens. When I ask him why he blames the workers as being stupid, saying things like they do not care about working, they just want to go home. I knew there was something fishy about this statement since whenever I am working alongside my workers there is a real bond and we have a good time. For 4 months Aruna has been the one stabbing me in the back sabotaging my jobs then blaming the workers.

The next day I came to work and Sam called me into his office to show me a letter from chairman saying that Aruna will be fired if I felt Aruna was not a team player. Through out the day I saw Aruna hanging around with nothing to do. In the afternoon I decided that since I am an adult and Aruna is a misguided kid that I should give him the chance to shake off the bullshit and join the new ESM.

I approached Aruna to talk with him and he immediately became confrontational on the verge of tears which in my experience a gun or knife stab is sure to follow. I said Aruna you decide. Do you want to come off it and learn how to do the work correctly and I will teach you? Or do you want to be fired? His answer was very sad. He said with complete confidence "I not learn from you. You must learn from me." At that I turned and left. I saw this as an imitation of the henchmen, but without authority or substance to back it up as in the past when Dudley was in charge. So now I think they are going to fire Aruna. And Carleton is walking on eggshells with his tail between his legs.

This reminds me of a story you may have heard a similar version called the boy that cried wolf. This story is called the American that cried wolf in Sri Lanka. It goes like this. One day the American was in the pasture guarding the village sheep. When a wolf came the American shouted to the villagers "A WOLF! A WOLF!" The villagers did nothing and said so what. Three times that week a wolf came and ate a sheep. Every time the American shouted to the villagers "A WOLF! A WOLF" but the villagers were not interested. Then the mayor came to get one of the sheep for wool and asked the American. What happened to the three sheep that were here last week? The American answered "The wolf ate them. I tried to get help from the villagers but no one cared" The mayor left saying to the American "You must make the villagers believe there is really a wolf"

The next day a wolf came while the American was guarding the village sheep. The American shouted and ran all over the village yelling help; there really is a wolf that will eat the sheep if no one comes. But alas, none of the villagers bothered to do anything. The next day the Mayor came and said what happened to my

other sheep? It was here yesterday. The American answered "I cried out and ran to the village for help trying to convince the village there really was a sheep, but no one cared" The mayor said I am really getting angry about this. Next time try harder to convince the villagers to do something. The next day the American was guarding the village sheep and the wolf came. The American shouted "A WOLF! A WOLF!" This time the mayor came but the wolf saw him coming and hid behind a tree. When the mayor came he saw no wolf and said to the American. I see no wolf. Stop crying wolf and admit the sheep wandered away while you were sleeping on the job and we will forgive you.

Getting back to the scare tactics that Dudley used, I believe that some of the reasons chairman is finally pumping money into ESM is because Dudley is gone and the strangle hold of fear has dissipated. This for which I am partially responsible. It happened like this.

A couple weeks after Dudley left it left ESM with nothing but garment factory managers running the company with absolutely no fiberglass technicians except yours truly. A few weeks after Dudley left chairman called me into a board meeting he told me that since Dudley left he would now rely on me for technical advice on fiberglass. I replied "Don't look at me. All I have ever known about resin, gel coat and fiberglass is that you mix part A with Part B and you better not put too much or too little in the mix, and if it is cold you better get a heater, but in Sri Lanka it is always warm so you have nothing to worry about".

Chairman replied with "Come on man, I need an advisor, be serious" I said "I am serious, as long as you mix it correct and keep the rain off it you have nothing to worry about." I then told him in common sense saying "Look around you, the workers you have that do good work have only two years experience at most, never went to college, make pennies a day, are not brain surgeons and they do excellent work every day as long as they follow simple instructions, so relax, this isn't like building the space shuttle. Your poor uneducated workers know all they need to know, and do a great job every day. There is not secret or technical aspect." Then I made my disclaimer.

"Although it would not hurt if you were to read up on the subject so you know for yourself. I think you can read a short book on it to get all the info you ever need" I think this broke the strangle hold as it seems chairman is more relaxed personally and with his money. By the way chairman's brother died last Saturday. We were in a meeting and I asked if he could get help with obtaining a CE mark for the boats from his brother's business partner who builds CE mark boats for Norway. He said he could not talk to his brother. I said what's new, you are like my family. One disagreement and you never speak to each other again. Please I am sure he will help if you just talk to him. Chairman said "I can't talk to him he died last week" I told him I was sorry for his loss as I pulled my foot from my mouth.

Doesn't get any better,

That's right. Yesterday I met Ann my beautiful smart wife to be at Fort Station near her job at the bank. We met after she got of work. I took the 107 that ends at Fort Station for 20Rs. I waited about 10 minutes for her at atop the pedestrian bridge overlooking the Fort Station. I figured she would see me as I knew I stood out since I am twice the size of a Sri Lankan, light skin, and was two stories above the crowd.

I spotted a gorgeous girl wearing the traditional Sari standing on the platform looking around. Since I am old my eyes are not what they used to be I was not sure if it was her or not. I came down from the walk bridge. I approached the girl; she came to me and it was Ann. She greeted me with a smile and that youth full soft laughter that only pretty women can pull off. I don't know if they are aware their laughter it is a magnet for a man's attention or if it is just natural. I was transported into the fourth dimension, or a fourth dimension what ever the case I was now the star in a movie only God could script as she asked if I was ready to be on display.

You see when a foreigner and a native girl are together everyone stares. Not like the stares in the 60's in Mississippi when the first black man and white woman went to the local market. But an inquiring stare usually followed by a smile when eyes meet. Harmless. She said "On Display" because a few weeks ago we went to the Zoo. What made it dreadful was it was on a Sunday when every Sri Lankan. In the neighborhood was there. I made the mistake of sitting on a bench at the Zoo with Ann by my side. I was nothing short of an exhibit like a "white monkey and his trainer" as Ann put it.

Everyone stared at me like I was part of the attraction. Ann is very witty and makes remarks like that as she is aware and has a humorous side to our relationship. For me it is nothing short of a fantasy dream I never asked for. True I asked for a pretty young wife even before I came here, but this is really over the top of my expectations.

There we were, her in her silky sky blue flowing Sari gently waving in the breeze, brown wavy hair in a pony tail and me with my jaw dropped to the sidewalk in disbelief this classy creature would want to spend time with me without getting paid. She told me to pay attention; we were going to walk to the beach. I said "OK" and nothing else as I only talk when she allows me to talk. She says "No talking" We walked along the boardwalk on the beach heading south from the world trade center buildings to Galle Face hotel about a kilometer away. The waves crashing below on the beach, she a graceful vision of beauty almost causing cars to crash from their rubbernecking. And me a stumbling fool.

We came to the Galle face and the movie I was in really getting interesting as I remembered my visit here almost 3 years ago alone. The Galle Face was opened in 1856. Mark Twain stayed here, Teddy Roosevelt, Clark Gable and other famous people. They have the registry from the past 150 years on display. "After you dear" Ann said to me as we arrived and went to a table on the sea side. It was twilight.

We sat and she kept me well entertained by allowing me to indulge in my mindless repetitive dribble. She really has nothing to say except she feels safe with me and she loves me. The old me by now would have figured out the angles to exploit the situation as with the other girls. I would have been in one of the rooms by now having my way with her. But I am in a movie. A nice movie written by God. For some reason those ways I used to engage in with having my way with these girls does not enter my mind anymore mainly because of Yamuna who brings out to feed the animal in me every other weekend. I may be getting off the subject but I think it is important for a man to have an outlet to express his true vulgarity every couple of weeks then re-join civilization in between times. I see this is the way here. I see it is the way to tame the wild females lest they consume a man into the depths of the most pleasurable vulgarity all the time.

Yes this is the challenge to tame the wild females so the man could then re-enter the civilized world to get his work accomplished so again he could visit the savage pleasures that satisfy the nature of man's desires in the flesh. Me not being Sri Lankan have not mastered the art of taming the wild females so Yamuna

takes advantage of this to the extreme. By this I cannot explain unless you experience it for yourself. By the way me being a Sri Lankan now understood without instruction that the wild female must live at least 100 kilometers away from the civilization.

Yet, there is more pleasure and satisfaction just being with Ann after the complete letting loose of the weekend in the wild. Ann and I sat and counted the container ships at our table by the sea as the ships came over the horizon towards Colombo harbor. Until I caught a glimpse of her true nature when she said "To hell with the ships I have to get home now" Her mother and sister will be worried, and are already worried about her going out with a foreigner more than twice her age.

One thing did scare me about Ann when I took her too seriously. She says she will always love me and that I will make a good husband. Then she follows it up with. "And if your not a good husband, I will kill you" Great motivation for good behavior. She says she has to trust me. If I lie or cheat with her she will not be able to marry another since everyone knows once a Sri Lankan girl marries a foreigner, no respectable Sri Lankan man would marry her later. I had to ask her "Your not really going to kill me are you?" I asked because I know I will lie and cheat on her, it is just a matter of time. She replied "Poison is how I will kill you" Great so now I have a great future to marry this pretty young intelligent girl then get poisoned.

She saw that she could move me and scare the crap out of me, then reached out for my hand laughing a little telling me she would not do that, kill me that is, because she loves me. I thought that never stopped anyone from killing their spouse before until she followed it up by telling me if she did she would probably get caught and then have to spend the rest of her life in prison and she doesn't want that. It is great to have a young nice woman who demands respect and in return for being a gentleman and being thoughtful rewards me with tid bits of her affection. It is a refreshing change from every other woman I have known who has left nothing to the imagination then abandons me when I revert to being myself. Ann does not allow me to be myself. She does not tolerate stupid juvenile remarks. She says "Why did you say that. You are going to make me angry. You have never seen me angry. You do not want to see me angry. Do not say these things again." Boy do I get busted. I get downright embarrassed for making smart ass or off the cuff remarks.

Another thing that will anger her is sarcasm. She says "You are being sarcastic. I do not like that" And she isn't kidding. She says "If you must be like this then you must tell me now that you will not marry me. I will not cry. I must move on. So tell me do you want to marry me or not? Do not be afraid. I must know." Again I felt like a real terd. There is no back peddling; there is no way to squirm out of an honest answer. She looks me in the eye "Well tell me now. I do not want to waste my time" My only feeble attempt at a comeback was to say "Maybe you don't want to marry me as I am a rude man." She answers "I have decided I will marry you and that will not change. You must tell me if you will marry me or not" She doesn't say I better shape up she puts in a way that I cannot argue with.

Theelak is a manager at the garment factory. He told Santhi while she was waiting for me in a cab at the factory that I had a lot of girlfriends and I would not marry her and just wanted her for sex. I see Theelak around the factory and I have been expecting him to give me the evil eye, so I could give him the evil eye back. But he is always friendly. Today he shook my hand and thanked me for catching the night guards sleeping on duty. I took the opportunity to ask him why he said those things to Santhi about me. He said that he was just warning her. I said "But you shouldn't meddle and say things like that that do not concern you." He said to me "You should not have so many girlfriends and I would not have to warn girls about you" Boy I could not argue his logic. The old I would have not agreed. The new Sri Lankan me understand and is why I treat Ann with respect and by the way make damn sure she never meets Theelak.

Oh yes, you are probably wondering what about the work effort. Well it is great. Even though the workers failed to apply the gel coat to the mold of the 33 properly and now the whole boat needs to be painted again with gel coat it did not bother me. You see now at ESM we have WD and AD time. WD is With Dudley time, and AD is After Dudley time. If this error would have been discovered with Dudley around he would secretly meet with chairman and Sam to tell them it was entirely my responsibility, that I told the workers to do the job wrong and the entire error was due to me not knowing anything about fiberglass, and this was justly another example of how I was ruining the Blue Star reputation.

Then the next day Chairman, Tahere and Sam at different times would then come to me and ask stupid questions from me. Stupid questions that require I educate them on all aspects of fiberglass work. Which is an impossible task for three reasons. One they do not understand English. Two, they are Sri Lankan garment businessmen that know nothing about fiberglass and rely on Dudley to assure them he was in control. Three, All I know about fiberglass is you can fabricate anything you want as long as you mix part A with Part B in the correct manner. This process of blaming me and me defending myself would take weeks. Meanwhile the problem would not be resolved. Only the blame game would be played so Dudley could maintain his strangle hold of fear over chairman.

This process would then lead me to eventually freak out as Dudley knew would happen. At which time I would look for the first flights out of Sri Lanka and counting my losses. But now in the AD time when this error occurred I prepared myself for the chaos sure to follow as during the time of Dudley. I automatically went into defense mode in preparation for the insanity to come. But when I tried to get worked up and fortify my defenses all Sam and Chairman said was "This error happened when Dudley was here, now he is not here so lets just fix it and learn from our mistake" I did not see the scurrility, instead I threw the first volley saying.

"There was no one who supervised the work being done"

They answered that I was supposed to be supervising. I fired back. "I was at Amma Street getting tools when the gel coat was applied so how could I be supervising. Further more ESM is supposed to know how to apply gel coat. It is not like I asked a garment worker to apply gel coat. I asked a worker who is supposed to be skilled at his job to do the work and it is your job to see that it was done correct in my absence. I cannot be everywhere and do everything all the time. We cannot continue to do business if this is the attitude that I must do everything myself." See I got good at offense.

But Sam and Chairman calmly repeated their first statement telling me to relax and not get worked up. They said this happened when Dudley was here and now Dudley is gone, so lets all work together, teach the workers the right way so this doesn't happen again and we can move forward. The walls came tumbling down. I realized it would be OK. I would not be the target and the means for the henchmen to strengthen their hold on power.

The reaction to the error was unmistakable positive, blameless and was an opportunity uncovered rather than a nightmare beginning. So Now I am showing the workers how we re-paint a 33 foot boat with gel coat. I am not freaking out; I am not looking for the next flight out of here. Instead after the AD managers and I discussed how to learn from this error we all had lunch together laughing and just hanging out having pleasant conversation in Sam's office. It is very refreshing to

now be in Sam's office with Taher, Pahan and relax talking about the latest cricket match instead of arguing who is right and who is wrong. For the first time at work I don't always have to be talking about the problems.

Abbas,

At ESM you have Wise Sam the GM, Gregarious Sudath the sales manager, Jolly Chairman the billionaire, and me the one who gives the Sri Lankan Shit heads the rope with which to hang themselves with.

Abbas was my translator and secretary for the past three months until yesterday when I fired his ass and threw him out of ESM with the blessings of Sam and Chairman. The short version is that he is the shit head type of Sri Lankan. The long version is like this.

When he applied Sam told him he would earn 20,000Rs per month He countered with 28,000Rs per month. Sam said no and a week later Abbas accepted then began working as my translator and secretary. He was very efficient at his job and was not why I kicked his ass out. The reason is because a week after he started he began telling me sob stories about his wife being ill, children in college etc. By now you see this is characteristic of the sob stories the beggars tell like "Excuse me sir I have not eaten in three days"

But I did not see it. Instead since he was doing a good job I fell for it. Out of the kindness of my heart I gave him an extra 8,000Rs that first month to help him. Which by now you know that it is a BIG mistake to give a Sri Lankan 1Rs more than they have earned. Lest you become a victim of extortion as happened to me with Atula and Nilu. But this time I did not see this behavior is in 99% of all poor Sri Lankans. I sent him an email saying I would help him and give him an extra 8,000Rs this month. But by mistake I made a typing error in the email and put 80,000Rs.

Then when I paid him he said your email said you were going to give me 80,000. I immediately took a disliking to him after that. I told him it was a typing error on the email. That I meant to write 8,000. And he should not even have assumed this since before I sent the email the day before I told him I would donate 8,000 and he understood damn well what I meant when we talked about it. After I clarified it and he did not mention it again until three months later when his contract was up for renewal. If you know me you know I like to cause trouble with people I dislike and that is what I did with this man every chance I had for the remainder of his contract.

Not by backstabbing and talking about him but supplying rope to hang himself with. Whenever we were in my office together I would tell him that he could not live on 20,000 Rs per month. I told him he should ask for more money from Sam. The next day I told him that he should get deeply involved in the finances of ESM by taking on all the shipping logistics issues. I said "By doing this ESM will rely on you to solve all their problems they ignore now and then you will be indispensable to them. Then at the end of your contract you tell ESM you need a lot more money. This way they will see that you are the only one who knows and manages the shipping logistics and they will have to pay you more rather than have to do it themselves".

Sure enough he got deep into handling all the shipping logistics which is time consuming, boring, and complicated. He saved the company hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars in customs, port, duty, clearing charges, VAT fees on all my shipments of parts from the USA and China, and me a lot of aggravation. Once my shipments had arrived I did not need him anymore. Then it came near the end of his contract. Several times he brought ads from the job classifieds offering employment for this type of work for three times what he was making at ESM. I told him that's nice. Ask Sam about it. Sam just deflects these type of things by saying he will discuss it with me. Which he does not do since he knows I don't care and would reject requests for higher pay.

The closer it got to the end of his contract the more he would push his request to get paid two and a half times more than what was being paid. Now I was getting angry at the shit head I created and avoided my office so I did not have to look at him and hear his complaints. Complaints I encouraged him to make. Finally I decided if he wanted if he is that dumb I would let him have it. So the next day I sat in my office and said to him I would give him the next order to manage and then he would tell Sam he was in charge of the parts, and negotiating the payments from the customer. He said OK let me have the order and I will start on it. I gave him the task to manage the complete order for this reason. He would either handle all the details and communication with the customer and give me more time to be with the girls. Or he would screw up and I could tell him he did not deserve the pay he requested. To my surprise he did neither. Instead the next day as I arrived to my office I found a letter written by him and he was seated at his desk nearby.

The letter stated that he was now in charge of USA orders, shipping and deserved two and a half what he was being paid now. It also stated I made a contact with him to pay him 80,000Rs per month in addition to the 20,000Rs he was being paid. Then with my self destructive coaching he ended the letter with as follows. "I have shown that the duties of my job entitle me to be paid considerably more than what I have received. I have a written statement from Todd that he would pay me 80,000Rs per month in addition to the 20,000 already paid by ESM (which is twice the job classified offers and was really ridiculous) as of now I have received nothing towards this amount. I will allow you the next week to take the necessary steps to fulfill your financial obligations to me undertaken by you" I told him to take the letter to Sam. But Sam already had a copy.

Right then and there Sam nicely said to him that ESM would not pay a penny more and that I being a foreigner have no authority to even hire him or to pay him anything. Abbas began laughing as he had mentioned earlier he would go to the labor department to force ESM and me to pay. It seemed to him we fell into his trap.. I thought he won't be laughing for long. He thought Sam was on his side. Sam and I play good cop Bad cop. And you know I am the bad cop. Or more like Sam is the nice Sri Lankan and I am the mean American. Well it wasn't long before Abbas stopped laughing and slumped in his chair. Sam had a few words with him and he left. But not before threatening to take a copy of the email where I made a typo and use it in court to sue me for breach of contract and make me pay him 80,000Rs for three months, the length of his contract. By then Sam surprised me by dropping a name to Abbas. A name of a major underworld figure who is Sam's friend. Sam may seem like a nice friendly innocent guy, but he is smarter than me and very wise.

An example of Sam being wise: When it comes to Carleton, me and Sudat among others say out loud that we hate Carleton and wish he would go and why does Sam keep him. Sam explained why and reminded me of another person I know. Sam said that he listens to Carleton because 99% of what he says is completely wrong, and this prepares Sam for anyone he may have to do business with in the future who may become difficult. Sam says that Carleton is wrong 99% of the time and 99% of the time Sam takes what Carleton says and disregards it. But that 1% when Carleton is right has been very useful in business

dealings. Carleton is an expert at revealing errors and flaws most of which do not exist, but it gives Sam an insight to what others may see. Sam says you cannot always rely on your way being the only way. You must take what you can from others and disregard the rest.

Wedding #3

Went to another wedding tonight. It was a Buddhist affair. They had good food but not many guests were eating the great grilled pig or any other meat. I asked them why and they said that devout Buddhist do not eat meat. Yet they do eat fish. Of course I saw this as a contradiction and could not help but interject my opinion on the matter since when they tell you they do not eat meat they say it in a way that implies they are better than you. Just like the monks. So naturally I could not stand for anyone thinking they were better than me.

I asked the person "Why don't you eat meat?" Answer "Because we believe life is sacred and to take a life so we can fill our bellies is wrong" My reply "But you eat fish correct?" "Yes we eat fish." "Why do you eat fish? A fish is a living thing that moves about, has offspring, eyes, a brain, yet it is OK to send fishermen with nets to kill them and take their life so you can fill your bellies. What makes you the ones who decide which life is worth saving and which life you can destroy?"

And what about plants? Plants have a soul and can feel emotion just as we do. Just because we may not understand the soul of a plant does that give us the right to destroy their life?" This went over well as the person just turned around and walked away. I am doing my part as the US ambassador of logic. If they would just say we prefer not to eat land animals. Or we eat fish instead of meat. I would not mind, but they say things like it is wrong for anyone to kill a living thing. Excuse me? I kill living things all the time. What about mosquitoes? Their answer to that one was that you should just brush it away, not slap it. Just wait and watch, you will see these same ones who say this will slap a mosquito every time. Luckily for me Buddhists are not like Muslims who cut off peoples heads for insulting their religion.

This wedding was for Pahan. Everything begins when they bride and groom arrive at the parent's house. This is where the home comings takes place. There are native men dancers with bongos that greet the couple in the driveway. The dancers dance about wearing red girdles and a white skirt with tambourines on their heads and arms. They keep dancing for about 15 or 20 minutes until the couple is finally allowed to approach the front door where the mother and father are standing. Then the couple goes up to the entrance of the house to kneel before the mother and father before they can enter. I can see it now if this was my wedding to Ann. Ann and I would come up to the front door kneel and mother will say "Don't think your bringing that girl in here!" What a loving, caring family. After the couple greet and ask for blessings to their union they enter the home and everyone comes to greet the new married couple.

Pahan is the new western thinking engineer draftsman. Actually he is just a draftsman. Seems that is good enough to be an engineer. I like him as we have Dialog. I cannot tell you how refreshing it is to finally have dialog with an intelligent person. Actually it is not dialog it is me telling him what we are going to do and him nodding his head. Believe me that is a big change than before. Before I would tell the draftsman what we were going to do and they would say "You cannot do that. The boat will be unbalanced, it will delaminate and you will ruin the blue star reputation." That answer was always the same.

Sometimes they would mix up the standard answer like saying. "It will sink, it will break apart, it will tip over" Stuff like that. Meanwhile the entire time they were the ones putting out unseaworthy boats that actually costs people their lives. But no one seemed to worry about the ESM reputation those times. Like when two of their multi day fishing boats broke apart in heavy seas and a crew member was lost. Or when one of the pontoon boats they made for river crossings tipped over and at least one person died. No they were not concerned about that. But if Todd showed them the way to do it correctly the retarded criticism would fly against all logic. In the end it was very good for me. Since in the USA I see now there was a similar pattern.

I still remember Jack one of the boat builders that hung around Stapleton saying to me I did not know my ass from my elbow. Yes Jack knew something about boats. But let's be realistic. The only real thing you must know about boats is that they must be able to float. Boats are not complicated, but that is how some treated the subject at Stapleton. Not Ralieg, but the ones who hung around. Ralieg would just say "That might work.... or You might have a problem..." Others would say things like "The angle of the reverse chine dead rise slope counter rotating hook epoxy Kevlar degree composite will cavitate the strakes to a negative transom shaft....." Then when they would lose me, they would follow up with "Don't you know anything"?

All boat builders I know were like that except two. One was Ralieg, the other was Pete a Cuban who made the brand boats called "Release Boats" He had sold the business and was retired and visited Ralieg's shop from time to time. Pete bought one of my 33 footers without a word. He just paid for it and drove it away. Meanwhile all the ones who were so called experts said they would buy one of my boats but first I needed to change the design.

Raleigh always kept silent never saying a word to me if I was right or wrong he let me do whatever I wanted as long as I paid for it. All people I learned all just like Pete and the experts. They like something, and they pay for it and that is the end of the matter. The ones who cannot afford the thing will criticize and never be satisfied enough then blame you for not doing things the right way. I see now the criticism there is the same as it was here. The only difference is the language and the country. Before I used to think the boat builders at Ralieg's shop really did know what they were talking about and I should know more than I do.

But now after I had experienced the same treatment for a year and a half I see now the experts at Ralieg's shop were just like the henchmen here. Not wanting to help or make progress, rather to just criticize to make themselves feel important; since at Ralieg's as well as here I stand alone. I am not interested in being important. I just want to build boats. So either let me or I will go. All the assholes that ran ESM talked crap about me but chairman let me do what I wanted as long as I could pay for it. So you see Sri Lanka and the USA are similar. In fact I see now that they are almost identical except the language, the shitty roads, checkpoints and the sex girls. Other than that it s the same attitudes and BS with people who are miserable. And nice guys like Stapleton and Chairman.

But back to Pahan, I like him since he lets me do what I want and tells Sam and chairman I have good ideas. They call the wedding ceremony a homecoming for the groom and no women are allowed except elderly men with their wives. When the bride gets married she wears white. When she returns from the honey moon she wears red. The bride has her own homecoming with her female friends. It is kind of like bachelor parties but in reverse they have them after the marriage and honeymoon. Now I know why Ann did not want to go. And now I know why all the men were given little red boxes of really good chewy cake. The little red boxes of cake are for the men to save to give their wives the next day.

At first I did not know this so when a girl gave me a little red box with good chewy cake in it naturally I ate it. All the men looked at me until one of the few English speaking men told me it was to save for whatever you want to call Ann. I asked the girl to give me another little red box and she said "Ah you have two wives" I said "No I dropped the first one on the floor" In retrospect I should have said Yes you want to be #3?

Speaking of Ann. She is my secretary now on the advice of Sam. All we do is sitting in my office and talk. She loves to laugh and has that youthful innocent laugh. She talks to me about marriage and meeting her family and I say things to her like "Ann I need to tell you something. . .No I better not" Then she says "Tell me it is OK, I will not get angry" "OK, Ann. I can't tell you, you will get mad at me and scold me." "No I will not get angry and I will not scold you if you are honest, tell me" "OK, Ann, you know when we get married you have to. no, I can't tell you, you will find out when we get married" "Todd please tell me, I want to know" "Ok, Ann, when we get married and we are alone in our home together, you always have to be naked"

She burst out with the soft laughter I love to hear. She replied "No this cannot be. What if we have guests? I must wear clothes sometimes" Then she asks me. "Todd you have been smoking haven't you?" I have to answer yes. She says "I do not like that, you must stop, and you told me before you had stopped and now I find out you have not. Why do you lie to me in this way?"

"Well it's like this Ann. I had a lot of stress with the Indian Job and started smoking again" She says "That job is done. So you have no reason" "Ann that reminds me. What are you going to do if I don't stop or if I do something else that makes you angry?"

"I will not like that"

"Yes but what will you do when you find out I do what I want to no matter what anyone tells me?" "Then we will fight all the time and you will not like that will you?" Her logic is right to the point. On one hand she will do whatever I ask and agree with my requirements, but on the other hand she lays down the law and does not take any crap. By the way speaking of girls, In the USA when a girl touches you it is a sign of affection. Here when they smell you that is their sign of affection. No not like a dog sniffs another's ass. I mean they smell your neck your hands, arms. When this happens you are in for a good time because it means they like you. Ann started smelling me today.

OK enough of my love life. Except I have to mention Yamuna. I really like her. I would marry her, I love her. But there is one minor obstacle. She is neurotic. Every day she left me 20 messages and 20 calls a day. Saying "Why don't you answer your phone? Why you do me like this?" Then when I do see her she tells me situations of desperation she is in. Then I feel like giving her everything I ever had just to try to make up for the horrible life she has to endure. It makes me feel like shit and bummed out. So I cut the phone off for good and sent her some cash to relieve my conscious. Then I see Ann and she is the opposite and I realize I was falling for the old bleed the American tactic again with Yamuna.

In regard to ESM. Yeah that's right I did not forget what the hell I am supposed to be actually doing here. As it is I have boat orders coming in every week from Africa, Norway, USA, Canada A year ago I made and sold a couple of boats and had to endure hearing how great the Australians were because they were ordering 150 boats. Yes even the Australians told me how great they were and were ordering not only hundreds of mid size boats but were going to buy several of the 44 foot ocean racing type boats for a million dollars each. Funny thing after one year they have yet to buy even one boat, not even a row boat. Meanwhile people from Norway, Africa, and the USA Canada are calling regularly ordering from me.

I did not think much of the Australians as I am to busy doing my work. But as expectations fail and dreams vanish, the ones who were promised a glorious future begin to fester their disappointment and direct it at the ones who are succeeding. That would be the Australian workers taking out their disappointment in my department. Turns out the workers in the Australian department hate me and hate my workers. Now I know why they are always so rude.

In fact Chamind my lieutenant in charge of my troops told me my workers hate them as well because for the past year the Australian workers have been boasting about making 150 boats. I mention this because James the Australian shit head who is too good to talk to me came to ESM yesterday and met with chairman for hours in the board room. They then moved the meeting to the Australian department for a while. After the Australian left, Chairman was leaving ESM and he called out "Todd, Where's Todd? Get me Todd" I said "Yes what can I do for you?" chairman asked me that since I had so many orders for boats why don't I sell the Australian boats as well. Because the Australians are not getting any orders and their operation needs help from me. It all became crystal clear. The Australians had not even crossed my mind for the past 6 months. And now I see all this time they have been in dire straights. The reason I have not thought about them is because they have been spending tens of thousands of dollars in making the Australian department a state of the art facility comparable to any in the US. They spent this in anticipation of the 150 boat order that never came.

I thought they must be doing OK since they were spending all that cash. Mean while my area looks like a garbage dump. The floor caked with decades of resin spills, gel coat splashed all over the walls, cob webs, iron beams raining down rust, trees growing thru the windows, leaky roof, electrical wires hanging all over the place. A real dump. Then it dawned on me. Even though my area is the pits. I put out the beautiful Indian Boat have plenty of work am building at least 6 different model boats with countless orders. It dawned on me this is how God does things

I have to stop writing now. As I was writing this I heard a low flying airplane. Very low flying, like right over the roof of my apt. First I remembered they do not allow aircraft in the skies here, and then I thought maybe it is a mosquito plane, then again nope. I thought I hope that isn't the airplane that has made two appearances around Wattala to drop hand thrown bombs at gas stations. The plane faded away and I forgot about it until I heard a thud off in the distance. Yep it was that little God Damned LTTE plane dropping bombs again near Colombo. But that wasn't the end. Then I heard it coming back my way over my roof. Then it turned around and was circling. Great, now their aiming for my apt since they heard an American lives there. But then I heard a helicopter come, then another and now the air force us chasing the airplane around in circles near my apartment. I hope they don't start shooting because they don't care where they shoot, they just shoot and my roof is just a thin piece of corrugated asbestos. Yes asbestos. No one told them it causes cancer and if they were told they probable would not care anyway. So I am going downstairs where I have a better chance of escaping wild bullets.

Before,

I want to talk about Ann. But before you gag, I am not going to say how wonderful she is anymore. Turns out she is serious as a heart attack. There is no funny bone in her body. Yes, she laughs and jokes sometimes but that was yesterday. Today I saw a side to her that scared the bajeebeez out of me. I sent her an innocent playful SMS message. The content was the average dribble between boyfriend and girlfriend. But the way she responded was similar to what my third grade teacher would have replied. My third grade teacher was Mrs. Terasse a large mean woman who seemed to get pleasure from humiliating children for being children. Ann's reply was nothing like the playfulness we exchanged in the past. In fact I completely changed my mind about her. Now how do I face her at work? After all she is my secretary for the next 6 months by contract. I think she perhaps is closing the trap on me. Little does she know who she is dealing with. Good thing I found out now. I can see it in the future that she will rule over me with an iron fist. She will not be a wife she will be my master. Now I will hide downstairs in production. Now I will have the excuse to go to India for a month, then China for a while. Then to the USA for another month.

Could it be all her soft youthful laughter and playfulness was just an act that she could no longer keep up? Could she be that conniving and calculating? Now I think back to when she told me that if I was not a good husband she would kill me. I see that she was serious and just made it to be a joke at the time. The more I think about it I think she is maybe psychotic. When she replied to my comy SMS message with a thrashing and then elevated her contempt when I asked her if she was always so very serious I realized she may be dangerous. I don't think I want to be left alone with her. She is a gorgeous 110 pounds 5 foot six inches of solid ice.

Did I go thru life's ups and downs, survive self inflicted tragedies, work my ass off so this cold hearted bitch, Yes, I said it BITCH can treat me like a stray dog that just crapped on the new rug. No, I am somebody. I am Todd. Gee I feel better already. Let's review. I can either have the ice queen or I can have the neurotic clinger inner stalker. Let's see. What are my choices. The neurotic or the psychotic? MMM... I think I will just go back to the sex girls. But then again the sex girls have their problems too because you never know which one you are going to get. Sometimes they are young and beautiful; sometimes they are fat and ugly. What a quandary. By the way does anyone else out there have these types of issues? Or is it just me?

On the Surface,

Three months ago the government put fourth the 2008 budget. Since then it has had three votes for or against. One in October One in November and the third last week in December. The Government shows how it will help the country and the opposition shows how it only lines the pockets of the politicians. Around the months during the budget voting the news reports are frequent saying a Member of Parliament had been kidnapped. Or a relative of a Parliamentarian was kidnapped. These kidnappings take place just before each vote. The news describes these events as "Some unknown criminals have kidnapped a Parliamentarian and now he has been released unharmed" The news goes on about how despicable this is and is followed by the Parliamentarian giving a speech after the release vowing to apprehend the criminals. Followed by another Parliamentarian in session putting fourth a resolution to stop the kidnapping of Parliamentarians, and to put a stop to threats made against their family members.

Why are these people and their families being kidnapped and threatened? It is always the same answer. It is because that Parliamentarian had indicated he was going to vote against the proposed budget for various reasons. For this reason he or one in his family is kidnapped and threatened unless they vote for the budget. I am telling the truth. Come here yourself and see this. Now on the surface you would think this is a terrifying place to be. That even the Parliamentarians are not safe. Or that the government is on the verge of a takeover by a dictator. That is how it appears. If one was not "In" they would understand why tourists are afraid to come here as this type of situation regarding Parliament held hostage to criminals is not a place most would go for a fun vacation.

If you stay here a while you will do what I do and do a little looking into the facts. Start with the statements made by the ones kidnapped before they were kidnapped and after they were kidnapped. Before they say things like "This budget will only serve the rich, it does not help the poor. I want to only help the poor so I will vote against this budget. I will fight to help the poor and by voting against this budget I will force the government to consider the needs of the poor and make everyone equal... Bla...bla...bla... help the poor, I am only for the poor...so on and so fourth...bla...bla...blaaa...I will fight if necessary to even form a new government that only considers helping the poor live better"

Then the kidnapping happens and the Parliamentarian disappears for about a week. Then suddenly he appears on live news broadcast even before the police hear about the release. After the kidnapping the kidnapee says things like "Last week I was kidnapped by criminals in the government who held me in captivity. They told me I would never see my family again if I voted against the budget. They told me they would harm my children and son in law's family if I did not change my vote and approve the budget...bla...bla...bla.. It was terrifying as you can imagine.

...I will not rest until these criminals are caught and punished. There must be a stop to..... we in Parliament being kidnapped or our families threatened" Weeks and months pass yet no leads or news or anything about the criminals who did the kidnapping. Even though the average is about five kidnappings like this regarding Parliamentarians who indicate they would vote against the budget no investigations lead to any arrests and security does not seem to stop the events from happening. Now take a look at the actual budget that was drawn up behind closed doors.

When they write the budget it is not held in public. Look at the budget and see if a picture begins to take shape. Look at what the budget had put aside for the Parliamentarian and his office. The same one who was kidnapped. The budget will allocate things like new cars for all office members, it will increase his salary and everyone's salary who works for him. It might provide a new lavish office space and other luxuries.

Meanwhile the majority of the constituency is probably living in poverty. When I say poverty I don't mean food stamps. I mean living in a tiny one room wood shack with a rusted tin roof, no bathroom, no refrigerator, stove, clothes, and waste removal. And no food other than a kilo of rice a week two divide between the families.

All this huddled together among ten thousand families in the same predicament. No schools, no hospital with 50 miles, absolutely no infrastructure. Are you getting the picture yet? Do I have to spell it out for you? Then look at the end results after the kidnappings and budget passes. The Parliamentarian is admired by

his poverty stricken continuants for being so brave to stay in office under such terrifying conditions. The Parliamentarian now driving a new \$70,000 Peugeot a new office on the 20th floor of new office building.

His family and extended family getting offices and new cars they never use. And the poor helpless victim forced to change his vote and approve the budget under duress? What does he say to his critics? He says "I had no choice I had to approve the budget. I feared for my life and my family safety. But this I vow. I will not rest until the criminals that kidnapped me are caught!"

Funny thing is that after the budget is approved all the kidnappings stop, none of the kidnappers are ever caught and the kidnappers never ask for money only for the victim to change their vote. Meanwhile during the kidnappings the government is strangely silent on the subject. Then look at the votes on the budget from the start. On the first vote the budget was approved by an overwhelming 85% approval from all parties. That right there should be a clue. The budget is passed overwhelmingly on the first vote. So why would anyone go to an extreme criminal act to sway a vote to approve a budget that has already been approved? It is the second vote where the kidnappings take off. The second vote after the kidnappees are released for changing their vote the budget passes again overwhelmingly like the first time. Only now it passes by 86%. By the third vote the budget has passed by 87%. It takes three votes over three months in order to manage the drama of the kidnappings and the releases.

Now about the girls. I know at least there is one man out there who finds the Girl situation interesting. Being older and having the experience that comes from dozens of failed relationships one knows what to say and what not to say when confronted by the side of a girl who is planning to claw her way out of poverty by loading guilt on your shoulders thereby putting herself in the position of judge and jury over your happiness.

If not for experience knowing there is more to life than sex with a beautiful young girl I would have gone down that path. You see there are paths these girls take. Paths they deliberately lead foreigners like me. These girls and their families only dream of marrying a foreigner. So when one comes in range the whole family plots the physiological strategy to snare the beast (being me, an untamed American. The best prize of all. Better than a German, better than an Australian). With others it was a simple game of extortion over a false pregnancy.

After I became too smart for that one came the next more sophisticated strategy that is to give the foreigner the greatest sex 24/7 they could ever imagine then reel him in. But this did not work because like any other man that 24/7 sex gets old no matter how pretty the young thing. Then there is Ann the beautiful young virgin who could not play the sex card so she played innocent playful fun followed by the guilt card.

Well that one took a while for me to get. She was puzzled when it failed. Now she is back peddling. But I see now I see if I wait it out another will come along as they always do with another plan to entrap me. Maybe I will run into a plan that includes, Cook for me, clean for me, treat me as if I was king. Yes I think that might get me, but so far it has not happened. By the way I actually have a secret love for the daughter of a hardware store owner store near Elakanda Junction. She is beautiful as a man could want. And she is very cheerful. I go there just to buy one nail or a razor blade or anything just to have an excuse to go inside and see her big smile and sparkling brown eyes greet me. She speaks good English. She is always happy and will light my smoke if I don't have a match.

Ann is usually happy, except when she stares at me with contempt for sneaking a cigarette. The hardware girl is about 20. Already her father asked if I want to marry his daughter. But I don't think I am going to marry any one of them. No matter how beautiful since I met a man from the UK who lives here. He agrees the girls are great and it is best to have one live in. But the way I was going about it was all wrong. He said the way you do it is you rent a small house or apt somewhere then put an ad in the newspaper for a live in maid. Keep the terms as an employer. Forget about the romance and marriage. Do not even talk about any possibility of that ever being able to happen. Then you get the girl to live in and you don't have to live with her, just visit. She gets a place to live away from the poverty and she gets a pay check. Her family keeps her in line for you since you started by setting the rules not to be a husband they know you are paying her for a service and they desperately need the money.

The average pay for a maid is about \$60 a month. A small house about \$150 a month. Then you have a girl who will cook for you, take care of you and not ever try to play the physiological strategies or she knows she will be fired. A few days later I asked Lakmar my driver to look for a house like this for me. He knew right away what I needed. He took me to a nice apartment building. He said this is what you want. I looked around and saw only maids. No men, just beautiful young women in maid uniforms in the laundry room, in the mail room, in the office, hall, stairs, talking with each other in the recreation room.

Another lesson learned. So now I am looking for a maid. You see for every difficult situation here there is a great solution you just have to either figure it out through trial and error or get lucky once in a while and take some good advice. My ways in life are always trial and error regardless. But I am not so foolish as not to take good advice when I get it. You know since Ann helped me break it off with Yamuna the stalker, and then I broke it off with Ann for being an ice princess I feel so much better not feeling guilty that someday I will abandon this place and all the girls I know. Yes I broke it off with Ann saying "Ann our cultures are too far apart. Your culture requiring you marry before sex and my culture of living together until you get sick of the person".

I go to the Pegasus resort often for lunch, dinner, to go swimming, buy jewelry or just hang around. It is a beachside oasis of modern civilization amid the Chaos and village life in Wattala. The sand is orange and not fine but coarse. Off shore about a quarter to half a mile offshore you can see the surf breaking. This is due to a barrier reef just under the surface called the Pegasus reef hence the name of the resort. The reef runs north and south just offshore on the beach side the waters are about 50 feet deep on the outside the reef face falls to hundreds of feet. Now I will tell you about my youth as the relevancy came to mind as I looked out at Pegasus reef.

When I was younger in my teens and early 20's I used to take my canoe along with my friend Tom paddling out to the channel at King's Bay Yacht club that was far south of Miami on the mainland side of Biscayne Bay. The channel ran east and west. Near the channel there was Chicken Key a small Island. Tom and I would paddle out to the channel and dive for lobster, stone crabs and whatever else we could spear. The water was about 8 feet deep on the edge of the channel, and much less at low tide, it would then drop to 30 feet down the face of the channel where it was dredged out when it was made.

Since the water was shallow around the channel near shore few boats would stop for fishing or diving so no one but Tom or a few of us local boys knew about this stretch of Florida Lobster gold mine. First thing we needed was to steal large kitchen forks from our mother's kitchen drawer. You see we used the large sharp forks to spear the lobster behind the base of the tentacles as they peered out from under the rocks. By the end of the trips the forks were so badly bent they had to be thrown out and mother knew there would be a lobster dinner whenever her kitchen forks disappeared. Back then you could paddle around the channel, but today you would be stopped by patrol and homeland security.

I went back the other day with the canoe, and sure enough within a few minutes of approaching the channel about a mile offshore a patrol boat sped up and

asked what I was doing. A side note about being stopped by the patrol that day, and how I got sweet revenge for the patrol boat and crew ruining my visit to the old lobster mine.

I launch my canoe at a spot next to the Deering estate at the mouth of a small river. You have to walk the canoe out about 100 feet from shore because at that spot the bay water is only about 10 inches deep at hi tide and is a sand bar at low tide. That day was high tide so I was able to paddle right up to the shore to leave. As I was approaching the shore the same patrol boat came speeding up behind me with their loudspeaker ordering me to stop where I was and wait for them. What #\$\$^@&@s I thought. They obviously thought I had snatched up some lobster while out there and were going to bust me. They were about 600 feet off shore coming in fast they were also approaching the shallows where is was 10 inches deep. I halted as they ordered and watched as I knew what was going to happen. Sure enough they had no idea of the water way and their boat ran aground. They did not just run aground, they were traveling at a high rate of speed so they launched themselves onto the rocks for a good 50 feet. I could have stayed and answered their cries for help but I saw it as a small victory and left. After all it is perfectly believable that I could not be of any help anyway. Besides, did Jesus ever say "Go out and help those who want to persecute you?" Later that day you could see from the road they had Sea Tow helping them get off the rocks.

Back to Pegasus reef. The reason I thought of the lobster trips while seeing Pegasus reef is that I know that wherever there are rocky cliffs and reefs in warm waters there are Florida lobster. I had seen one or two at the street side fish markets My next move was to investigate the situation for exploitation. After all there was no patrol or coast guard, only the Navy who were not interested in small boats, only boats like the one I was making for an Indian Customer in the Andamen Islands.

I looked for lobster but could not find any at the local markets and I asked why. I was told two reasons by the local fishermen. One the current is too strong by the reef and traps get carried away, and even if you could use a trap there is no way to stop the poachers who will pull up any trap they see and there is no law enforcement to stop it. I asked then why doesn't anyone dive and get them with a spear. The second reason they said was because no one locally knows how to dive, can afford the diving gear, and the current it is too strong to swim against; anyone who tries gets swept out to the Indian Ocean.

OK that answered my questions. But the more I visited the resort the more I thought about it. Then I remembered swimming against the current in the channel. I even swam against the current of twin propellers sucking me into them. Yeah that's right. One time Tom and I were out sticking lobster and Tom waved to me to surface as there was a huge yacht bearing down on our position. We often needed to surface and swim to the side of the channel to let the boats go by, or be run over. But this time I had my fork stuck into the biggest lobster of the season. He was under a rock at the bottom of the channel. I figured I would hold onto the fork with one hand and a nearby rock with the other. Then when the yacht passed I would land my prize. But that was not what happened. The yacht huge and was going slow about 8 knots with big propellers.

As the yacht went directly over me I felt the displacement of water push me down to the bottom and I thought OK this won't be so bad. As it passed, the propellers began to suck me up from the bottom. Then it really got serious when I thought I would lose my one handed grip because the other hand was pinning a lobster to the ground. I felt this was the end; I would be chewed up by the propellers and spit out like a mess of bloody flesh and broken bones. I reluctantly let go of the fork and got a better grip on the rocks and held on as my feet were pulled up within a few feet of the propellers. After the yacht passed I went back to the lobster with the fork still sticking in him and went to the surface raising the lobster on the fork above my head in victory as I broke the surface. At the rear of the yacht I could hear the passengers yelling obscenities at me like "You %@\$^&@ idiot you nearly got killed !"

Since I knew I could swim against a current, I made up my mind to go and see for myself if there were lobster on the reef. I was going to at least see for myself if there were lobster on Pegasus Reef. I could tie a rope around my waist to the boat and that would save me from being swept out to the Indian Ocean if the current was too strong. The resort rented me a diving mask, fins and snorkel intended for swimming inside the barrier reef. Inside the barrier reef there are pools separated from the currents. I don't think they would rent me the gear if they knew what I had in mind.

I paid a local fisherman to take me to the outer reef while I dove to look for lobster. We approached from the beach side and I dove to see the sand bar runs up to the reef so there were no rocky cliffs on the calm side where lobster would gather. We went a few hundred feet to the outer reef where you could see it drops from light blue aqua to the deep blue sea. By the way you cannot do this during most of the year because the seas are too rough and murky. Only in the spring time does the water get calm enough to enjoy swimming or diving offshore (actually diving offshore is sometimes beautiful in the spring but always very dangerous from what I have been told and no one dives on the outer reef).

As is my way of defiance for the norm and sensible I told the boat driver to anchor on the shallow rock of the reef while I tie the rope to my waist and venture out to the seaside reef cliffs. I went down about 8 feet and immediately saw hundreds of lobster tentacles sticking out from the rocks like long thick hair coming out of the side of the reef. I was ecstatic. I hit the jackpot. I saw my fortune in being the first lobster business. I did not bring a fork to start sticking because this was just an exploratory trip, but I wish I had. I tried to go further but the current was pulling at my rope which was only about 20 feet. OK, I realized I needed a better survey of the area so against my drivers advice I took off the rope and went down the face of the reef about 40 feet. I have never seen so many lobster waiting to be plucked. I could see about 75 feet clearly each way on the reef face where every nook had at least two lobster tentacles sticking out everywhere.

By now it was time to go up for air. As I broke the surface I looked around and could not see the boat. I saw I was about 100 feet offshore from the reef shallows where the surf was breaking. As a wave brought me up I saw the boat about a quarter mile away. I realized the current had taken me ra in just a matter of a minute or two while I was entranced by the view of lobster heaven. I %@^\$\$& this is just like when the yacht almost ran me over. I saw no hope and figured I would be just another smart ass tourist who paid no attention to the locals and was swept out to sea. But I knew I was a good swimmer and I knew not to fight the current. I gave up on trying to get to the boat and started swimming with the current but on an angle towards the reef. But even if I was to reach the reef it was rocky and the current swept over it with breaking 4 to 5 foot surf. I would certainly be shredded if I tried to land on the reef.

Luckily for me sharks are scarce near shore because they were fished out for their fins years ago. So there I was swimming parallel with the reef about a mile offshore without a boat. Off in the distance when a big wave would lift me up I could see the Port Of Colombo. I figured I could swim at an angle towards the port about five miles away and hope a ship does not run me over. That was my strategy to survive.

As I swam I saw the reef was disappearing to where I could see open water to the shore. What I saw was the mouth of the river that separated Wattala from Mattakkuliya. On one side of the mouth of the river was Crow Island where there was a Navy base that kept watch over the Port of Colombo. On the other side was the beginning of the Dutch Canal where we launched boats from the factory. I could see the lookout tower at Crow Island and knew I had gone about three miles south. I swam very hard at an angle toward the Dutch Canal side of the river mouth because I did not want to end up coming to shore on the Navy Station side. I managed to swim towards shore enough to make it between the openings of the reef at the river mouth and was able to get to shore. The bad news is I did not make it to the Dutch Canal side. I could not avoid the Navy Station. Oh Well at least I was not swept out to se I thought and proceeded towards the Navy base shore.

As I approached the beach I noticed a lot of activity at the base. I wondered what was going on. Finally an hour swimming against the current and making it to shore I crawled out onto the Navy Yard beach. Within a few seconds I was surrounded by soldiers with their rifles pointed a few inches from my head. An officer came up and asked me who I was and why am I spying on the harbor? I told him my story and for my sake they believed me when one of the officers recognized me from the boat factory. I was released with a warning never to try that again.

I sat for a while then hopped on a trishaw back to Pegasus and returned the rented gear. I then walked back through the jungle path from the resort back to

the factory to see a commotion outside the factory gates. It was Sam and Percy, the boat driver and a few others. As I walked up I could hear they were upset about something. I approached and asked what was going on. They turned to me and Sam hugged me. Apparently the boat driver had told everyone that I had been swept out to sea.

That ended my lobster diving adventures there. But I still think there is a way to exploit the lobster. Instead of traps with a floating buoy that can be poached. I would set out traps with buoys that floated up but stopped ten feet or more below the surface. Then mark each buoy with GPS. After a while I could visit the traps located by GPS then lower some sort of gaff to hook the submerged buoy and pull up loaded traps. Someday, ah yes someday.

X mas,

Here when you say Merry Christmas they look at you and do not understand because they do not understand the phrase "Merry Christmas". You must say "Happy Christmas", they do not respond to the later. Here they don't mention Jesus birth except and only if you are in a church. Even then they do not talk about the birth of Jesus as the reason for Christmas. In public they only refer Santa Clause. When you say Christmas was the birth of Jesus they don't understand, they just know it is an important day to go to church and get a days rest.

The Buddhists have no holiday similar on the 25th. But they take the day off anyway. Every Buddhist holiday like the monthly full moon holiday is a legal working holiday. But for Christmas all company workers must work 4 hours extra on the two Saturdays before Christmas to make up the time they are taking off for the 25th. In other words if you are a Buddhist you get at least one free holiday a month. If you are a Christian you must work overtime prior to Christmas to take off one day a year. It sounds weird but Buddhist and Christians get the same days off and work the same schedule. In Christmas season they do wait to open gifts on the morning of the 25th. They open them as soon as you give it to them unless you give it to them on the morning of the 25th for some reason at noon on Christmas day everyone lights off firecrackers at noon there is a tremendous roar of firecrackers going off in every direction.

Ann,

One thing I like about this place is the people are very easy to read and manipulate. Even the backstabbers make to attempt to hide the stabbing. When Ann suddenly turned out to be the ice princess attempting to enslave me I applied my interpersonal manipulation skills I had developed here. In the USA it is not easy to develop these skills since there are so many twisted levels of consciousness one tactic does not always work.

But here you only need to know a few tactics when preying on young women. Ann had figured she had me in her claws and that was to be our relationship here. At first I thought to cut her off and end the relationship entirely like the others. But then again I remembered I am getting older with no one to care for me, she has a witty side to her, she is very smart and is learning to manage my business affairs here very well, hard working, understands complex issues that baffle me, she seems to be loyal and lastly she is a very pretty 23 year old who has not had sex with every foreigner in hopes to get a visa.

All this I weighed and decided to instead apply skill in handling this case. They do not know about the ways of mind control and that is a good thing. Most are honest straight forward people. The others are backstabbers. Ann is not a backstabber. Ann is poor, knows it and would like that to change, and also knows that a promise is worth nothing. She sleeps in a bed with her sister and her mother sleeps on the floor in a two room tiny house. No chairs, only a small table near the cooking hearth. No gas for cooking, no refrigerator. Ann is the ideal prey for a foreigner. Only Ann will not compromise for a few months of gifts, cash and promises of going to America like the other girls. Instead Ann says "No I cannot do that. If you want this we must be married first.

If you want me I am yours and only yours I will do whatever you say. If you don't want me that is completely OK I will move on" I like that a straight forward deal. That tells me the chances of her loyalty are greater than my previous relations. Taking all this into consideration I decided that instead of cutting it off and abandoning her as I have done many times with the other girls who try to put a choke hold on me rather I would apply the skills I have mastered in interpersonal manipulation I shortened it to a term I call "interpermaniploitation". By the way that term I invented so don't use it without my permission.

With Ann the tactic was Silence since she loves to read, discuss books and have conversations in English this would be the way. I could not use money because she is used to living within her means earning \$80.00 a month as a phone operator. I could not use anger because I don't do that anymore. So I shut off the communications. Not at work but after work and on the weekend. I am not so childish as to give a cold shoulder or pout during the day when we are at work together. At work I treat her as an employee. I am friendly and we work together. Besides I need a good secretary, I have a lot of stuff that needs to be done. The only difference at work is the cuddly and cute conversations stopped. She would try to start a cute conversation but I would not feed it and the attempt would fade. Or she would throw in a comment in a conversation about work like saying "Do you want your lunch today? You should get married so your wife can bring your lunch" I would answer "I like the food they cook here in the canteen" Or she would say "Your shirts is a mess today, if you had a wife she would iron it for you so you would always look your best" And I would say "Yes your right. I think I will hire a maid to cook and do my laundry"

By now I can see the disappointment in her eyes. She is losing her grip on the dream ticket. Then after work she always SMS messages me and we go back and fourth with cute messages. But that stopped when she demonstrated contempt when she thought she had me in her claws. So at night I ignored her messages. Before long she became like Yamuna, sending me 20 messages a night in desperation. The next day at work I would not mention anything about the messages. She did not mention them since it was obvious she wanted me to say something. Instead I would greet her in the morning with a genuine smile since she is very pretty and I am happy she is a great secretary.

If this was Yamuna and I ignored her messages she would definitely confront me the next morning at work and ask why I ignored her. But Ann is cool and calm and mature. Instead when she sees I am ignoring her on a personal level she acts like it is OK and goes on professionally as if nothing happened. I was wondering how long she could keep this up. I really did not care about marrying her since she is a very good secretary and really helps me at work. And that is what I need anyway, not a wife at this point. But the next day would reveal her soft side that I had not seen. The next few days I greeted her with a nice smile that I was glad to have her as my secretary. She smiled back but a worried smile as if we were on the Titanic as it was sinking and she was trying to cheer me up.

My plan of interexploitation was working better and faster than I imagined. The entire week she was worried and tried not to show it. I took the opportunity to tell her at the end of that week "Ann you look worried. You have nothing to worry about, you are doing a fine job and I am not going to fire you. Blue Star will keep you when I go back to the USA" That did not help her nervousness as I knew it would only serve to confirm to her losing her grip on me. That night more messages I ignored. The next day she broke down. It was like breaking in a wild horse. The details are not important. What is important is that Ann has changed. When she is with me she is a soft warm cuddly kitten, with the rest of the world she is the ice princess. And that has turned out to be the best deal. She gets people follow orders where they used to ignore me.

He staff is scared of her since she does not joke around and is very serious about everything. Until she comes into my office where she reaches for my hand and sits in the chair in front of my desk and smiles a genuine smile telling me some women worship their husbands. Am I going to marry Ann? I do not know. I do know I would if I could, but I cannot since no women are allowed in my apt means I have to find a house nearby ESM to rent. This idea is far fetched for many reasons. First, just imagine a foreigner from the USA living in a house in a neighborhood where anyone can come and go everyone nearby would see me come and go. It is not that the decent people would care or bring trouble. But the criminals and beggars would have access to me. At my apt no one can come anywhere near me since there are three guards and a 20 foot wall around the compound. But out there the beggars, three wheel drivers, drunks, criminals come at me like mosquitoes the minute I walk out the ESM or garment factory gates. If I had a house outside my fortress it would have to be a fortress itself with high walls and at least one guard. Then I would have to get a drivers license and a vehicle, or hire a drive and a vehicle for \$500 per month. Either way it starts to get expensive to live here outside the factory fort.

Andaman Islands,

I went to the Andaman Islands for the past 10 days to rig the engines for the custom one of a kind Hercules Model boat I made for the customer at Port Blair in the Andaman Islands. This place is poised for a boom. The Indian government subsidizes business and petrol to get people to develop the island. There are no pleasure boats there. There is only one boat there before I delivered the Hercules. That belongs to my Indian customer. Their business is sport fishing vacations for the elite. They own a guest house on Havelock Island some 20 miles from Port Blair. On Havlock there are only luxury vacation homes. Everything has to be brought there by boat. Here are no businesses there, just wealthy people on vacation who want to be apart from the crowds. On Havelock is where my customer brings their guests to stay a few days and fish. They arrange airfare transportation everything. In the day they take the guests fishing. The fish they catch are all giant fish 50 to 100 pounds. They are the kind of fish you can catch around Miami, but these fish are huge.

When I arrived I spent the first two days at the boat rigging the engines. I knew no one and no one spoke English. It was hard because I had to eat the crap the crowds eat at the hole in the wall cafes all over. I thought this place sucks, no good eating, even worse than Sri Lanka. Then the next day my customer arrived and ordered lunch brought to his office where we all ate. This food was fantastic. I asked him where it came from. It came from the Lighthouse Inn a hotel a block away. Funny I did not see this even though I was around that area looking for a decent place to eat.

After asking around where the Lighthouse was I was taken there by a nice man. It seems these great restaurants are semi hidden. If you did not know where it was you would never find them. I walked down a narrow walkway of broken cement slabs between two old four story buildings, down another narrow alley to what looked like a dead end. I thought this is where the nice man will rob me. But he pointed to a broken down wooden door and motioned I go in. At first I hesitated, then said hell with it and went in. I entered the dilapidated premises. Inside it was cavernous as if they hollowed out several buildings to make one huge room. Inside it was air conditioned, very nice marble floors, at the sides were tanks of live lobster, red snappers, crabs, tiger prawns.

The waiters all in white shirts with bow ties, and a bar area. I sat down in disbelief and the waiter brought me a menu. I could not understand a word on it. The waiter seeing this suggested seafood. I agreed. At that other waiters brought trays of fresh fish, tiger prawns, and other sea life I think was sea cucumbers. I picked out a big snapper and a couple tiger prawns. Ordered a coke and waited for the food. I sat at a window on the third level the window overlooked the harbor where they are building a huge new pier for tourism.

There was a fountain below. Funny thing, I remember walking by this window but from the outside it looked like a slum. The food took a while so the waiter suggested I order an appetizer which I did, even though I had no idea what it was called. The food there is Thai and Chinese the cooks are Thai and Chinese the waiters are Indian, Thai and Chinese. I stayed there till midnight gorging myself on the best food I have ever had in my life. I ate until I could eat no more but I did not feel full so I kept eating until again I had to stop for a few minutes, and then proceed until finally I gave up realizing I had never been this satisfied with a meal since the last thanksgiving at home. I went to the light house restaurant nearly every day. The days and nights I did not go to the Lighthouse in I went to the Emerald Gecko, another hidden Thai Chinese restaurant with the best food spicy and sweet at the same time. They can take a Tiger prawn and serve it up so you cannot recognize it, but when you eat it you don't care what it is it is that yummy. I even found myself eating the heads crunch crunch.

I went back to my hotel room and slept like a baby. It is nice weather there it is always 75 degrees. There are no mosquitoes like in Sri Lanka or Miami. The next day I went to work on the boat and hung around with the customer. My customer knows absolutely nothing about boats and I hope he never finds out I said this. Even though they both admitted this to me.

The entire trip was basically a hand holding mission while they prepared the boat for sea trials. Actually all I did there was watching the electricians and mechanics do their job as well as watch the other workers doing the detail finishing work. Having me there made the customer feel at ease. I could tell when the

customer was frustrated as he would not talk to me and say things like "I could have bought a boat with the engines already on it for what I paid Blue Star for just the boat" Other times like when we drove the boat as it mastered the 5 foot seas and he was happy, he would say things like "Hey Todd you got a cigarette?" It turns out I understand why there was frustration. There is absolutely no fiberglass there, no tools, no materials, and no experienced craftsman, nothing if you need to make repairs. There are no skilled workers except the electricians because no matter how remote the island there has to be electricians to change the light bulbs and fix the short circuits.

These guys have to do all the work that requires thinking. The engine mechanic they had flown in from Dubai to stay the week installing the engines and gear. And me? I just hung around. Something I am very good at. Whenever I was asked a question I would say "What do you think we ought to do about it?" Then just agree with what ever they suggested. The customer had said several times "Todd, I think the engines are too low, they are close to the waterline. I think you put the engine bracket too low and you need to build it over aging and make it higher so the engines do not get wet"

This worried me a lot since he said this many times sounding very concerned. He also said other things that worried me like "Todd, are you sure you made the engine bracket strong enough? Are you sure the bracket with the engines won't fall off into the ocean?" Then just before I left to go there he really had me in a panic by sending me an email saying "MAJOR PROBLEMS WITH THE HURCULES" The email went on to say ,

"When I give the boat gas full throttle the boat only goes 12 knots and points straight up and I cannot see over the windscreen. And I tied a rope to the engines in case the bracket breaks off and they fall into the sea" Boy I was worried like the time I was sued by an asshole trying to get a free boat from me.

Back in 1998 I made the mistake of letting a guy talk me down to a ridiculous price for my 33 boat. I should have known the guy was an asshole when he told me he got the money to buy the boat from a car accident settlement. When this guy got the boat he launched it and forgot to put in the drain plug. Well the boat sank ruining all the electrical wiring and electronics. So naturally he sued me as this was of course my fault.

He claimed the fiberglass I used to make the boat was defective. And by this caused him to miss the fishing tournament. Completely ridiculous. The case was dismissed, but still during the two months it went on I was a nervous wreck. But this time I was a stranger in a strange land with no Raliegth to bail me out of trouble. So I worried and worried and just told the customer I would be there in a few days. The customer upset with the performance and the seemingly low engines expressed his worries and concerns that he had thrown all his money away on this disaster.

The customer asked the mechanic if the problems could be fixed. The mechanic flown in from Dubai and who is a well known Yamaha certified technician opened his mouth to answer the customers concerns. The seconds it took him to reply seemed like an hour. Thoughts of what he would say raced thru my mind as I remembered the asshole henchman at ESM who said the boat was unbalanced and would sink and delaminate ruining the ESM reputation. I also remembered a few of the so called experts that hung around Stapleton who said I did not know my ass from my elbow and thought the real international expert mechanic would confirm what the customer was worried about and not satisfied with.

I was waiting for the hammer to drop. But to my surprise the Mechanic calmly and confidently said "The engines are exactly where they are supposed to be they are not too low, they are just right. And the engine bracket seems strong enough to handle the engines. And about the boat going slow and pointing straight up? That just means you need trim tabs. You will always need trim tabs when you are running a heavy sea going speed boat like this one" He called my Hercules a sea going speed boat. Boy did that sound good. Since the customer had no idea what trim tabs were he was left a little confused but reassured the engines were set at the right level. I took this opportunity to instantly order trim tabs from my USA supplier and told the customer I did so.

During the three days the trim tabs took to arrive I was on pins and needles and the customer was still nervous about the whole trim tab concept and explanation. When the trim tabs arrived the mechanic put them on. It was dark by the time he finished still the customer could not wait to see if we were right. He took the boat out then gave it the gas. Instantly the boat leveled off nicely. He took it out about a mile into the harbor and ran back and fourth. You could see his navigation lights zooming back and fourth across the bay. I flung my fist in the air and shouted "Thank you Jesus" The first thing the customer did when he got back is he came to me and asked if I had a cigarette, then he smiled. This was the first time he smiled since I had arrived 7 days before. I could tell he felt reassured and then knew why it was so important to have the whole team there being the boat builder, and the master mechanic.

During my stay there ere several countries having naval war games. There was a US aircraft carrier offshore, an Indian helicopter, French destroyers, Dutch Destroyers and Swiss navy ships. They all had their different flags. At about 3:00 pm every day two Tom Cat fighter jets would circle around the harbor in a play dogfight then shoot straight up until they disappeared. Then after that a few transport helicopters would fly over the harbor with long chains hanging down with the countries flag attached waving. Then after that you heard a loud boom and smoke would rise from the distance where the navy would be blowing up targets at sea. Then a few huge transport planes would fly around. This happened like clockwork every day. I tried to take pictures but the Indian Navy personnel around the harbor and jetty asked me if I would not take any pictures so I instead secretly took pictures, unfortunately most were too blurry.

In the Andamans you hear about the natives that no one can contact and the Indian Government makes sure no one has contact with them. This is partly true. Andaman Islands are about 10 Kilometers wide and about 600 kilometer long north and south. Port Blair is at the south end. Phuket Thailand is 300 Kilometers to the east and at the top it is 60 kilometers from Myanmar. About 30 miles north of Port Blair there is Nicobar Islands where the Navy is stationed. No one is allowed north past this so there is over 500 kilometers of wilderness where no one is allowed. In this northern area the natives are not disturbed. Even if you got by the Navy you would still have to travel by sea countless kilometers not knowing where you are since the maps have no reference points north of Port Blair and absolutely nothing but wilderness.

There is a Government road running up the length of the Andaman Islands joining the islands together. But no one is allowed to travel that road unless with a permit and with a Military convoy. My customer told me of a time he and his partner traveled with a convoy north when one of the vehicles broke down and the convoy was halted briefly. He said the natives slowly came out of the forest and came up to the vehicles staring at the passengers.

They say you are not allowed to stop anywhere on the road and if you have to you cannot get out if the car. It is like Lion Country Safari. About 20 years ago there were some travelers who thought they could sneak away from the convoy and take pictures of the natives as the came up to the vehicles. Well a month later they found 7 of these travelers and all were pierced with arrows and some had their heads stuck on a stick facing the road. This is they type of things they say

about going up north.

But south some say you can go to one of the remote islands and visit the tribes. I found out there are two tours you can take to sneak a visit with the native tribes. One is \$6000 per person and the other is \$300 per person. If you wanted to sneak a National Geographic peak at the last cave man society on earth which tour would you take. The \$300 one? Sure save the money. Well this is how the tours operate. First the \$6000 tour. First you go out and buy boxes and boxes of gifts for the tribe you are going to visit. They like candy bars, cakes, knives, clothes, pots and pans. Then you head out in the disguised fishing boat 30 miles to a remote island. Along the way you are first stopped by the Navy. There you have to pay \$1000 bribe to the officer in charge and \$1000 to the crew. Then they let you pass. Then you are stopped by the police. To these guys you pay another \$2000. Then they let you pass, then you are stopped by the Forrest department these guys you pay another \$2000. then they let you pass and you approach the island where the natives come out to greet the boat. Once you hand over the gifts the natives put on a show for you. This rate is for two people.

If you have more you have to pay more in bribes. Well after all that I will take the \$300 per person tour. This is how that tour works. You meet the man with the boat. He tells you to give him the \$300 per person now so he can take it to his friend who is in the government who will get a pass. This friend will then notify the Navy, Forest Dept, and the Police you are coming so you don't get stopped. The next day you meet at the boat and travel 10 kilometers to a remote island. There about four to five natives come to greet you and after you hand over the gifts they put on a dance briefly. The gifts you need for the \$300 tour are not pots and pans and cake but only alcohol and cigarettes because the tour guide says this tribe already had enough pots and pans.

OK, so now you either took the \$6000 per person tour or the \$300.00 per person tour. There is only one big difference with the \$300 tour. That is the natives you see on the remote island actually live in the apartments in Port Blair. They look like natives and go to the island the night the man with the boat gets paid. They then dress up like natives and act like natives putting on a show for you. Then after you leave thinking you had just seen a rare and historical event the so called natives sit around smoking cigarettes and drinking your gifts and the next day they go home to their apartment in Port Blair to wait for the next tourist. But like I said all this goes on at the southern end, on the 600 kilometer island chain for the 550 kilometers north of Port Blair the tribes are truly isolated and protected by the government of India.

Now I am sure you are wondering "But what about the sex girls?" Well there are no sex girls there. Everyone is decent. In Sri Lanka all the girls look at a foreigner and all I have to say is "Want to go to America?" And I can have my way with them. But in India they don't want to go to the USA. They are happy where they are. Indians make decent money and the housing is not bad. Plus it is a free society. As far as the looks of the women that is another difference. In my research I have formulated a theory while comparing Indian Women to Sri Lankan women. Sri Lankan women are all beautiful and all, 99 out of 100 have a body like a playboy model. Even the ugly ones are attractive.

Funny thing, Yes there are a lot of beautiful women in India like Chennai where I spent a day on lay over for my flight. I went around the city researching the women, but they did not interest me. It was because their looks were OK, but not as dramatically attractive as the Sri Lankan women. And the most noticeable difference is their bodies were not nearly as attractive and shapely as my Sri Lankan girls. In fact in India there were a few fat buttoxes. Yes I was surprized. The looks were nothing to write about and 9 out of ten buttox were flabby. This is what led me to my theory. That theory is that in poor countries where you have to walk everywhere, have no money the women keep themselves in tip top physical shape because they have to walk down the hill to the well to fetch water, they have to walk to the river to bathe, they have to walk to the market, and have only enough money to eat a little rice now and then.

But in developed countries with the amenities the women sit on their ass and get flabby and lose their looks. The theory is the first thing that goes when a civilization becomes modernized is the women lose their looks, willingness, and figure. I will submit this in depth theory to the next issue of Scientific American.

I am scheduled to go back to the Andamans in May when the tourist season ends and the customers want me to do more work on the boat and maybe bring them another one. The Hurcules boat is truley a luxury craft. You know there are boats and then there are sea going speed boats. The Hercules is a sea going speed boat as everyone calls it here.

2 Feb 2008

I am serious this time,

I told chairman and his son that I am cutting my losses and leaving. They don't need me anymore with the engineers. In the past few weeks I see they have put the entire payroll and factory expense on my shoulders. They take money from me to build boats then when it comes time for them to buy materials and parts they say "no money, no money" I then say but I just gave you \$10,000 to make the boats for me. Then they reply "Yes but we had to pay for employee payroll, electricity, materials and things for our local boats that are on order." I went along with it the past month since my Chinese partners bailed me out in the past when I paid ESM a 50% deposit to make a boat only for them to ask me to pay the full amount if I want to finish the boat.

This after putting me off for a month in getting started on a boat they already received 50% payment for. I say "you already got 50% so do 50% of the work, not 0% after a month then ask for more" Their answer. "Please give and we will do, we promise". Actually it is Abey and Sam who say this. Chairman is nowhere to be found. In short they have been taking all my deposits for boats and paying their expenses and not doing anything for me. Luckily for me my Chinese partner bailed me put last month by building the boats I had paid ESM for. My Chinese Partner made and shipped them for half what ESM wanted. I still made a little money but only a fraction of what I would have if ESM was not criminal. When I saw this trend I took the only action I knew how. Since I had no recourse I instead got ESM a sale with a USA dealer and priced the boats 30% less than they cost to make.

My bullshitting skills came in handy. I out bull shitted the greatest bull shitters in the world. I made ESM accept a letter of credit if they wanted the job of 6 boats to the USA. This sale is a history maker as the first exports of Sri Lankan boats to a USA dealer. Since the Sri Lankan are so greedy they did not notice the cost to build and ship the 6 boats cost 30% more than they were getting for them. I explained that is the cost to get the business going and is the custom in USA for the buyer to pay 30% less than the cost on the first order as an incentive for future business. Good one, Yes?

They want to screw me without giving a damn about my finances; well I did the same to them. When the boats arrive I will be in the show and take all the new orders and build them with my Chinese partners .Ha, Ha. What do I care all they try to do with my cash payments is take them and give nothing in return but more bullshit excuses and saying no money, no money to make the boats I just paid for. ESM is run just like the politicians. They take all the funding for a road or bridge and make the bridge but no road. Or they start the road then a year later the jungle grows over it. In Sri Lanka you have bridges all over the place that go no where with the jungle growing over them.

I got them to boost my brand; ESM is now 40,000 in the hole in making the boats for the USA. If the letter of credit expires without the buyer getting the shipment the seller is out the money spent. Even if they do get the order out in time the credit is only 70% of 40,000. So in the end they get what they asked for and I get my brand name a boost in marketing. It all makes sense now. When I first came here I wrote that they are afraid to do business with foreigners because the foreigners leave a financial mess with the Sri Lankan. Now I know why. Foreigners leave a financial disaster behind because they have no choice but to run and cut loses when the Sri Lankan take and take and take and give nothing in return but excuses. Someone should write a book about this to warn others from coming here with promises of future growth.

On TV here they now have a telethon to help the victims of the tsunami. They plead to the world saying they need more help. I might have mentioned this before but I will repeat. There are no more donations or aid to Sri Lanka for this reason. The charities who had donated the hundreds of millions of US dollars asked for an accounting from the Sri Lankan government. The Sri Lankan Government replied they did not have a database set up to track the money so they are not responsible to answer to where the money went. That was a year after the tsunami.

So then the charities said that since the government could not account for the goods and cash donated that was supposed to go to the victims that instead the charities would give the donations directly to the victims. The government said OK, but the charities had to pay the government 20% tax on the value of all donations given directly to the victims. The charities bit the bullet and paid the taxes to give directly to the people. This time there was a database to track the donations. That was a year ago.

Last month a survey was completed to assess where all the donations went and how it helped the victims. Well needless to say after the results were in the charities no refuse to donate a single penny to anyone in Sri Lanka in the Future. Why? Because this is what they found after reviewing the past years donations. What the victims did was to get a free fishing boat worth \$3000 from the charity then turn around and sell it to another fisherman for \$1000. When the victims were given a house worth \$5000, they turned around and sold it to someone else for \$2000. When the victims were given a tractor worth \$2000 to work the fields the farmers sold it on the market for \$500 and went back to using an ox cart. Also the study revealed an trend that every year the number of tsunami victims has grown from 100,000 in 2004 to over 250,000 three years later. All the homes given to victims are now occupied by different families who were not victims.

About Ann; She is one out of a million. She spends her time reading books. She is smart and understanding. When I leave here I will be letting go of the best thing I ever had. I have an idea to marry her before I go. I would then send her money to finish the law degree she started since we met. It will take her another 4 years to finish the program to become a lawyer here. She has come to be very kind and affectionate to me. She listens intently to my dribble and laughs at my jokes. Plus she is 5' 6" 105 pounds of young beauty. If I had a place to live in the USA I would take her with me. But I am homeless.

Here we had a meeting with chairman. I like our meetings because you can see this business is just for his amusement, yet it is life or death for Sam the GM, and Abbey the accountant and the engineer and me. The meeting starts with me asking chairman how he is today. Then he answers "I am very upset with you Todd" I say why. He says "I walked by your area and noticed that all your lights are on. You don't need all those lights on, you don't need lights on near the front of the shop since you have sunlight" OK I say I will never do it again. Then he asked what the meeting is about and I say it is because I ordered parts for my boats 6 weeks ago and ESM still has not ordered them. Then chairman turns to Sam and Abbey and shouts,

"When Todd orders things you get it for him right away. Why was this not done?"

Sam and Abbey say "No money, no money" Then chairman changes from being the boss and turns into a whimpering baby almost crying and in a very soft voice asking Sam

"Sam, please is there any way you could find the money we need to order"

And Chairman is almost crying. Then the next topic is Sam and Abbey and the engineer say,

"Todd is a poor planner he always changes the designs at the last minute and causes confusion".

"He has to plan better, if we cannot make a profit I will shut this place down now!" Then chairman turns to me to say,

"Todd you must plan better" Then I do my tenth step and say,

"You are right I want to take this opportunity to say I have been wrong in causing this confusion. I apologize to you Sam, Abbey and the engineer. I will do better in the future"

Then chairman changes to become a warm friend reaches out to hold my hand then tilts his head to the side and quietly says to Sam, Abbey and the engineer,

"Todd is an American Entrepeneur (my new word rhymes with manure), we are Sri Lankan and do not understand his ways, but we must support him. Todd his great at selling and marketing and making the boats he can sell I think you will all agree without him there would be no Blue Star"

At that Abbey Sam and the Engineer nod there heads in agreement. Saying yes "We all agree Todd is a great marketing and salesman and know a lot about making boats."

Then chairman turns to his son Tahere who has been present but silent and asks "Tahere, what do you think" Tahere says,

"I am downright pissed off at Todd for changing designs at the last minute. Todd has to plan the work better and stick to the plan only"

Then I turn to Tahere and say "You are right Tahere, I will not do this anymore and do things your way"

By the way the meeting was about getting the parts I ordered 6 weeks ago but was forgotten about two minutes into the meeting. So when chairman said I have to go now I said,

"Wait a minute; I still don't have the parts I ordered six weeks ago. I need an answer when I will get them now or all work will stop today!"

Then chairman turns to Sam and says ", Sam, order the parts." Then Sam and Abbey turn to each other and say "OK we will pay for these now," At that Abbey left the meeting to go to the bank and make the wire transfer to get the parts.

After the meeting I go to my office where wonderful darling Ann is there studying her books I gave her on logistics, import, export laws so she can pass the test to become a shipping agent here. Also even though she is very intelligent she never learned about Mozart, Beethoven, Monet, Hamlet, or any of the arts. So I spend my time with her telling her the boiled down versions. Like Hamlet said "to be or not to be "because he wanted to kill himself"

Van Go was a painter who painted with heavy brushstrokes going in wavy directions then he cut his ear off. She is fascinated and wants to know more about the arts. Then Ann cuts me up some fruit and while she is cutting I tell her she is very good with the knife and that scares me. She laughs. We talked about the differences in our languages in American English and British English. They are really different. She tries to teach me Sinhalese but I tell her you can't teach an old dog new tricks. She tries any way and I teach her some American phrases like the one where when someone comes home from work they ask their spouse jaet (meaning "Did you eat" for those that don't take short cuts in talking) At this she burst out in laughter. And I joined because she was laughing. Then we stopped and she asked "Why are you laughing?"

I said because you were laughing. Then I asked "Why were you laughing? She said because "jaet" in Sinhalese means shit" Then we laughed some more and she said "See you can learn Sinhalese"

After this I went down stairs to see how things were going on and found we had run out of stainless steel screws again. This may seem minor but the entire boat yard has to stop all work because there are no screws to finish the jobs with. At this I went up stairs and sat with Abbey and asked Abbey "Abbey remember the screw case?" Abbey answered "Yes I remember Thilina quit his job over it"

The screw case happened about 6 months ago when the yard had no screws so I could not finish a boat and all work had to stop. There are no stainless screws nearby. You have to get a cab and driver and go to Colombo 10 miles away in traffic. It takes hours to get screws if you run out. With the screw case I had a fit because I sent a written request to Thilina the stores manager to get me some 50 screws two weeks in advance of needing them since they are a big deal to get. Two weeks later he still did not get my screws.

So naturally I had a tantrum as Chairman calls it and we had a meeting where I demanded that someone "go get me 50..... stainless steel screws so I can do my..... job." Immediately Sam had Thilina go for screws. Four hours later he came back with screws only they were the wrong size and nothing that I had ordered it was like he was restarted. So I again threw a tantrum and called my cab service and got the screws myself. It took me three hours. When I got back I said,

"Hey you stupid idiot don't you know what a 10 X 1 ss screw is?"

You are supposed to be the stores manage and you don't even know what kind of screw I ordered and to make things worse I wrote down what kind of screw to get and you.....(that up as well" Then Sam came in and asked what was the problem. I said Sam this moron brought the wrong size screws, but the real problem is he does not even know how to keep enough screws on hand so I can do my work, then, two weeks after I write down what to get he finally gets off his ass he brings the wrong ones so I have to stop everything and go to Colombo to get them myself.

I cannot work this way when ESM cannot even maintain a simple stainless steel screw supply. After all these screws only cost one or two Ruppees each. Do I really have to do everything myself?" Sam said I will look into this and report my findings to you and chairman." "Ok thanks Sam and get this guy to do his job or hire someone who will be responsible so in the future all work does not have to come to a stop because he is too lazy to keep the screw supply up to date."

Three days later I got the report. It said. "Mr. Todd you were responsible for the delay in getting screws....." It when on with the usual idiotic excuse and blaming me for everything. Then at the end "...the results of the investigation "... It is our conclusion that this is the events in regard to the screw case as they happened. Mr. Todd ordered Screws in writing, then 10 days later stores obtained the screws...we then supplied Mr. Todd the screws and he informed us they were the wrong kind....This concludes the report."

I said to Sam that is exactly what I said. The point is it absolutely idiotic, moronic, absurd and completely irresponsible and stupid to take 10 days to supply screws that are vital to production schedules and cost only two cents each and I asked for 50 that totals only one dollar. Yet it took 10 days to get and then the screws that were supplied were the wrong ones and I had to get them myself.

The next day Thilina resigned from the company. Today six months after that ESM ran out of screws again so all work had to stop. So I went upstairs calmly to remind Abbey about the screw case since he is in charge of paying for things needed. I said "Abbey it costs only one dollar every week to keep the production going. And by not keeping stock of screws shuts down everything." This time I was calm since I have Ann who keeps me relaxed.

So I calmly explained how idiotic this situation is that it is repeating after all we went through with the screw case. Then Regina the bookkeeper, Deepika the labor jobs time keeper, and Ishani the new stores keeper since Raj left came upstairs to show me records to prove I had used all the screws I bought 6 months ago. I said to them,

"That is not the point. The point is you should make sure there are always enough screws of different sizes in stores so we do not run out and then work has to stop. Someone needs to take responsibility and keep at least 50 screws of different sizes on hand always"

Then they take turns asking me. How many screws do I need? Again I say "That is not the point. You need to always have at least 50 screws on hand." They did not understand the concept so explained it calmly to them in a way they understood. I said "When you have rice to feed your family, you have a 20 kilo bag of rice, yes? You don't go out and buy 100 grains of rice do you?" They all nodded their heads in agreement. Then I said "When do you buy more rice? Do you wait until there is absolutely not one grain of rice in the house? No you don't. You see that when the bag of rice gets near the bottom and you are running out, that is when you buy another bag of rice. "

I went on because this was fun and they were intently interested in my lecture either of genuine interest in my dribble or afraid I would have a tantrum if they did not listen to me. I went on to say. "When you need rice to feed your family do you go to the store and ask for 100 pieces of rice? No you don't, you buy a 20 kilo bag of rice and when it gets low you get another. Here I can indulge in repeating myself many times. I don't know why but I like to repeat myself over and

over. Maybe it is because I like hearing my voice? Or maybe it is because if you do not drill the..... point into these idiotic brains they will do the opposite of what it is that you ask them to do.

I went on " That is just like the stainless steel screws. When you see they are running low you buy more so you always have at least 50 on hand" A break through as they finally understood the point I have been trying to make, at least they nodded their heads when I asked "Do you all understand now?". I was on a roll. I continued downstairs to my area and saw my workers doing something I did not tell them to do so I stopped all work and got all 12 workers to listen to me. I asked,

“Did I tell you to do that thing?

No I did not. Who told you to do that thing? I know I didn't tell you,

so why did you do it? How many times do I have to tell you do not do anything unless I tell you how when and where to do things”

I was referring to the carpenter cutting a panel I had been working on for two weeks. In custom building sometimes you have to make a panel that there is no mold for. In order to make it look good you have to spend hours shaping it, sanding it, smoothing it and all kinds of labor intensive work to make it look good. I told the carpenter to screw the panel on the inside of the cabin but he cut the corners off because he could not figure out how to make it fit. He butchering the piece I had worked so hard and so long to make perfect. That is why I say to them never cut, sand or change anything without getting me. Then Ann came to tell me something. I told her I have never had this much fun in my life. We went back to my office where she hand fed me more fruit she had cut up for me and she made me a cup of coffee. Finally they have the best Italian coffee here at the supermarket nearby. It is \$15.00, but well worth it to have at least one comfort from home.

4 Feb 2008

It was Independence Day Monday. The way they celebrate this day is for the days leading up to the day they have at least one or two bomb blasts on busses, in the train station, at the market as well as a few assassinations. Then on Independence day they have three or more bomb blasts, murders, kidnappings. That is how they celebrate Independence day in Sri Lanka. The rest of the year there are bomb blasts but usually one a moth or less.

In Depth Research

My in depth research has revealed a theory. This theory states that Sri Lanka women are not fat and wear the size clothes that fit them. And the majority of women in the USA are fat and wear clothes that do not fit them. I came to this theory through decades of observations in panty lines in the US, accepting as on page 448 that I would never achieve the pinnacle of relationships where my spouse was devoid of this so called garment defect. When I came here I saw virtually no panty lines which enhanced the natural beauty of my visual peripheries. This most pleasing phenomenon baffled me for some time. Since this issue was not a priority on my list of investigations and was not stupid or moronic I put it on the back burner. Now after buying clothes for my countless sex girls, steady girlfriends, and now Ann I now realize it is because Sri Lankan women all have adolescent bodies with small frames.

This is different from being thin. In the US this is a big problem with USA women. The biggest complaint is the panty lines seen under there clothes. This problem feeds a multi billion dollar industry for exorcize equipment, and griddles. I see now the condition in the US is hopeless due to the structural anatomy of the US woman combined with my last theory that women in civilized nations lose their firm buttock. What has been the solution for the USA woman? The Thong underwear. Without full buttock coverage or seems there are no panty lines. However with this type of undergarment the ass rubs directly on the garment which causes the garment to wear out sooner and is the cause for symptoms like chaffing, and the cringe associated when a passer by sees a fat woman wearing the thong underwear. A visual similar to the Plumbers Crack in the category of public backside displays.

In addition the word thong rhymes with shlong. Legally only swimsuit models are allowed to wear this type of undergarment, yet countless fat women are breaking this unspoken bylaw of society as we speak. The problem is women are wearing clothes too small, therefore causing the seems of the undergarment to protrude outward thereby showing lines on the outer surface of the outer garment. The scientific reason is due to the pressure of the buttocks trying to escape confinement by pushing out in all directions.

Are you still reading this dribble? Don't you have anything else better to read? Like save the whales, the rainforest, something? Ok, I will go on. The study adds to another theory that in the US it is acceptable practice to hide any objectionable characteristic rather than correct the source of the dysfunction. Disclaimer: I am not a fan or champion of Sri Lanka. But here the women wear clothes that fit and hang on their figure. They wear the size clothes accordingly. These women have no panty line issues. The reason is that they are not wearing clothes too tight so their buttock is not trying to escape in every direction, thereby panty lines are not an issue. Barely one in 100 women seen on the street have panty lines. The vast majority have the garments fitting very nicely without having to find ways to hide their fat. The reason is they do not have any fat. The truth be told even the women of girth have hourglass figures. With the vast majority of women here their buttock (to answer your question, Yes I am obsessed with the female buttocks at my age) barely fills the jeans they wear.

This is a contrast to women in the US who jam their flesh under pressure into jeans which is why jeans are made of such strong material in order to withstand 115psi. When I first noticed most women here who barely filled the posterior department of the jeans I thought they must have a bony ass. Since in the US when a woman does not fill the posterior junction of her jeans it usually means she has a bony ass from being anorexic or a crack whore. Here I was pleasantly surprised to see this was not the case and found that here the women have bodies that are slim and what is different is that their bodies are small. They may be 5'6" and 23 to 35 years old but their body is small like a juvenile.

After 35 they still have a juveniles body, but I am not interested in this age group so I don't care to include them in my studies. I wouldn't say the women are thin because they are filled out. More like they are a doll or like the recollections of an alien sighting; the head is big and the body small. This phenomenon runs with 99% of women here. This is why they look so good in their clothes. It is like they are miniature in stature under their garments. Yet on outward appearance they look normal size. This is why they have no panty lines. In the US there is just flab without form. I know since I am the poster child for flab without form. Therefore we stuff our flesh into garments that don't fit because our bodies are big. So big that only near perfect specimens can wear clothes and look slender. The slightest bit of flab causes us to be and look fat. Here the women can have a little flab and it is not noticeable.

Oh yeah, what about work. All my six boats went to the USA today. A great achievement!! Hooray!!!

Another observation; this one is regular, for all audiences. When I first came here I was invited for dinner many times. When I sat down for the invitation I always had my dinner alone with the host sitting beside me asking if the food was OK. The family in another room. I thought this was rude that I did not sit with the rest of the family and maybe I was being put on display. I got used to it and stopped asking why when ever I was invited to a house for dinner I sat alone. I was usually too busy at these dinners gorging myself anyway. On these dinner invitations the tables were always set with many well prepared and well presented dishes. So naturally I ate it all without question. Since Ann I see now the culture behind this. Here at dinner time the family prepares a dinner for the head of the household and serves it to him. It is out of respect the family leaves the head of the household to eat alone in peace undisturbed. When I visit for dinner I am the guest and get the same respect at meal time. The meal is prepared with pride then out of respect I am left alone to enjoy my meal. This explained why every lunch at ESM Ann would prepare my lunch present it to me then she would leave the office. A couple of times I asked her to sit with me and have lunch together, but both times she said she would eat later meaning the family does not eat until after the head of the household or guest has eaten. I saw this at the minister's house. He was always eating dinner or any meal alone.

I had a problem that led to me having to flee paradise today. I called my friend the minister to tell him we were building a new design fishing boat with better fish storage and he was invited to see it launch. I expected him to be friendly as he usually is. Instead he asked where I was. I said I am at the factory. He asked "In Negambo?" I said no in... before I could finish he told me I had to answer to charges of being a spy. I asked what he meant. I told him I was not a spy and I thought we were friends. He replied telling me that the years I had spent there were as a spy and I used my friendship with him to be close to the government so I could spy for the enemy. Again a said I was not a spy. Again he told me I was a spy and that I should be locked up. Next he told me that I was to report to his office first thing in the morning to answer charges of espionage. I asked if I could make it the day after tomorrow because I was busy launching the new vessel. He told me if I did not report in the morning he would send the police to get me.

OH **&@^##* what was I going to do? I will tell you what I did. I booked the first flight out of there which was at 4:00 am the next day and hoped they did not have me on an airport watch list. I then left everything I had in the apartment and hopped on a trishaw to the Galle Face hotel. Before I arrived I stopped at the American embassy to tell them a minister accused me of spying. They would not let me in the gates instead over an intercom a US representative told me they warned me I should not have lived among the people and should have stayed in the American compound. You see they knew who I was and knew I ignored their warnings not to mingle with the locals. He then said don't worry they already heard about it. It was due to the escalating war where everyone was being accused of being a spy. Come to think of it a lot of people were disappearing.

Since the embassy was no help I hid at the hotel. I called Ann to tell her I was leaving in a few hours and probably was not going to return. I reminded here that this in no way would stand in the way of bringing her to the US to marry me. I tried to bring her to the US on my last vacation but they would not grant her visa. Turns out no Sri Lankan can get a visa out of Sri Lanka. I remember contractors that worked for me telling me they had work visas for the US but could not get there because no airport stop along the way would allow them to pass through.

Ann found a way to visit me at the hotel before dark. She was in disguise and I do not blame here. It would devastate her reputation if anyone recognized here going into a hotel to visit an American. We talked for a while had diner and she left. I swore to here that as soon as I got to the US I would file a petition to bring her to the US to marry me. I do not think she believed me but acted as if she did.

While in the hotel after Ann left I called my usual driver to ask if he heard anything about why I was thought to be a spy. He came to meet me and he explained a lot that opened my eyes to how it came to be. It started with some videos I took when I came at the time of the Tsunami. When I first arrived my friend the minister told me to take pictures and videos of everything and get Americans to become interested in Sri Lanka and invest in building fishing fleets for Tuna. That is what I did. I took photos and video every time the minister and I would get together which was often as he and I inspected the devastation. We even posed together for the camera on occasions. Sometimes I would film as he was talking to other businessmen. I did not think he cared as he told me to get the attention of the Americans to invest in Sri Lanka, so I videotaped everything we did together.

Turns out the videos I took back then are now being viewed as me spying on the comings and goings of the minister in order to set him up for the enemy. I thought %&^#&##* these ^^@%#@##* Ass&@###\$^!*s. I am not ever coming here again. My driver told me that was not the main reason the think I am a spy. I asked him to explain.

He asked me if I remember reading about the Phantom in the newspaper and how the Navy finally caught and sunk the boat that was launching attacks at night the disappearing out to sea. Yes, I remembered something about that. I remember articles in the paper and the news where there was a speed boat that would come to the harbors at night and attach floating bombs near the container ships. Whenever they would be spotted they would speed off into the sea and could not be caught.

I remember on night hearing a bomb go off in the harbor about five miles away and seeing reports it was a floating bomb left in the harbor by the Phantom. My driver then showed me a photo from the newspaper from last week where they finally caught up with the Phantom and had a battle at sea where they took a photo of the Phantom as it burned. Uh OH, is that what I think it is? It was a boat I made for some Indian Businessmen from the mainland of South India which was also the enemy base headquarters. They had told me they were from Bangalore and where making this boat for sport fishing in Chennai.

Well they were not business men they were terrorists who used the boat to attack the Navy and I was the guy who made it for them. Still it was an honest mistake, right? Then I remembered about a week ago several navy officers came to the factory and went to Chairman's office they left then returned several times over a few days. I thought they were customers since the factory makes many boats for the Navy. But I sensed these visits were different, but could not out my finger on it so I ignored the signs.

My driver is also the driver for several Blue Star members and over heard what was being said. Turns out the Navy had found out the Phantom was made at Blue Star and that I was the one who made it. When meeting with the Navy officers the chairman and every executive at BSM distanced themselves from me saying they had no idea who I made the boat for that they had no control over what I did and I was out of control as far as they see it. Baloney ! They knew everything that was going on there. I could not get a nail or a piece of rope from stores unless they had a record of who was paying for it and who the customer was. They met with the buyers anyway. So when they put it all on me I knew I was their scape goat.

It all became clear that I had better get on that plane or I would disappear. At 2:00 am I hired a taxi to take me to the airport all the while looking over my shoulder. When I entered the airport I checked in without any luggage which immediately drew attention because who travels one way internationally without luggage? In this day and age they figure you're a terrorist. They questioned me and I told them this was a family emergency. I sat in a locked room without

windows for a few minutes while they checked me out. I thought I am going to miss my flight if I stay here any longer and if I had not left for the airport hours earlier when I did I would have missed my flight. Apparently either no one had put out a lookout for me yet or the minister let me go I do not know (Today I think the minister let me go). They let me out a 5 minutes before the flight left as I ran on board the plane and said farewell to paradise.

ANN MY LOVING WIFE, here story - A very very very big day to my life. I am at the International Air port Colombo. In two hours I will be getting in to a flight going to Chennai. Actually this is the first time I am in an air port. From my child hood I had one particular dream which was to fly around the world. That dream started to come true when I came to know I got my visa to the United States of America. I hardly believe that I am not in a dream. If it is actually a dream I don't want to wake up.

My mother, sister and brother bid good buy to me and kissed me, embracing me for the fourth time today. I felt like that I am a big bird which is flying out of the small nest. I did not bother even for a moment to think about the future I am going to have. It might be because I did not want to have that strange feeling which came from my abdomen to my brain like a fire when ever I imagined about the life in United States. My mind said to me the best thing was to enjoy the moment and worry later.

When I came to Chennai I had to stay another nine hours at unknown place to get in to the flight going to New York. There at Chennai air port the immigrant officers were checking me as if I was a terrorist who was carrying arms and ammunitions to destroy the whole world. For some reason or other I was the enemy of every immigrant officer who flocked around to check me. Ultimately they scanned my visa on my pass port and brought a female officer to have a look at me. In my passport picture I had my hair down to my neck where as now I tied it like a bun. I at once understood that officers couldn't compare me to the picture and tried to be of some help to them.

"I had my hair down in the picture, may be I can make it as it is to make it easy for you"

I tried to be polite. They then seemed to make me out and took me to a lounge and told me to stay there until early morning for my next flight. They took my passport with them and that make me dreaded. I managed not to show my anger or panic and instead gave it to them smiling. I did not know what to do until midnight. It was only 5 o'clock in the evening. I fell in to chair near by and dragged my baggage near me. I tried to have some sleep but I could not sleep. I missed my mother and sister actually I missed my Sri Lanka for the first time in my life I felt like I can't live without it. Tears came to my eyes and luckily no one was at the lounge.

I started thinking about how I met Todd Allmand in 5th September 2007 and how we planned our future. First I wanted to make my family happy and help everybody have a sophisticated life with the help of Todd and then in April 2008 when Todd returned to the USA I realized that I had loved him and I wanted him for my life.

I wanted to write a diary because I was unable to understand what was going on in my life. I was acting abruptly and I did not know where I was going to stop. Every time I read what I wrote the previous day I realized that was nothing but the consequence of hasty decision. Some times it had been my own prejudice to come to conclusions about people, and those same sudden decisions had taught me unforgettable lessons.

Any way this is the story about Todd and me, two different people from two different parts of the world struggling to decide what is best for our lives. I can not be completely angry with the hasty decisions I or Todd took because for some reason I felt like that my going to Miami USA was a result of being hasty. Any way I am in the presence now and want you all to go to my past in Sri Lanka and decide what kind of a character I am. This is my diary which I started to write simply because I was tired of doing nothing.

Diary

After a long time I got a chance to clean up my room, specially the messy table. I have lots of books on my table. Some of them have never been touched by me. But I still like to collect books. I think when I am old and have nothing to do I will read all the books that I have collected. As a result of my cleaning the room I got this book which has a nice hard cover and pretty good pages with rules on it. From now on wards this is not a book but my Diary.

When I was small I was always thinking someday I would write a good book which would be appreciated by the whole world. By the time I realized that a book like that could not be simply written by an ordinary person like me who had not much experience of the stuff spoken, what I did was starting to read anything I pick up. Being a 23 year old girl now I know that we have to learn about the life until the last minute of our life. Some times we really do not know what we should write on a book and what would be appreciated by the reader the most. If we spend our time thinking what to write and what not to we will never write anything. So best thing is to write anything that comes to your mind. There is no any other book than a diary on which you can play with your own words and own attitudes.

05 December 2007

This is a very important day of my life. I started working with Mr. Todd Allmand, a foreigner from the USA. This is of course a new experience for me as I have never had a job like this before. Before coming to work at Blue Star Marine I worked in two other places. It was with Dr. Fernando at Eldeniya and at people's bank head office at Colombo Sri Lanka.

Working as a junior teacher of English under Dr. Fernando I enjoyed the teaching career and was respected by my pupils. The only reason for me to leave Dr. Fernando and the school was the opportunity I got at people's bank head office to work as a Receptionist. I thought this was a very good opportunity for me to meet with different type of people and to learn more about the world around me.

People's bank had a good reputation and it was one of the best carriers in Sri Lanka. But there was something bad in the recruiting system which I didn't know earlier. The administration of the bank had started recruiting out source staff instead of recruiting permanent staff. I was also a victim of out source recruitment thinking that I would belong to the permanent staff and get all the benefits that the permanent staff got. After working for the bank for one year I realized that nothing would work out better for me if I continued to work in the bank. I started looking for a new job.

One day when I was going through Sunday observer for vacancies I felt like I wanted to have a look at the marriage proposals.

Though my mother wanted me and my elder sister to get married I never had the intention of marrying. I have met a lot of boys in my life. Some of them wanted to be my boy friend. But when they were refused they all were kind enough to keep on the friendship.

Every girl has a dream guy in her mind. So did I. Physically he was very tall and his features of course were not very clear. It was a cute face any way. He should be a very intelligent and well experienced person. He should not be second to any other person in the world. But by the time I was growing more and more I started realizing that the dream prince is a dream himself. The reality is something else. Can a girl get a man who loves only her? Will he live forever only for her? Will he take care of her all the time? Can he be a mother or father to the girl? Will he scarify for her? If he meets a prettier girl will he forget his first wife? A lot of these questions always were in my mind and I never wanted to get married.

When I was reading the proposals amidst all the other funny proposals (they looked funny to me) I read proposals "A Tsunami consultant 47 (American) seeks a house sober wife for early marriage. Anyone can ask why a girl of 23 likes to marry a 47 year old person. One reason why I had the idea to call this foreigner was my feelings that he should be well experienced and very intelligent. Another reason was that I thought that I don't want to worry about my and my family's future after my getting married to him. On the other hand I had the feeling that when two of the same ages get married the wife would quickly grow older and start looking much older to the husband.

Most Sri Lankan married couples have this problem though they don't want to talk about it openly. When the woman looks older to the man the later is attracted by young women. This causes a lot of problems in marriage life. By the time I realized this I wanted to marry a person who was at least ten years older than I. That is why this paper advertisement hit my head at once. I called Mr. Todd Allmand and went on "I am Ann and read your proposal in the news paper." He went on asking "Are you pretty? Are you slim...? (What kind of a man is this? Asking these type of questions even before introducing him self. First of all people should be polite to each other. Again he started "How many kilograms? Oh this is absolutely ridiculous. He doesn't want to marry a woman he wants to purchase a woman like he does with a cow I guess.

"Ok" I tried to be nice and polite.

"I am slim and 53 Kilograms"

"Are you beautiful?" He demanded. I didn't know what to answer. Of course I am an ordinary girl. I am tall and slim but not pretty enough to tempt someone.

"Dear Sir beauty differs from eye to eye." I managed an answer. "Would you mind coming and seeing me?"

"Ok you sound good... You send me your photo...and I will decide after that. Do you understand.....?"

I didn't know what to say. He gave me his email address. I was supposed to send him one of my photographs. But how? It would cost me money. On the other I thought it was too early to send a photo. If I did this it should be done secretly. I sent him an email letter without a photo.

The letter said,

"Dear Sir,

It is very difficult for me to send a photo to you. Please come and see me at the Fort Station.

Sincerely

Ann"

So finally he came to see me to the Fort Station as I wanted. Oh my goodness he was very fat. He had a big belly. I couldn't help telling "you are very fat" But he didn't seem to worry about that. "Strong bold fellow he is" I said to my self. But for a moment I thought that it was not very good to tell someone's physical drawbacks at the first sight. Further that should be discussed if you or he had a deep relationship which made us to care for each other. I did worry about me

telling him fat at once.

I must tell you that except his fatness Todd was a perfect man. Most of all his attitudes towards me seemed marvelous. He said "oh you are very pretty I will quit every other thing and I will marry you". At that time I couldn't understand what he meant by "everything". By the way those questions will be eventually answered in my diary.

Can a man decide to marry a girl on the very first day he saw her? Can he stop every single thing he was engaged in only because of the girl he met only once? Oh this is a joke. This cannot be true. I don't believe this.

That night Todd called me through the number I gave him. Believe me or not I started to like him. We started making appointments for each other and met every weekend. I really didn't know if I was doing the right thing or not. But I really enjoyed the time with Todd.

I started learning more and more about Todd by meeting him. One thing I learnt about Todd is that He was very extravagant. "Why does he spend so much money always?" I asked my self. We always had dinner in five star hotels. I thought that Todd expected something in return. But he also seemed to understand that he couldn't have what a man always wanted from a woman who was young. Overall he seemed to enjoy my company. I always enjoyed conversation with Todd as he always had a clear and a logical explanation of anything he discussed about.

As the time goes by I knew that Mr. Allmand, my boss has had a lot of casual affairs with many women in the USA as well as in Sri Lanka. When Todd kept on telling about the women he met and how bad they were and how he got rid of them I couldn't help thinking that he would get rid of me also soon. This idea came to my mind because; all these women with whom Todd had bad relationships, had physical relationship with Todd. So why should he be worried about a girl who was not at all ready to give him the physical relationship he wanted.

"Todd if you find me uneasy and bored you can leave me anytime you want" actually I wanted to tell him that I couldn't have sex with him regardless of whatever things he gave me and how happy he made me. But he strongly affirmed that he found me very interesting and loving. So I started not to bother about that any more.

One week after I started working with Todd at Blue Star Marine I got a phone call from Yamuna who was one of the former girl friends of Todd. Actually I answered the phone for Todd being his secretary. Todd had actually told me about Yamuna but I really didn't care about it because it was all before I met him.

Yamuna kept on telling over the phone "Nangi (Younger sister) I do not know if you are having sex with Todd. But do you know that he has two daughters and two grand children. He promised to marry me and took advantage of me. Be careful he will do the same to you."

I didn't know what to answer. But I already knew about Todd's family whose photographs he had already showed me. So I thought either Yamuna had not understood what Todd said to her in English or Todd had lied to Yamuna. I never wanted to get in to someone's past life and make it uneasy for him to live in the present. So I didn't care about Todd's past and always tried to make him enjoy the time with me. I tried to explain to Yamuna.

"My dear you have let Todd understand that you want to have sex with him as much as he wanted. So he enjoyed the opportunity. I know Todd pretty well. He will never do anything by force. That is not only his fault but also yours. Do you understand what I say?"

I thought that Yamuna would understand. But no way. Now she was accusing me. "Todd came to see me every weekend. But you troubled us both and you came in to our world. You broke our deep relationship"

Oh what a shit! (Excuse my French). I couldn't be calm any more. So I started.

"Ok Yamuna if he promised you that he is going to marry you why couldn't you wait for having sex with him until he married you. I am sorry to say that you have made a mistake and I have nothing to do about it." I put the phone down.

I had a fire inside me. Oh I was too hard on her. I should have listened to her and explained. She must also be a woman who is trying to come up in life in the same way I did. Todd had said to me that Yamuna was a bad woman. Whom should I believe? Todd or Yamuna or my own soul? I thought that time can solve any matter as it did with me always.

08th January 2008

Todd was sick and he had been sick for the whole last week. One thing I really liked about Todd was that he never grumbles about sicknesses. He always wanted to be occupied with something. When he had nothing to do he kept on thinking and having conversation with me which helped him to take good decisions.

As a boat builder Todd has a good reputation. The Allmand Boat Company in the USA once belonged to his father and when his father died his uncle took over. Finally it was time for Todd to undertake the business. Todd was a very smart guy. He was very good in tooling and designing the boats.

People who created more beautiful things in the world were always smart but they always had a side of their own which they never wanted to reveal. Unfortunately the people who worked for them started realizing this and revealed their personal lives to the whole world by writing books about them.

Todd hated advices. If somebody tried to prove that what he did was wrong he went mad. But he always managed to prove that he was correct and had logical arguments.

Blue Star was lack of money and Todd couldn't get his materials for his work in the factory. So we got a chance to have a conversation. We were comparing some English words to Sinhalese and it was full of fun.

"Tell me a bad Sinhalese word"

"Why?" I asked.

"Because I want to scold my workers downstairs. They don't understand a word in English"

"Oh" I started teaching him bad Sinhalese words.

"Ok there are so many bad words in Sinhalese as in English. You tell me what bad words you want to translate in to English and I will do it".

"Ok" he smiled sarcastically and started to remember bad words.

"Oh come on Todd don't you remember any English bad words?"

"Perhaps I need to go downstairs and work with them for a while then I will remember as much bad words as we want"

"Ha.... Ha....ha....." He started laughing and I couldn't help laughing too.

Todd went downstairs and soon came to know that his workers had made a mess of the hull of 19' boat which was supposed to be exported to the USA. Todd was upstairs and started telling about this mess with the same sarcastic smile on his face which I couldn't define. I guess now he smiled because he was really tired of yelling at everyone and he needed to be acting professional in front of his workers.

Todd took a great decision that is to stop smoking. Even though he told me yesterday that he was going to quit it I didn't believe him. But today I of course didn't smell any cigarette smoke in him.

My boss was upset since he couldn't get his money from the USA account. His mother had sent him a bank card but he could not get it activated. City bank said to him that they couldn't transfer money from a commercial account to a personal account. I marveled at Todd's silent bearing of the situation. As his secretary I knew that he can yell at anyone to get his work done. But now he seemed to realize and I hoped he would get everything done in a proper way without nagging at the chairman, the old well experienced, respectable owner of Blue Star Marine.

Todd wrote a journal which he did not want me to read. On being asked what he had written about me in the journal he said that he had written that first he found me as a girl who tried to get him under her control. (He might probably have written it in a very naughty way. I think so because I know him pretty well).

08th Jan 2008

Today I managed to talk with Todd about something which had been bothering from recently. I had a feeling that Todd never wanted to get married again. I also thought that every woman in the world reminded him of his x wife whom Todd hated and told me about.

Whenever he saw or heard about a woman in the television or in the vicinity who was already married and fell in love with another man Todd started telling how bad that woman was and what punishment she should be given. He never bothered to think if this was really because the woman was nasty or if there was a reason for her to be like that. Regardless of all these, what he mostly did was accusing women in general.

Actually in Sri Lanka you will hardly find a bad married woman. Women in Sri Lanka are brought up as flowers. Their parents are always after them because they know that beside children, women are the closest victim of any danger. When a girl grows up and arrives at her puberty elderly women hide them in a room where male can't see them. Then they go to an astrologist and ask for advice. The astrologer tells them when is the auspicious time for girl to come out of the

room and meet with all her relatives. They celebrate this in the same way they celebrate their wedding festivals. Uddarata Boddhu Govi caste (Buddhist upcountry Farmer) is considered as the most aristocratic and important cast in Sri Lanka. They practice this custom and never let it down. However these customs are not practiced in other races like Tamil, Muslims and Burghers. They are just like the rest of the world.

But the importance of having these customs up to date has helped Sinhalese to live with one partner for once and for all and that separate them from all the evil of the rest of the world.

Any way when talking about girls in the rural areas of Sri Lanka, most of them are pure and very innocent unlike the girls in the urban areas.

The girls in urban areas have the facilities like the rest of the world. They are working girls and are very extravagant. They always have the access to internet and are highly vulnerable to any other evil thing around the world. So they are being mislead and misused. They enjoy trying what the rest of the world does and get the wrong ideas and messages. They find it is marvelous and they want to enjoy it more and more.

To get married to a wealthy and a respectable guy in Sri Lanka either the girl should be wealthy and educated or she should be pure and very pretty. So the girls who are not very pretty and wealthy but are innocent mostly become victims of liars and sex maniacs and they lose the chance of getting married again. So in great despair and disappointment they practice prostitution to make day today living. The more money they earn from prostitution the more they are encouraged to practice it regularly.

A very few number of these girls get chances to get married to kind gentlemen and the rest suffers the whole life with a rude man simply because he is the bread winner. So when they find a man who doesn't hit them and who talks to them nicely they go after their love without their knowledge of it. But sooner or later they regret upon their absurdities and then nobody is ready to listen to their confession and it is very bad that they are not given a chance to rebuild their life from a proper start.

So it was a long story which I could not explain to Todd in five or ten minutes I had to talk with him. On the other Todd was a bad listener. Because of all these I kept quite and believed that some day he would understand the real situation. I personally did not like the way Todd talked about the women in Sri Lanka. Instead I always wanted him to show the innocence and the talents that were hidden in side the Sri Lankan women.

Oh I am sorry I could not still tell you what I wanted to clarify with Todd.

I asked him,

“Todd, tell me. Do you really want to get married to somebody...?”

He brought his eyes to his forehead and asked,

“Why don't you believe that I really want to marry you.....?”

I asked this from him because I had the feeling that he never wanted to make the same mistake he made by marrying his x wife.

He went on “Ann I really want to get married to you and lead a happy life with you”.

I looked at his eyes. They looked honest. Then he asked me,

“Why? have you given up the idea of marrying me.....?”

I paused for a while and then answered.

“Even I do not know what I am going to do.”

By now I had understood that Todd had given me a chance to understand him more and he might have wanted to behave in a childish way which might make me give up the idea of marrying him. But I was not to give up. Sometimes I did want to leave him and live my free and the childish life with my family.

Everybody in my family considered me as a baby and I was given extra care in the family. Mother always cooked what I wanted to eat. My elder brother always bought the sweets I liked the most. My elder sister never ate without giving me a portion of her meal. Though we were poor we never had external affects on our small and peaceful family. By now I had become a young bird and started to feel flying out of the nest and making my own nest.

Any way if Todd's idea was to scare me and drive me a way he was wrong because he did not know that I did not give up for nothing. Perhaps I would have to teach him a lot about life though I was as twice small as he was.

If I was to marry Todd I should love him. So Do I really love him? Can I love him? Good questions. But what a pity! Where are the answers.....?

Todd said to me today that the girls he met before he met me were all crazy. How dare was he to say this to me? He had had a lot of fun with all these innocent girls (from my opinion) like Nilu, Fathima, Yamuna or any one I don't remember.

Poor girls! they must have thought that this foreigner would be their husband forever and look after them forever. Perhaps some of these girls were actually pure but Todd didn't want me to know it.

On the other the more I think about it the more I can comment about this situation.

By working with Todd I was learning a lot. Actually I was gaining lots of advantages and reaching lots of opportunities in this period. I was paid twenty thousand

Rupees by Todd. It was 200\$ and it was big money in Sri Lanka. From my wages I always bought big bulks for the month. Everybody in the family seemed happy and they started to consider me as an adult. Isn't that a great achievement?

My boss wanted me to go to classes for computer shipping and Logistics. He always said that all his work depended on good computer and logistics works. He paid for my classes and released me on my class days. Oh Could a Sri Lankan like me ever imagine about a job like this? If there were jobs like this only a very few and selected number of people got the chances. So I don't ever hesitate to say that I was lucky.

By the way I would not have told my mother about Todd. Now she was asking me when Todd would come to our home to visit the family.

In Sri Lanka when a girl found a boy friend and was ready to marry him she told her mother about it the first. Then the mother talked with the father about it. Usually fathers got very angry at their daughters stubborn decisions. But mothers always calmed them down and made them realize that their children were not small any more and they wanted to make their own nests. After a long conversation fathers agreed with some conditions. They first talked to the boy and after finding him a good, hardworking and respectable boy, asked him to bring his parents for the marriage plans. Most boys were lucky enough to bring his respectable parents and soon got married. But in some cases boy's parents didn't like the girl's parents and relatives so they refused to their son in marriage. Poor girls and boys eloped not knowing what to do. But believe me most of the eloped couples had a very hard time and came back to their parents with their children. Parents after seeing the innocent faces of their grand children forgot everything and were very happy with their children and grand children ever after.

Anyway in my case it was not at all like that. First of all my father passed a way when I was 11 years old. I always fondly remembered him and missed him a lot. So did the others of my family. My mother always accused my father telling "he was not supposed to leave me alone with my children. I can't forgive him for that."

My mother kept on telling this and this made us very aggravated. We had a lot of arguments about this matter in the dining room when we were ready to have the supper and my mother was always alone. All the children were accusing her including me. In a short while I felt sorry for her and started keeping quite. My sister first got up from the table and went to her room without eating. My brothers did the same telling "We can't eat like this. It is not good for the digestion" My mother and I were remained at the table. She looked at me. "Go if you want I can eat alone" she said in anger.

I started eating and my mother did the same. I wanted to make the situation cool. I said. "Oh this brinjall curry is excellent. I am sorry for my brothers. They are missing this." I talked aloud to make sure that everybody heard it.

In five or ten minutes brothers came telling "Oh very hungry." My mother looked at me and I looked down and concentrated on my food to make her feel I didn't remember what happened. In a short while the elder of the two brothers shouted "Hey aren't you eating? We are going to finish everything." Everybody knew that message was for my sister. But she was stubborn and never came out. At midnight she was very hungry and wanted my help to make a soup for her. So I went and sat in the kitchen dozing until she finished having the soup.

The situation was completely different now. By now I understood that it was very hard for my mother to forget my father and she accused him only because she wanted to make her mind. My mother was 40 years old when my father died and never got married again. She was always happy at our triumphs and always regretted on our failure. Though she was not educated enough to help us in some matters she knew lot about life and I was not quite sure if we got the maximum out of the chance.

I couldn't take Todd home. First I would have to make a good environment for Todd to be easy at that hour. One reason why I couldn't take Todd home because nobody except my sister understood English. Another reason, now we were down and out and we were unable to make somebody comfortable. On the other all my relatives would have looked at Todd as they were watching an alien or a strange animal. I of course wanted Todd to participate in the Christmas party we had at home in last year. But for some unknown reason or other he didn't come even though he promised to come. But now I felt that it was good that he didn't come to our place last year because even I was not sure if I was going to marry him or not.

Why my mother's nagging us to get married soon was something I couldn't comprehend. Why can't a woman live independently? Why can't she prosper alone? Is it necessary to have a husband always?

09th Jan 2008

Man is the most wonderful creation of the earth. God created man and the latter created all the destructive implements. Now man has become a victim of his own arms and tools. Sri Lanka has been having a war for over twenty five years. Actually the war has started before I was born. People bear different type of explanation and opinion how the war started in Sri Lanka and why we can't stop it. I don't understand any of those explanations even though those explanations have been said by different people at number of time. Why can't every man think that every one is human being and everybody should live together and strive to be united?

One of my teachers says that Sinhalese are prejudiced against the Tamil. Another says that the war started because of the Sinhalese only act which was brought by one of our great presidents.

Any way my personal idea about this is that what ever they may say nobody can explain clearly why we are struggling with this cruel war for many years and why we are spending all our money on this war. I think most people have been tempted to have a wrong idea which is not completely correct. It is just about a private grudge and most people do no know that they are being used to spread the wrong idea. Any way I have no idea how they should give a brain wash to these people.

Dr. Fernando, one of my teachers of English says that if the war to come to and the younger generation should learn English. He also says that English is a sword to cut off all the barriers on our way to achieve all our targets and goals.

The more I thought about it the more I understood that what he said could be true because most Tamil people spoke both English and Sinhalese in addition to Tamil where as most Sinhalese didn't speak either English or Tamil except Sinhalese. So as the doctor said if both the parties spoke one language most ideas would be expressed and Tamils will be friends of Sinhalese. Both would empathize and that would help the war to come to and end.

So if English to be spoken everywhere in Sri Lanka, Sri Lankan will need a lots of good teachers of English. To have a big programm of producing English teachers, either there should be lots of volunteers or Sri Lanka will have to get the help of other countries.

Two bomb blasts took place in both Ja-ela and Colombo 02. Ja-ela attacked killed one of the ministers and five of his body guards were severely succumbed injuries. Colombo 02 attack didn't harm anyone except the damage of a telephone booth.

Today it was very difficult to travel in buses in Sri Lanka. We won't know when a bomb is going to blast. Nobody is sure that they would go home safely until they reached the door of their house. Believe me it is that dangerous in Sri Lanka now.

Todd wanted to start a business English class in Sri Lanka. When I asked him if he had ever been teaching before he answered me saying he had all the necessary teaching manuals for the subject. I was satisfied with that answer.

Sometimes I felt that most of Todd's behavior was similar to Dr. Fernando. Todd always wanted to start something new and he talked about that new program with a lot of interest and enthusiasm. When finding it difficult to do that he drew his interest to something else of which he talked and to which he gave more importance. He always spoke about the good advantages of his new experiments which he never started and talked about the disadvantages of experiments which he was not able to finish. Dr. Fernando did the same thing always and I was really tired of that behavior of him. Several times I wanted to tell him that he did not need to explain to me about any of his new experiments because I already knew what was to happen next. But when I was relaxed and thought about it more I came to the conclusion that experimenting something new always good even though the results were a matter of chance than keeping quite at the need of the hour.

Any way I always helped Dr. Fernando at his great experiments and secretly regretted over his failure because he was too old and trying very hard to too something. But Doctor was never discouraged at anything and he kept on doing things. Sometimes his experiments did work and when they worked out he didn't talk about it. Most of the time he thanked me for that which I could not understand. Sometimes I felt that he did know that I was with him all the time even though the work with him was too boring.

In the same way Todd worked and worked hard. But I should tell you that Todd was enjoying his work and he was making big money. Todd loved all of his boats. When his workers were delay to work on boat he complained about it to Sam the Manager because his customers were very angry at the delay. But when the work was all done Todd delayed to ship it on purpose telling a bunch of lies about the shipping. Everyone believed it except me.

I did not believe it because of an earlier conversation he had with me.

"Ann whenever a boat is done I don't feel like sending it. I really love my boats. Aren't they nice Ann?"

"Yes they are nice Todd. Even I feel like having one of them for my self"

I absolutely meant it.

"You can have one in the future. On the other you can't go boating here. The army doesn't allow you to....."

When Todd and I were talking about an advertisement we wanted to put in the Sunday Observer suddenly the telephone rang. That was the Indian Customer Darren who bought a feet boat from Todd. Emerald Seas Marine had shipped the wrong steering wheel with the boat and the customer was mad about it. He was accusing Todd about it as it was only Todd who could talk about the matter.

Todd sold the boat to Darren just before I started working for him. Darren required a different kind of boat which Emerald Marine was not used to build before. So, many in Emerald Seas Marine were in the idea that a boat like that could never be built in Sri Lanka. But Todd at once said he could make it and he did with his inexperienced workers. I saw the pictures of the boat and it was really nice looking.

10 Jan 08

Todd is a real Todd (fox) today. He acted like a wild pig. ESM sent had sent the wrong steering wheel to the customer in Andaman Island and now the customer is very upset and angry about it. None of the people in ESM could talk to the customer because half of them did not speak English and the other half did not want to involve in anything related to Todd's business. They did not want to involve in Todd's business either because they did not like Todd personally or they were scared of Todd's big mouth. Todd answered to the customer and told him that he would send the correct steering wheel right away. Now he told me to make arrangements to send it right away to the customer. "Yes Sir" I replied and let the responsible people know and they promised they would do that. In the evening Todd returned to his office and asked me if the wheel was sent.

"Ann did you tell them to send it?"

"Yes Todd I did"

"Ok did they do it?"

“No they didn’t” I replied and was ready for the procession of smuts and bad expressions which normally came out from Todd’s big mouth which was covered with nice manly lips. I almost closed my eyes and ears. When I looked up to see Todd’s angry face, to my surprise he was not there. In a split second I knew where he was and what he was doing because I heard the big commotion which came from the next office room.

Todd kept on shouting like a wild man and all the others were silent as usual. He came back to the office making a big noise, rubbing his steady legs against the carpet of the floor and ran back to them shouting. This time when he ran back to the office I saw his bare feet. Oh gosh! he has forgotten his shoes and his clothes were hanging around as if he was in a battle field. I found this interesting because this was the first time I saw something like this. I could not help laughing but I was careful to have a serious mood to convince Todd that I was sorry about the situation.

After one hour everybody except Todd acted as if nothing happened. Todd was still angry. At this very moment the office assistant brought two pieces of cakes to us. One was for Todd and one for me. Unfortunately the office assistant has put both the pieces in to one small plate and kept it on the middle of the table. Todd was talking to me telling how bad ESM was and how they did not care him. Todd ate both the pieces of cake and did not bother to ask me if I ate or if I wanted a piece. Oh what a strange man! I said to myself and tried to forget that.

By 4.30 pm Todd said to me,

“Ann, go home now. You don’t have any work to do now. We tried a lot but we can’t do anything until we give a brain wash to some of these idiots. I will stop everything and will go back to the USA. I will not come tomorrow. I will not come until they call me.”

“Ok sir”

I said and started thinking over the situation. This is the second time Todd said to me that he was going back to his country. One week after I came to ESM Todd told me the same and when Sam and the chairman talked to him he became the normal Todd again and started working again. This was the same old strategy Todd used to practice when he was out of care. Todd needed a lot of care and importance to carry out with his work. (I think every body likes admirations and importance though they don’t talk about it openly.) When Todd realized that ESM tried to work on their own without listening to Todd, the latter could not stand it. So he started with lots of dramas to drag attention. This was going to be one of those dramas and I knew for a fact that Todd would report to work tomorrow too.

10th Jan 08

Do you know how the bulb came to this world? If you already know this will be a reminder. Thomas Alva Edison made the first public demonstration of his incandescent light bulb on December 31, 1879, in Menlo Park. Before inventing the bulb he was experimenting on it and failed for 9,999 times and on being asked by one of his assistants if he was going to keep a record of failing for 10,000 time, Edison answered that he was going to introduce a 10,000 mistakes that somebody can make when producing a bulb.

I think this is a wonderful lesson to anyone who tries to do something and fails and retries without being discouraged. Had Edison given up the idea of trying and working hard on his target the whole world would have still been in dark. So in my view if someone determines to do some he should not let anything be an obstacle on his way to success.

Todd has apologized to every one today and now is back to work as usual. Todd told me that he quit smoking and that made me happy. But I did not believe him because I had the experience of people telling me they quit drinking and smoking and in another two or three weeks they were in the same boat again. But this time Todd seemed determined and I thought I should encourage him. So I congratulated him from the bottom of my heart.

11th Jan 08

Sometimes when Todd looked at me with his cobra eyes I saw a hidden anger in his eyes even though we were having a very friendly conversation. I could not

understand why he could be angry. For a moment I thought it was because he could not have any relationship with any other girl he knew because he said that he was going to marry me. Todd is very different now from before. Earlier I went to very nice places with him like Kandy, Colombo Museum and zoo. Todd enjoyed the time with me then and now he seemed like he wanted to get rid of me soon and go to another girl. American men are different people. They don't last long. They go woman to woman and never get married. Even if they are married still they want to have other affairs too.

Todd did not get anything from my affair except I was a good listener to him. He always liked to talk about sex and sometimes I could not help thinking if he was manipulating me towards sex. Whenever Todd wanted to show his love and affection to me I took one step backward because of two reasons. One we were in an office where we were supposed to be disciplined. On the other, I thought it was too early to have a deep relationship with Todd without knowing if I could get on with him.

So I assume that Todd is upset because he does not get what he wants from me. Some times he looks at me and sighs deeply as if he has to go a long way with me and it sounds to me as if he says "Oh it is only five months more to go with this trouble" Maybe I am wrong but what to do this is how I feel.

12 Jan 2008

It was absolutely a nice day after yesterday being one of the woeful days. Yesterday when I went downstairs to the store the girl who works at the store told me that Todd was a very nice boss and she liked him very much. She also said that Todd gave her chocolates when she helped him in his worked. The store girl wanted to be too polite in front of me and she seemed she took extra care to explain Todd giving chocolates to her. I thought it was because she thought that I already knew that Todd gives her chocolates and I would have got that wrong. In Sri Lanka when a man gives chocolates to a woman it means that the man has some kind of feeling towards the woman.

I understood the girl's situation and was nice to her. I tried to imply her that I did not care it at all. On my way back to the office my mind invariably went in to an incident which happened most recently.

I used to unpack my boss's bag in which he carries his laptop to the office every morning. One morning when I unpacked the bag I saw a chocolate bar in his bag and thought he brought it for me and implied that I did not see it. After one hour Todd came running and took the chocolate bar and thrust it in to his pocket. On being asked if he was eating chocolate while working he answered me that it was for one of his workers who liked chocolate very much. He did not mention the name of his employee to me.

Now it was obvious that Todd gives chocolate to this girl all the time and I was frustrated. I felt that Todd was playing with every girl's feeling. I further thought that I should forget Todd and work hard for my own future.

When Todd came back to the office yesterday I could not help asking about the chocolate.

"So, was your worker happy about the chocolate?" I asked

Todd was looking at my eyes for a while and he seemed shocked for a while. At the same time he was smart enough to understand that I knew something about it, while he saw my eyes sparkling with sarcasm.

"Of course it was the store girl. She always asks for chocolates so I give her now and then."

Todd acted like a baby at this incident and implied that he never knew that giving chocolate to a woman whose husband was abroad was more like inviting her to come with him. I tried to forget it and I did not want to make Todd angry by arguing and showing his weak points. So I thought it was one of the worst days I spent in ESM.

Todd took me to Pegasus which was one of his favourite places. Pegasus is one of the very famous hotels in Sri Lanka and no foreigners missed it on their trip to Sri Lanka. We walked in the path from EMS to Pegasus. There were lots of thorny bushes and holes with water in either side of the path. Todd walked in front of me and he turned back time to time to make sure I am ok. Todd was very familiar with this path and gave me instructions about how I should walk. Todd called this path "the jungle path" and always found it adventurous.

There were small crabs in the marshy areas and some of them came out from small holes on the ground. I found it fascinating and was looking back for a crab. I almost slipped due to a wet rock which I did not see and could not help making a noise "Ahaaa".

"Are you alright? What happened?" Todd went on

"Nothing, just a slippery rock."

"Be careful look on the ground and walk."

Todd seemed very happy and he took effort to look after me. This pleased me up to a great deal and I felt as if I were a small girl who was looked after by her father. We entered the Pegasus and walked towards the sea. Sea was calm and fascinating as it was after 3.00 O' clock in the afternoon. We walked back and forth the beach and walked towards the stores.

Todd walked towards the Gem Store and started looking for gems and nice jewelry. There were very nice Red Pigeon rubies and Blue Sapphires. Todd knew

that my favorite colour was blue and gave me a ring with five blue stones carved in to it. I put it in my small finger and said "beautiful". Todd removed it from my small finger and put it on in my ring finger. It looked very nice in my finger and Todd kept on looking at it for sometimes, then picking up more rings from the show case he put in my finger. The whole hour my hand rested in his and I enjoyed it.

I got the chance to look at Todd very close and I found his features fascinating. He eyes were sharp, bright and his nose was perfect. His two lips tightly kissed each other and were apart when he looked up to see the gem which he held above his head. I woke up from my observation when Todd asked me,

"Do you like them?"

"Oh they are alright but you know that I am not much interested in gems and gold."

I thought this was the best answer for that moment because I did not want Todd to buy anything for me. I had a feeling that if I get something from him that I will be a debtor to him and I would have to give him anything he asked for. So I avoided presents and other valuables from Todd.

On our way back from Pegasus Todd and I were walking very slowly. Actually Todd did not seem he was in a hurry. I was walking slowly behind him expecting that he would break up this pin drop silence. Finally he started.

"Ann I want to buy you an engagement ring."

I did not know what to answer. I was looking at him in surprise. He looked at the far trees across the path and went on,

"I want to marry you. I will marry you after I come from Andaman Island. Till then I want you to have an engagement ring."

Todd sounded as if he was the one who was deciding my future. He was to leave to Andaman Island for two weeks as the Indian customer found many defects of the wooden work done by ESM. This same man who was who was caught giving chocolate another girl now was asking me if I liked to marry him.

"Are you sure of what you are doing?"

"Yes I am Why? You do not want to marry me do you Ann?"

"Yes I want to marry you." I did not know what I was telling. For the first time I felt as I was disobeying my mother and eloping with a man I do not know.

14th January 2008

My boss will leave to Chennai Tomorrow 15th Jan 2008 and now he was getting everything ready. When Todd arrives in Chennai the personal assistant of the Indian customer will pick him from there and take him to Andaman Island. One hour after lunch Todd talked to me and said,

"Go to Pegasus and give measurement for your ring. I want to see the ring in your finger when I come back."

"But, we didn't pay the money did we?" I answered him while cutting some fruit for us. Todd liked fruits all the time and he wanted me to peel and cut them for him. I liked fruits too and I tried to cut them in different angle and that made me occupied. I can be a fruit seller Cant I? Sometimes I said that to Todd to make it funny. Todd is a real fun maker too. He says he can be a banana seller and he would enjoy selling bananas to young ladies. He used to say it with eyes full of lust and first I pretended I did not understand the irony in it where as it was an irony itself.

"I paid the money last night. Now you go and give your finger size to them"

"What?"

My eyes reached my forehead for a while and it made Todd understand that I was shocked. I tried to be cool. "How much was it? Did you pay for the blue sapphire? I showed my interest.

"It was 18,000 rupees and it is the Blue sapphire"

Well, Todd again sounded as if he was my guardian and the one who decided my future. Now I knew that I had to get along with this and I was ready for anything. I did not have a plan for my future. I wanted to do my higher studies and become somebody who is important. There is nothing wrong in trying to carry your self up. I saw this as a great opportunity and I did not want

"Ok I will go today".

In the afternoon Todd left the office after having the evening tea. I am glad to work in ESM because it has a good schedule. We start work by eight thirty in the

morning and by ten the office assistant brings us tea. After having thirty minutes break for tea we start working again. By one o' clock they ring the bell for the lunch and again in the afternoon they give us half an hour tea break. After Todd left I set off to go to Pegasus.

I took the jungle path which Todd and I took the other day we went to Pegasus. When I got in to the real jungle with lots of bushes and marshy area I got a sudden fear to walk alone in that path. There were no people to be seen. It was just the tall trees and thorny bushes. The other day this same road was very romantic with Todd. That day from my subconscious I wished no one to appear in our romantic scenery which was full of love and care.

When my mind invariably went to the memories I had with Todd in this area it made me very calm and tranquil. Sometimes I felt I really love Todd. But my mind was not ready to believe that I love anyone in the world other than my mother and sister. When I was proceeding suddenly a man with bare chest appeared in the road in front of me and he stopped at once in front of me. Then he took his own way murmuring something to himself and when he was passing by me I had the smell of arrack. I realized that he was fully cut.

First I got shocked thinking that he could be a ghost or a criminal who tried to hurt me when he stood in front of me. But on the contrary I realized he got shocked by seeing a girl in this jungle road where he expected no one to come in front of him and see him bare chest and drunk. I realized that this place was full of smugglers and drunkards. I wanted to get out of the place as soon as I could.

I gave the measurement for my finger and was asked to collect the ring in two days. The gem store keeper was nice to me. He asked if Todd and I were to get married and I said yes. He congratulated me and told me to get the other way when going back. That was nice of him I thought. I set off from the gem store and took the other way back to ESM. This road ran beside the beach of Ussweta Keyyawa. I saw a few foreigners seated in woven chairs in the sun in the beach. They laughed and talked very loudly. I thought they were having a beach party there.

Before leaving ESM today Todd said that he was going to miss me for one week. He gave me a hug for the first time. When my body crushed in to his, some unknown feeling came through my lungs to my cheeks and I felt my cheeks getting reddish from hot blood. Then Todd's face with broad forehead bent down to see my face. I looked at him and his eyes were on mine. He held me from his steady arms for a while and then said

"Ann we will get married soon after I come back."

"mmhh" I did not say yes or no due to the sentimentality of the moment we were in. But now when I was really alone thinking about what happened each and day I spent with Todd it was all about laughter and aggravation. Though it was most of the time aggravating to work with Todd, there was something which tied me on to him for me not to be able to go away from him. Todd always treated me as if I was a child. He did not want me to come down stairs when they were engaged in heavy work thinking that it would harm me.

One day I had to follow Todd to the store in order to translate an order Todd needed for the USA order to the store guy. While I was following Todd at once a pipe which was protruding against the door from one of the rafters hit right near my eye and that brought lots of tears to my eye. I couldn't help exclaiming "Ahh" and Todd seemed very worried about it. He found some medicine from somewhere and asked me to apply near the injury. I did that and it made me feel better. After one hour he came to the office and examined my eye and said,

"Oh what a relief! I thought that your eye is swollen and you would have to see a doctor."

After that he warned me how dangerous it was and asked me not to come down stairs unless he asked me to. After explaining those to me every time he finished it saying "Understand?" as if was a naughty child who was disobeying his father. There was another reason why I think I am attached to him. When he was cross with me he did not care me at all. He answered very crossly and was very cold. To get his attention when I told him I was leaving or going down stairs for some work he said "Go ahead" without even looking at my face. This made me very sorry and his showing me that nothing and nobody were indispensable for him made me like his manly behaviour. Sometimes I felt that was his arrogance yet it was not able to make me go away from him and instead it made me more attached to him.

15th January 2008

Today being Tipongal we were all at home. Tipongal falls in the month of January and it is a public holiday. Tipongal is celebrated by Tamil community of Sri Lanka. According to them the Tipongal day is as important as the New Year day. They have many games and lots of decorations with coloured coconut or flour in front of their houses on the day. They make milk rice with lots of fruits and nuts in it and they call it the Pongal Rice. Both Hindu and Sinhalese celebrate their real New Year on 13 and 14 of April. According to their belief real New Year dawns when the sun rotates from the zodiac Pisces to Accuarious. So all Sinhalese and Hindus celebrate it highly.

My mother cooked milk rice with chilies Sambal which was of great appetite of every one. I ate two full plates and felt very sleepy. Coconut makes you sleepy and it helps the constipation. However it has natural cholesterol in it and my mother always makes sure to mix it with lots of water so it loses its thickness and help for good digestion.

I slept until 5 o' clock in the evening and joined the rest of the family to watch television with.

16th January 2008

I started working in the office for the first time without Todd and it was very boring without him. I got a mail from him and the mail read,

Hi,

I Am in the Andaman Island .it is very nice here. Very nice scenery. I will send some photos. There is very little service here. No good food no good hotels no nothing but the harbour , trees and beaches.

Todd.

In the afternoon he called me and asked me to do some work for him. He wanted me to contact the shipping agent and ask about the shipment to Denver Colorado. He also wanted me to send the correct cylinder to the customer through courier immediately. In the evening Todd sent me another email asking how he could conclude the emails he sent to me either saying love Todd or Sincerely Todd. He sent this email to me as an answer to one of my emails. My email read,

Dear Todd,

I sent the cylinder today and you will get it in two days. The tracking number is 00178453776489376. The shipping agent said that the shipment would arrive in Denver Col.. by the end of this month.

I am going to pick up the ring today and when you come back you will see that in my finger.

Best regards

Ann

When I reread my email I realized that it was too formal and it was not of the kind that lovers write to each other. Well I asked Todd to conclude it writing "Love Todd" and I concluded mine writing "Love Ann". I Still could not figure out if I really loved Todd or not. But as a matter of fact I will have to marry him. So I was ready for my unknown future.

17th January 2008

I set off to go to the gem store in the morning. I decided to go the gem store first and go to work after collecting the ring. I did not take the jungle path because of two reasons. When Todd called me yesterday he told me not to take the jungle path alone. The other reason was that I was scared of the man I met on the jungle path the other day. I did not take any risks with my life.

I was walking on the road until I reached the bridge falling to Pegasus gem store. When I thought about the first reason I did not want to take the jungle path it made me have a kind of respect or gratitude towards Todd because it showed me that he wanted to take care of me. Beside my mother, sister or brothers no one else has given me instruction to take care of my self so far. But now Todd tried to protect me from every danger around me. Every time when Todd tried to protect me it was a lift to my heart and I felt as if I was one of the happiest and secured creatures.

I felt that Todd was an important character to my life. The more I thought about it the more it made me think that I wanted a father more than anything. When I told one of my friends about me being ready to marry an American of 47 my friend laughed and asked,

"You got to be kidding Ann; He is my father's age."

"Who cares? All I wanted is a man who does not go after every woman and who loves his wife and scarifies for her" I answered her having a very serious mood. She did not give up.

"Ok Do you think that you found the right one? How can you be sure that this American is one of those guys you explain?"

"Very simple. When a man passes his fifty all he thinks is to settle down and have somebody to take good care of him for the rest of his life. On the other I am young and pretty so he will love me more and more. He will think that I am one a man can ever wish for."

My friend seemed satisfied but still she said,

"Well you do what ever you want but I don't want to involve in this decision of yours because it is all about your valuable life, you know what I mean,

"Ok forget it for now, I did not marry yet. I have got to go a long way before that."

I got rid of the situation and thought that I would never talk about this with any one again.

I collected my ring and wore it on my ring finger. The measurement was given for the ring finger. So I couldn't wear it any other finger. It was too big for the small finger and too small for other three. I couldn't wear it at home because every body might ask why I was wearing it on my ring finger on the other I couldn't keep it at home because I forget easily. Todd might come anytime and I should have it on my finger when he sees me. The only solution is to wear it all the time.

This ring is very exotic. It is a thin, plain gold ring with three blue sapphires incurved in it. It is brand new and shining so how come that a person goes without

seen it? Anyway my sister knows the whole story about Todd and me so I will tell her and ask her what to do.

We took a lot of trouble to send the wrong steering wheel to Dubai and get Dubai steering suppliers to send the right one to the customer. Though the Dubai suppliers said they would do it first now they said they could not send it to India because it cost a lot of money to send it. Although we said that we would pay the cost they did not seem to care. They were ignoring ESM completely.

I could not bare this ignorance any more. I talked to the General Manager about this and both of us talked to Dubai suppliers over the phone. After back and forth explanation to nagging suppliers they ultimately agreed to send the right steering to us so that we can send it to India. Todd could not finish it work until he got the steering wheel and he was struck there. So we had to wait until tomorrow to receive the steering wheel and send it back to India.

19th January 2008

We got the cylinder down to our office and repacked it to be sent to India. By evening TNT courier service came and picked it up. So I wrote an email to Todd,

Hi dear,

I sent the cylinder and other items you need to finish the job. You will get it in two days since we sent it through express. We all miss you and look forward to see you soon. Take care.

Love Ann

I wanted to tell Todd that I really miss him and could not believe how he spent most of his time in this office since no body speaks or was friendly. Instead I said "We all miss you." Now it was obvious that I like to be with Todd and I miss him badly.

21 January 2008

Whatever the government tells about the cease fire the public has no faith in it. Two bombs blasted at Colombo fort station and in a near by restaurant. Two people were succumbed injuries from the station attack and one got killed from the restaurant. As doctor Fernando says if the war never ends what will happen to my beautiful country. If, in a country people keep on fighting and killing each other that country will never be prosperous. That country will be separated from all the civilized countries. There can be so many mistakes in the past. But now in the future all have to get together and work for the welfare of the country. How wonderful would it be if Tamil and Sinhalese get together and live in harmony?

Nature treats everybody similarly. It gives shade to everybody and it punishes everybody. It doesn't separate Sinhalese or Tamil. That is why Tsunami came and thousands of people were killed. I think Nature punished people and tried to teach them a lesson but unfortunately people did not learn the lesson

23 January 2008

I wished if Todd was returned by any chance today. I wore the black sari which I liked the most. Everybody in the office said that I looked very nice. I thanked them and went away from the crowd. Sometimes when you become the subject of everybody it is too much attention and you want to run away from the crowd. I was glad to come back to the office and sit on my chair.

Had Todd been here today he would have told me how pretty I was. I remembered the first day I saw at the fort station. I was wearing the same sari that day and came to meet him at the lunch hour from my office. He was delighted after seeing me and was hurried to take my phone number and save it in his phone.

After the first day Todd used to call me and made appointments to meet. First we went to Colombo museum and had a nice time. When we finished seeing the cultural and religious monuments and lots of other stuff we went to a small hall where they had pictures and carved master pieces of the nature. We both were walking around fascinated and came near a glass box in which they had a crane standing on one foot. That reminded me of a story I had read and wanted to share the humor with Todd. So I started,

Once a gentleman shot a crane and gave it to his servant to roast. The servant roasted it and ate one of its legs. Then he put it on a plate on the dinner table. The master came and sat at the tale. He turned the bird up side down and asked, "Where is the other leg?"

The servant replied, "A crane has only one leg sir."

Next day the master and the servant went together to the river bank. There they saw a crane standing on one leg in the water. The master clapped his hands and the crane lowered its other leg and flew away. The mater said "look! That crane has two legs."

The servant replied, "Yes sir, but you did not clap your hands at the dinner table yesterday. So the crane on the plate did not lower its other leg."

Todd started laughing until tears came to his eyes. We both really enjoyed the time and decided to go there another day too. Our next trip was to Kandy. We left our homes early in the morning and first went to the temple of tooth. One of the sacred teeth of Lord Buddha is kept in the Temple of tooth and pilgrimages always go there. We worshipped Lord Buddha and then went to the Botanical garden Peradeniya.

We took lots of videos of both of us and felt very easy with each other. Todd and I took an important decision that day to work together and learn about each other before the marriage. That was how I started working in EMS.

I called the Indian customer in the evening and came to know that Todd had returned yesterday. I thanked the Indian customer for the message and dialed Todd's hand phone. To my surprise it was ringing. Then I heard Todd's voice. It was not the sharp normal strong voice. It sounded as if he was having a cough and cold.

"How are you Todd?"

"Good, how are you Ann?"

"Are you ok? You sound sick."

"Yes I got off my flight in the mid night and now I am sleeping. I am coming to work in the morning tomorrow"

I was very happy because Todd was to come to work tomorrow. I really could not wait to see him.

25 January 2008

Todd brought me a hand bag which was done with camel skin. The bag was shining and it looked exotic. I did not expect him to bring me anything. All I wanted was his company after an odd week without him. But now it was obvious to me that he had been thinking about me like I did. After giving me the bag Todd was looking at me with eyes full of kindness. He watched me unwrapping the parcel and said,

"Ann I miss you. Did you miss me too?"

"Of course I did." I told him without looking at his eyes.

I showed the ring to Todd and he was very happy to see it. I removed it and asked him to put it on my ring finger. He took my hand carefully as if he was handling something very fragile and slowly dressed my finger with the beautiful engagement ring.

03 February 2008

Today was Saturday. I do my higher studies on Saturdays. Todd pays my class fees. But today the class was cancelled due to a curfew. One bomb blasted today too. I stayed at home and watched two movies Todd gave me. One was Helen of Trojan and the other was Dick and Jane which was a funny movie.

I was awakened by an immigrant officer at Chennai Air port. They gave my passport back to me and put a label on my bag. Then they bid me good buy and I stood in the line heading to the international on board. At last I got in to a big air craft which was like a five star hotel. I got my seat and waited for thirty minutes. After that the craft started to move and in five to ten minutes it started to fly with a big noise.

This flight was supposed to go to New York. Soon after the flight got in to sky high the stewards and stewardess were hurrying up for something. They all had changed their clothes now. First when the flight was on board they were wearing a nice brown jacket and helping passengers to load their baggage. Now they were wearing nice yellow suits with gloves and getting ready to serve food to the passengers.

The flight started at one o'clock in early morning and now it was 10 o'clock in the morning. They gave us another meal for break fast and everyone watched movies. The only thing I remember in that flight was eating, watching movies and trying to sleep. Actually I could not sleep because I felt that I am going far a way from my country and I badly missed my mother and sister. The flight landed at Brussels due to a technical matter and started flying back to New York after one hour.

I started thinking about Todd again. When I was busy with my work and studies I stopped writing my diary. But after that lots of things happened to me and Todd. Todd decided to participate in the boat show in United States and was busy making six boats going to the USA.

He wanted me to go with him to the USA and meet with his family before our marriage. So we he and I were working for my visa and Todd even bought tickets for me. His buying a ticket to me without even having visa made me rely on him and have good faith on him. We even planed our trip and what places we were to see in the states and to come back in one month.

Unfortunately breaking all our dreams in to pieces my visa was not approved. Todd was very upset and I was miserable. I thought that I am going to lose Todd and he might not come back due to problems he had in boat industry here.

But Todd decided not to go until April. By now all our plans have gone in to the water. We were both hopeless and very sad. Todd got angry more than he used to be. He had a lot of trouble in making and shipping the boats in time. He always had fight with the administration of ESM about the money and labour.

After sending four of the finished boats to the USA time came for Todd to go there to claim the boats before sending it to the dealer. I did not know what to do. I cried and cried. Todd said he would bring me over to the states six months after he went there. I could not think about anything else. I had a job to do in ESM. I had to ship the other two boats and two engine brackets which Todd created for the first time in the world.

That was Wednesday 23 March 2008 on which day Todd left Sri Lanka. I did not want to work in the office without him. But still I had a job to do for Todd. So I worked there for two other months and shipped his boats and engine brackets. Todd and I wrote emails back and forth every day.

Todd always tried to make me relax and have confidence about our future. He always wrote encouraging emails.

My dear Ann,

I am working on your visa. I have paid 10.000.00 to a lawyer to take care of your visa. The lawyer says she does her best and all we have to do is to show them we are serious. Don't worry. You are a serious and a intelligent girl. Sooner or later you are going to be here. The first thing I am going to do when you come here is to marry you. Do not give up hopes. I am working on everything. I love you and miss you. Everybody here can't wait to see you.

Love Todd

My loving Todd,

Thank you for being so nice to me and taking care of me. I miss you a lot. I love you.

Your loving

Ann

We went on writing back and forth. I really missed Todd by now and thought that I really started loving him. I started to be more and more open with him and always told him I love him or I love him forever.

At last the flight landed in New York and everybody in the flight seemed delighted to go out have nice fresh air. My heart was thumping and I was nervous not knowing what to do to get out of the crowd soon and get in to my next flight to Miami in one hour. I was terribly afraid that I would miss the flight and be lost in New York. Todd's emails to me just before I started flying from Sri Lanka made me desperate in fear of the other world around me. Actually this is another world for me a Sri Lankan. I could not help looking at the instructions and warnings Todd sent me. They were crunched in my hand and were dirty due to the constant opening and folding.

Hi dear,

Your flight leaves at 2:45 PM

Remember stay near in the terminal building in Chennai. In Chennai there are two terminals; one is international flights, that's the one you land at and that it the one you stay at.

In New York you transfer to another terminal for US flights. When in New York follow signs for connecting flights, look for your gate with your flight number. If you have to ask for help, be careful who you ask, some people will not know and give you wrong info

Love Todd

Hi Dear,

Remember you must be at airport by 12:00 Noon. This means you must leave your house before 11:00am OK? Understand? It takes at least one hour to get to airport maybe longer from your house so maybe leave by 10:30. When you get to Airport they may have long process for getting through. last time I left it took 3 hours to get through get to airplane so two to three hours getting thru the airport, and one or one and half hours from your house to airport. Means you leave by 10:30 you should make it. Remember only bring carry on suitcase. You should call ahead to the airport and ask them

the procedure. it is better to call ahead to find out anything first then get delayed, there are no refunds with your ticket. if you miss getting on the plane it is a total loss.

Please tell me you understand you must leave for the airport before 11:00 am

Love Todd

I got out of the plane as soon as possible and stood at the clearing line. I was directed to a line there were about ten people waiting. I was nervous and looked worried. I could not stand in place and I turned around. When I turned around the second time I almost hit the elderly woman standing behind me. First she gave me a angry look and in a short while she started talking to me friendly. I thought she understood what my situation was because she said,
"Far away from home isn't it?"

I said yes and smiled humbly. The lady was almost to ask me something else but the person who was standing behind her talked to her and she attended to him. I thought it would have been a relief if I had some one to talk with and I might feel a little easy. But on the other hand I thought it was good that she did not talk to me other than been polite and nice because Todd had warned me about trouble makers in United States.

They took one hour for my visa checking and stamping on it. I was completely thoughtless thinking about the next flight in another twenty minutes. By now they must have finished on board and must have even closed the gates I thought. Suddenly I remembered that Todd asked me to call him when I come to New York. I went to the gate fifty two in which I was supposed to get in to my flight and started looking for a telephone booth. But I did not have any coins with me and believe me I took a lot of trouble making my cash in to coins and at last was able to contact Todd.

Hi darling

Hi

"Are you in New York?" Todd asked me

"Yes I am" I almost cried. I felt very sorry for my self being lonely in a place I had never been to and when I heard Todd's voice I could not help crying.

"I will get in to the flight now."

What? The flight has left. I do not know go and ask an immigrant officer. I can't do anything.

Todd sounded very irresponsible to me. It was only then I realized that the flight has gone and I hung the phone up and ran to an immigrant officer.

"Has this flight left?" I asked.

"Yes" he replied and did not even bother to give me an alteration. I sat down in a chair hopeless not knowing what to do. I was desperate and miserable. I started thinking and I asked Jesus to help me. In a split second one kind person came to me and said,

"There should be another flight. Go and change your ticket. Don't miss that."

Ok I stood up and went to the immigrant officer again. Luckily there was another flight and they exchanged my ticket. I looked around to see if the person was there because I wanted to thank him. But he was nowhere to be seen. I realized that Jesus could come through any one in the world and thanked him from my heart.

The flight started to move after 6. 30 PM and it was very dark out side. I could not see the New York City at all. I was desperately tired and fell a sleep. I woke up after half an hour and tried to sleep again closing my eyes tightly. But it was freezing in side and I crushed my bag on to my chest. After agonizing two hours we made it to Miami Air Port. I almost ran to the exit to see Todd standing waiting for me. But unfortunately he was not there. I walked back and forth at least ten times but still I could not find Todd.

It was after 10.30 and I was scared that I would not be able to find Todd. I searched for a telephone booth to contact Todd. I asked every one where I could find a telephone. Some said it was down stairs and some said upstairs. I ran here and there for one hour and finally found a telephone booth. I called Todd and asked him where he was. He said he was in the air port and asked me the location in which I was. I described him about the exit and he asked me to come to the baggage claim. I said I was in the exit and asked him to come and get me.

For another hour I was running here and there nervously and still I could not find him. I examined every black car and every fat guy passing by. I called Todd again and came to the exit again. At last after all those pain and agony I saw Todd walking towards me. He looked the same and he had the same cheerful smile on his face. I waited for a while and ran to him. He hugged me and kissed me. Ultimately all my trouble was gone I thought and wanted to sleep on his chest like a baby. You made it Ann you smart girl, I told you that you are smart

"Thank you Todd"

You look prettier than you were Ann, I can't wait to marry you. He held my hand thoroughly and kissed it.

"I love you Todd" I told him with eyes full of tears.

"I love you very much Ann, At last all my trouble is gone, it is time to enjoy darling."

We both walked towards our car to go home holding each other tightly. I know for a fact that we were the most happiest two in the earth that night.