

Memoirs of an Accused Madam

THE WAR

on Adult Business in Orlando



Vicky Gallas

Memoirs of an Accused Madam:

The War on Adult Business in Orlando

By

Vicky Gallas

Final Works Media, LLC
8501 Astronaut Blvd
Suite 5, #165
Cape Canaveral, FL 32920

Memoirs of an Accused Madam: The War on Adult Business in Orlando (Second Edition)
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Written for my son,

Alex

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Author's Note – July 13, 2010

It has been over a year since I published *Memoirs*, and during the past year I have had time to reflect on the situation and on this book. The main reason for the second edition is my decision that no one involved in my criminal case and prosecution deserves privacy, or the luxury of an alias. The actions of agents, prosecutors, other escort service owners, and a few escorts reflected a lack of concern for my privacy and future existence, so I'm not really sure why I cared; the truth is that I don't anymore if I ever did.

When I wrote *Memoirs* I was still angry and, admittedly, I still am today. I have since located and discovered new and additional information in relation to the telephone line blocks in Orlando area resorts during large convention bookings. For one thing, Eddie Munoz of Las Vegas has fought in Nevada state and federal courts concerning the line blocks in Vegas since 1993, with the last case filed in 2009. Munoz had Sprint of Nevada on the case 24/7 for years and had renowned hacker Kevin Mitnick testify in trial as to his understanding of the blocks. This discovery invalidated the "Vicky is crazy" assertions made by the opposition during my case and trial.

Imagine that – I've been screaming about line blocks since 1993, and here's this guy in Las Vegas that's filed numerous lawsuits in court and tackled Sprint on a daily basis, beginning in 1993. Sprint even changed the name of its publishing company to Embarq immediately following a court ruling that the blocks on escort service lines have in fact been ongoing for many years. To be fair to Sprint/Embarq, the court ruled that they were not the only telecommunications and publishing company with the problem, in fact, they are also victims and did attempt to repair the security issues, but to no avail. This in itself is testimony to the existence of the powerful people involved. Even top-notch telephone company security personnel have not been able to piece together this wild puzzle.

If a reader is active or retired law enforcement it is likely that they will not appreciate this true story. Few agents care to read about the misconduct of fellow officers, and find it far easier to blame the victim. I do ask that you keep an open mind. Do realize that I did testify in my defense and I filed a sworn affidavit in a federal civil suit, and I was never charged with perjury in either situation.

Preface

This book is written as the result of close to a decade in the adult business in the Orlando metropolitan area. I owned escort services from late 1992 until I closed the last, in late September of 2001. For reasons that are easily envisioned, Orlando is a unique place to be involved in such a business. If it were not for the climactic ending, of which I was on the receiving end, this story would have been buried and never written. When I wrote the story the first time I was still living in fear, and for good reason. It was a fictionalized version of the truth with a working title of Stalker with a Badge, and took place in a fantasy location. This was in 2002. It was several more years, perhaps late 2005, before I realized that the main case agent that I had considered to be a stalker was not exactly the responsible party, and in fact was as much a pawn as I had been, albeit a pawn that attempted to make a name for himself.

It is a story that I have threatened to expose on more than a few occasions since 1994, and is of past events, consequences, and recent developments. This is not fiction. It is a true story. In the spirit of writing a non-fiction account, I have strived to accurately depict these events and the people involved. I have used journals that I kept during the years that I was in business, documents in court cases, and I also initiated communication with several people from the past with the intention of gaining insight from other perspectives.

That being said, the viewpoints presented are those of the writer, the escort service owner, the defendant, and finally, the person at the receiving end and target of an agency that needed to continuously justify its existence and prove its worth in a community under siege by violent crime. This memoir is my memory of the events that have occurred. I have little doubt that a memoir written by someone on the other side, such as prosecutors or agents, would offer a different story, one that omits or places minimal importance on the events recounted herein. Providing that an account written by the opposition could not be contradicted with court documents or witnesses, it is indeed welcomed with an open mind. However, if it is provable that it is an account of lies it would be exposed as such expeditiously. As agents and prosecutors have witnessed, I have a low level of tolerance for lies relating to my person, my former business, the court case, and anyone close to me.

Throughout the near decade that I operated escort services, everyone, with the exception of my family, referred to me as Laura. I have always referred to the escorts by their chosen alias, a habit hard to break even today in some situations. In the interest of the privacy of several escorts and proper frame of reference, this work was written accordingly. In the situations that I have used aliases in describing people and hotels, the actual person and business most certainly exists. Given the type of business that I was involved in, and the particular location of Orlando, it was not possible to reveal everything. I do not name any clients. Privacy was not the sole reason for the use of aliases as only a few escorts are not named. No one involved in my criminal prosecution is entitled to privacy as there were no confidential informants and the case is a matter of public record. This edition provides the reader with the necessary tools to research should any so desire. In part it is written because of two reviewers (that may be the same person with two accounts) that claim it to be unbelievable and insinuate that I am a liar. After all I have gone through; I absolutely refuse to accept being called a liar.

There were many additional situations that are not written in this account; some I can prove, and some I cannot. The reason for the exclusion of these situations, including the provable ones, is so that those involved are not publicly embarrassed.

To be sure, this is not a defense of the escort business, escorts, clients, or the part that I played in it over the years by any stretch of the imagination. Numerous people have encouraged me in this endeavor, especially in the last few years. Each individual had their own ideas about the story and a

few believed the story to be all about them. In each case the person was only involved in particular elements or for two or three years out of ten plus. While I truly appreciated the input that each individual had to offer, at the end of the day I was compelled to tell this story in my own way.

On November 20, 2001, I was arrested on a list of six charges by the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI). Ultimately, only two of the charges were filed by Florida's Office of the Statewide Prosecutor: Racketeering; and Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering (RICO). In Florida each is a first degree felony punishable by up to thirty years in a prison. Knowing that I was not guilty of the accusations in the charging documents, I chose to fight and take the State of Florida to trial. Following a bizarre two week trial, on January 17, 2003, a jury of my peers acquitted me on both counts. This story is not a dissection of the case as that undertaking would require an entire book in itself. That task was delegated to a jury, and their answer was clear. It has been stated by many that it was a case of jury nullification; a distinct possibility, and one that only the men and women on the jury could possibly confirm.

It is not my intention to publicly embarrass the MBI. To this day, the MBI website and the Florida Attorney General's website both refer to my arrest, yet neither offers any information about the outcome of my case, and that I was acquitted by the jury. Everything I state about the MBI is a counter to the continuous efforts at misinformation, including a somewhat recent email from MBI Director Lutz to Orlando Sentinel columnist, Scott Maxwell. Lutz has this email posted on the MBI website, and though Lutz has since retired, the website remains the same as he left it in December of 2008. It is the MBI that continues to misinform, and I have every right to correct misinformation that is deliberately disseminated in order to influence or confuse the public. I discuss this email, and more of the same, in Part Three.

This book is not about me or any other individual. It is an account of events that transpired in the escort business in Orlando and does reveal a scheme involving many people, and its consequences for others. As with any considerable conspiracy that spans almost two decades there are many participants with limited knowledge, incognizant of the broad plan or any details irrelevant to their own part. The participants at this level most often are unaware that there is a plot at all. Dissimilarly there are the organizers at the top level, the elite group of people in the know-all category; those with much to lose should the plot be exposed. The scheme described herein was in force prior to my opening of escort services in 1992. I was not the first person to attempt to unravel the plot, and as the story will reveal, I was not alone in my pursuit. The sole question that remains in my mind is who, or rather what specific group of people, were the organizers. A good conspiracy is a non-provable one, and it is not my intention to prove it as one would in a court of law. Indeed, this is also an appeal for the missing piece of the puzzle.

I do attest to all that I state in this book as being factual and truthful. I have no idea if someone involved with the MBI, at a high level, had anything to do with the escort services' telephone line blocks or with the practice of website blocking. I do pose the question that if there was no connection whatsoever, then why was I pursued with such a vengeance that it resulted in an entirely fictional case created against me? In short: Why the railroad job? If there is no connection between the MBI and the line troubles, why have the perpetrators of the scheme never faced justice, or even investigation? This story reveals that many people played a part, be it small or organizational, in the overall plot. Is it to be believed that the MBI, as I describe them in this manuscript, was absolutely incognizant of what was going on around the Orlando metro area? Finally, if that is the case, then it is certainly far past time to dissolve the agency.

The story involves far more than the plot alone. It is perhaps more significant in relation to the consequences experienced by the many victims, including myself. A proverb descriptive of this manuscript is: "The truth, if it exists, is in the details." In this case, the truth does indeed exist, and is known to many individuals. The reader will encounter additional details at the end of this account in the Notes section. These details are important in the overall account of the war on adult business in

Orlando.

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Prologue

It is rare indeed for anyone to work in any facet of the adult business because that is their true desire in life and I was not an exception. My interest was easily attributed to financial need. In fact, I can candidly state that everyone working in the adult industry that I encountered in almost ten years of business was there for the money. Prostitution, or even avoiding it, was a strategy of survival, as it has been for many women throughout history. Poverty and prostitution have always been interconnected.

When I opened my escort services in 1992, with a partner, we both worked for a local transportation company. I was an airport starter at the Orlando International Airport where I was first exposed to the flood of conventioners that travel to Orlando. My partner, Eric, was a van driver. In those days I directed the visitors to vans, buses, and taxis as they began their excursion to the local hotels. In early 1993, I paid Eric a sum of money for his interest in the business and that was the end of the only partnership that I ever had.

I resigned from my airport job for reasons easily imagined: my wages were around eight dollars per hour; I rarely saw my young child; and the company gave me no health insurance. I would have had to pay for the insurance, with pre-existing conditions not covered, and both my son and I had health issues requiring frequent doctor visits – I still do. This situation is far from unusual in the U.S. today. In short, my initial reason for opening an escort service was healthcare, and the State of Florida was of no assistance as they are not today.

Beyond healthcare, the reasoning was the desire to buy my son stuffed animals, take him to theme parks, take him on trips to Manhattan and give him a better place to live. I did not grow-up in an environment of poverty, and I did not want my son to either. I rarely saw my parents before they both retired and I was in my twenties, therefore working day and night didn't sound like a viable option at the time. I wanted both: a middle-class lifestyle with a decent home, and to be a participant in my child's life. I had only a GED at the time and was a single mother with no intention of bringing a strange man into my son's life. To this day, regardless of the horrifying court case, I am not sorry that I made the decision to go into the escort business. By the time it was all over I was left with no more than I started with. However, my son is twenty-three years old now and saw a better side of life for a decade, has never been interested in drugs, and does have goals in life. We have always had a great relationship.

What is the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI)?

I have learned more than I ever wanted to about the U.S. criminal justice system since the day of my arrest in late 2001. Fundamentally it is one of the worst criminal justice systems in the world today. The proliferation of plea bargaining and the serious overuse and abuse of the informant system is largely to blame. Our own federal and state government agencies use informants in ways similar to those utilized in the former Soviet Union, and in situations that Stalin would have been proud of. The methods of some agencies are significantly worse than others, as this account will reveal.

Orlando is not the place to open an adult business of any type, and particularly not an escort service. At first glance, an enterprising person would consider it to be a prime location given the flood of conventions that are booked at area resorts. Instead, Orlando is a city that was stumped in its growth with moralistic rhetoric and rules imposed by a few, insistent on living in the fantasy atmosphere of the traditional community as defined by their own standards. But do they really have such standards, or is it all a cover? That is a question that lingers even today. These few so-called moralists have decided that their agenda is the right path for the rest of us. Somewhere in the recipe for moral values, the

intrusion of violent crime has proliferated and altered it into a recipe for disaster. But then what could have been expected when limited resources were spent to attack the adult industry for more than a decade?

Metro Orlando, as described herein, is the area that encompasses three counties in Central Florida: Orange, Osceola and Seminole. The Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI) is a permanent task force, described as a Ninth Judicial Circuit task force. The Ninth Judicial Circuit is actually only Orange and Osceola; however, the MBI has a lengthy list of cases originating in Seminole County also. The MBI also works other nearby counties when there is an interconnecting factor, such as a billboard in Orange County that offers adult-related services in nearby Brevard County. Not being an attorney, and not wanting to be, I am not so sure how legal this is; regardless, the MBI did it in the past. In so far as I am aware, the MBI mission has changed with its director. The director throughout the years in this story was William Lutz.

In the metro Orlando area we have the MBI to save us from strippers and the night-clubs that employ them, video stores that sell porn, massage parlors, bingo halls, slot machines, pipe shops, publishers that accept advertisements for adult services, escorts, and escort services. The MBI website describes the agency as “a permanent multi-agency task force which was formed in Central Florida in December of 1978.” The current member agencies of the MBI are many, including such federal agencies as the DEA; the Secret Service, the FBI, the IRS, and ICE. They consider themselves to be a specialized group of investigators that concentrate on drugs, vice and organized crime. This is not a local police force, although the organization also includes the Orange County Sheriff’s Office and the Orlando Police Department as member agencies. [\(note 1\)](#)

An outsider taking a quick look at the MBI in mainstream news articles or the agency website would likely consider their agenda admirable, and the organization not much different than similar task forces in most U.S. cities of comparable size. In the tri-county area that is metro Orlando, the great majority of responses to MBI agent actions in their cases and the choice of pursuits is one of outrage, not admiration. I have never encountered any person that admired the MBI, unless it was an agent in disguise, their close colleagues, their friends, or their family. This analysis includes many regular (patrol) police officers that I have spoken to over the years. The general consensus in this area is that the MBI should have been dissolved long ago. Power without responsibility and without formal checks and balances can be a tool used to terrorize. Regardless of if a person is on the receiving end of that power or is a bystander, few will admire and embrace the facilitators.

The MBI has always had a Governing Board that is supposed to oversee the investigations of its agents. The director of the MBI is selected by the Board. From 1994 until December of 2008, that director was William Lutz. It is questionable as to whose agenda the MBI has pursued: the Governing Board’s, or that of Director Lutz? Regardless of the origin of the ostensibly Puritan ideals pursued, it is clear that the Board has always had the power to change the agenda, and more important, to moderate and reject the methods employed by the MBI and its agents. It is this little piece of insight that elicits the realization that Lutz is just following orders. To be clear, regardless of any orders, the agents and Lutz are culpable for their actions.

The members of the MBI Governing Board through the end of 2008 were: Lawson Lamar, the State Attorney for the Ninth Judicial Circuit; Kevin Beary, the Orange County Sheriff; Val Demings, the Orlando Chief of Police; Douglas M. Ball, the Winter Park Chief of Police; Chuck W. Vavrek, the Apopka Chief of Police; and Robert E. Hansell, the Osceola County Sheriff. The only two longstanding members are Lawson Lamar and Kevin Beary, and the MBI is Lamar’s baby. Coincidentally, Lamar has been in the Orlando area news with frequency lately, complaining that his office is critically understaffed and short of funding while murders and other violent crimes have soared. Lamar asserts that if his office doesn’t get more money the justice system will fail. The reality is that Lamar’s office has been dysfunctional for a long time, and as this account will reveal, has abused the funds received, though it wasn’t Lamar’s office that pursued me.

The MBI's accounting practices are the law enforcement equivalent of the Enron method of accounting. This agency is well-prepared to defend itself with low investigative expense balance sheets. In my own case the MBI investigated me from 1994 until late 2002, just prior to my trial. Yet when attacked over the expense when I was acquitted by the jury, they claimed it was an eleven month investigation and the total cost, including deputy hours, was \$36,000. The list of ten agents that accumulated hours during the investigation did not even include officers from Brevard. For the particular eleven month period that was admitted to out of eight years, the costs stated are possibly true, but what about the rest of the officers not listed, the other years of investigation, and the two-week trial? The truth is that they open new cases and begin a new tally of expenses. It probably cost that paltry sum to have helicopters hover over my house the sixteen times that I counted in one month alone while I was awaiting trial. [\(note 2\)](#)

One of the worst fiascos on the MBI's lengthy list of investigations, to date, began in the middle of 1995. It was referred to as the bingo case. I first heard about the bingo case from Orlando Local 6 investigative news reporter Tony Pipitone. The case involved approximately eighteen defendants. They were charged under Florida's organized crime statutes with racketeering. The forfeiture tool was used and all property confiscated. Most of the defendants made plea deals to lesser charges. A few of the defendants held out and went to trial, all were convicted, but the convictions were overturned on appeal. I recently viewed Pipitone on Orlando Local 6 with a new investigative report – this case is finally blowing up in the MBI's face – 15 years later. The civil case in Orange County court is #1995-CA-006890-O. The case is Florida State Attorney General's Office vs. Bradenton Group Inc, et al. It's the Florida taxpayers that will end up paying for this overzealous, and illegal prosecution. It was the Florida taxpayers that paid for mine.

To be clear, my case was not the typical case by any stretch of the word. The MBI never had sufficient evidence to get a court order for a wiretap or a search warrant. There was never any recorded statement of me discussing or promoting prostitution with an escort, a client, or an agent. When the false allegations were removed from the 120 page "warrant for arrest affidavit" it became more of a 'he said, she said' story backed by nothing. I have always stated that the MBI adds two plus two and comes up with an answer of six. Has there ever been an escort service owner prosecuted on charges as serious as racketeering and conspiracy when there was never even enough evidence to get a wiretap? I find the entire concept as far-fetched and ludicrous as it could possibly be. But to expect, and attempt to force, a guilty plea with a case that consisted of mainly gossip and abstract theories is absurd!

A Close Look at Florida's Racketeering and Conspiracy Statutes

I do have the distinction of being the only escort service owner to be acquitted by a jury on organized crime/racketeering/RICO charges in any state or federal court in the U.S., in so far as my research has revealed. The feds do not usually go after escort service owners using the RICO Act, and I believe that the first case federally prosecuted was that of Deborah Jeane Palfrey. Palfrey was found guilty by a jury on April 15, 2008. Various states frequently use RICO when prosecuting escort service owners, including Florida. The Florida racketeering statutes are actually much worse, and carry potentially longer sentences, than the federal racketeering statute. I define worse as having an even broader scope, and open to conspicuously gray interpretations. Any business owner or individual conducting business is in danger of prosecution with the Florida RICO statute.

The Statewide Prosecutor, John Craft, often referred to me as an organized crime kingpin during the course of the case and trial. Racketeering statutes, federal and state, were created to enable the prosecution of mafia members when other charges fell apart, however, are often misused. The two charges that were filed by prosecutors and that I was put on trial for were: Racketeering (RICO), Florida Statute 895.03(3); and Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering (RICO), Florida Statute 895.03 (4).

Florida Statute 895.03(3) states:

“It is unlawful for any person employed by, or associated with, any enterprise to conduct or participate, directly or indirectly, in such enterprise through a pattern of racketeering activity or the collection of an unlawful debt.”

Florida Statute 895.03 (4) states:

“It is unlawful for any person to conspire or endeavor to violate any of the provisions of subsection (1), subsection (2), or subsection (3).”

Florida Statutes, Chapter 895, defines the following:

““Enterprise” means any individual, sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, business trust, union chartered under the laws of this state, or other legal entity, or any unchartered union, association, or group of individuals associated in fact although not a legal entity; and it includes illicit as well as licit enterprises and governmental, as well as other, entities.”

““Pattern of racketeering activity” means engaging in at least two incidents of racketeering conduct that have the same or similar intents, results, accomplices, victims, or methods of commission or that otherwise are interrelated by distinguishing characteristics and are not isolated incidents, provided at least one of such incidents occurred after the effective date of this act and that the last of such incidents occurred within 5 years after a prior incident of racketeering conduct.” [\(note 3\)](#)

The basis for the charges in my case was that two escorts, who were independent contractors for my business, were each charged and convicted on a single count of misdemeanor prostitution within a five year period. In fact there were three escorts convicted on a prostitution count: one in 1996; another in 2000; and the last in 2001. Each count under Chapter 895, the racketeering statute, is a first degree felony and is punishable by up to thirty years in prison. So, three escorts offer to commit prostitution in exchange for more money for themselves and the State of Florida wants to lock me away in prison for life. Is there any person that does not view this as absurd?

Prostitutes and Procuresses or Escorts and Agencies

In the interest of being realistic, I must concede that escorts usually offer prostitution services. Indeed, I did book many social escort calls during the near decade that I was in business, although by the time the call had concluded the client professed his true desires and expectations to the escort. The great majority of clients that booked a social escort still expected the evening to end in their hotel room or residence. While I find this truly sad, it is a fact. Indeed, it is not the escort service itself that is a prostitution service. Sometimes it is not even the escort, as not all escorts are willing to offer prostitution services. It is the clients of the service that facilitate the illegal services. I never had any escort working for my business that went to see a client with the intent and desire to have sex for money. It is the client that assumes that escort is defined as prostitute. They were never told such a thing on the telephone and no advertisement that I ever had stated or alluded to sex for money.

This phenomenon can easily be attributed to law enforcement stating in the news and in legislative processes that all escort services are fronts for prostitution. Not all law enforcement uses such rhetoric, but the MBI did consistently. It is apparent that the potential clients believe all that they say, and this is the type of client that calls. If in fact all escorts are prostitutes as the MBI states, then why would a person call that was not seeking exactly that? [\(note 4\)](#)

This outlook is American born. In many areas of the world an escort is exactly that. I recently conducted an experiment that is described in depth in Part Three. As a minor part of that experiment, I created a business booking exclusively social escort calls. When I informed the caller that the service was entirely social, ninety out of a hundred potential clients would state: “Oh, no thank-you.” Eight out of that hundred thought that this was a game and expressed their willingness to go along with it, but after being informed for a third time that the escort would really only go out with them, never entering their room, they too passed. The remaining two out of the hundred, on the average, truly sought a social escort. At any rate, no business could survive with such odds.

Prostitution Today and in History

There has always been a level of toleration of the prostitution trade throughout history; less during some eras than others, no doubt. Procuring and the procuress have always been much less understood and tolerated in societies in history and today. As the accused procuress, or madam, I can assert with confidence that the escort, or prostitute, was always welcome to work on her own if she so desired. I never hunted for escorts, and in fact, they hunted for me by seeking the advertisements and calling. All of my advertisements were in the escort section.

So then why do escorts work for agencies? The reasons are numerous, but most often fall into three areas. Some ladies do so in order to hand out their personal number to all of the clients that they see. What better way to start your own business if you are an escort? To simply steal all of the agency clients rather than have your own advertisement expense is without doubt intelligent, and of course dirty. Other ladies prefer to work through an agency for the control factor. Agencies quote hourly rates and both the agency and the escort are paid by the hour. This is defined as the escort either being paid for another hour or leaving when the time is up. Most had no issue with blaming this on the agency when they knew very well that I did not care less if they stayed longer without being paid more. With the great majority of escorts, additional hours were rare anyway unless I booked the call that way to begin with. Believe me, they wanted to leave or they would have stayed. A third scenario is the desire, or need, to be almost entirely disconnected from the business. Unwilling to have their name on a license, an office, or an advertisement, these ladies preferred to remain incognito and were willing to pay the agency a fee for its business end services. These ladies were usually the honest ones, and the best to work with. I never charged fifty percent as an agency fee, as most services do, and had various fees dependent on what I quoted. The fee was usually about one-third of the total.

Every escort that ever worked for my agencies was an independent contractor, and not an employee. The IRS defines many differences between the two, and no escort could justify a mistaken belief that she was an employee. They gave me their schedules and hopefully adhered to it. I never told anyone they needed to work any particular day or time to work for my service. The escorts paid me a set fee when they completed a call. I never saw the total that any collected, and I never paid them. This was a major dispute in my trial when the state consistently referred to the escorts as employees. In my mind there was no dispute. Each signed an independent contractor agreement that outlined the relationship between business and escort clearly.

To the client the agency was usually the bad guy; if they only knew. But they couldn't know or they would never request the particular lady again, and if offended many would not call the agency again. Certainly agencies exist that operate in a different manner. Some attempt to impose controls similar to those in the brothels in Nevada, and for monetary reasons. I do not pretend to know how every service operated, only my own.

Of course not all escorts work for agencies, and many are entirely independent. Following my trial and acquittal I did have the pleasure of meeting "Tampa Courtesan," Darcy, from the bigdoggie.net case, Operation Flea Collar. Darcy was also charged by Florida's Office of the Statewide Prosecutor and the agency that arrested me, the MBI, played a significant role in the overall case. We met to discuss and compare stories of police misconduct. Her main charge was Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering (RICO) also. The case against Darcy, and the other main defendants that had not already pled guilty, was thrown out by the judge when prosecutors insisted on concealing informants' names. Incidentally, those informants were men, from the client side of the transaction. Even though there could not be any transaction without the client and they initiate it by calling to begin with, the MBI rarely, if ever, charges them. Is this fair to the procuress and the prostitute or is it a double standard? There is no doubt that the thousands of clients of my businesses over nearly a decade would cringe on that question. Escort services, and the prostitution business in general, is indeed a system that is

enabled and powered by male consumers.

I never offered anyone a list of names in any attempt to make a deal, and I never called the clients. The clients always called me. The only client caught-up in my huge mess was one local resident that had given an escort his business card. The MBI found the card in her purse and played a game with the escort, the service, and the client. The client became their new informant, and of course was never charged with anything. The MBI is great with games, and are in fact experts in this area. No one ever gave the MBI any name.

Any student of ancient history is aware of the acceptance of prostitution, and not mere toleration, in the Roman Empire. In this era of history the prostitution trade prevailed as a part of patriarchal society, but was not respected as it had been with the courtesan in ancient Greece, and did not afford the prostitute positive social status. This acceptance was never extended to the procuress or brothel operator. To be sure, the procurer, procuress, brothel operator or madam has throughout history been considered infamous at the very least, and in various eras and geographical areas in history, was punished with death. In this era the client was absolutely accepted as having done no wrong. His respect in society was preserved. There are many similarities in the treatment and level of acceptance of the prostitution business between the Roman Empire and the twenty-first century relating to both societies' recent tendencies towards the patriarchal social system.

There are many proponents of legalization and the state-controlled model as it is represented in Nevada today. Over the years I have known several ladies that worked in Nevada brothels. Trust me, in reality the picture is not a pretty one. In the great majority of these brothels there is a high level of control, and for the reason of money, not safety. The house not only does not tolerate the prostitute taking one penny over her percentage of the take (not reporting a tip), the house fines excessively to make-up for any preconceived possibility that she might attempt this in the future. The ladies are subject to frequent searches, limited in telephone contact and kept in a virtual prison. I was accused of greed, but I never fined anyone anything, limited their telephone use, or searched them.

Periodically in history the state assumed control of the prostitution business in one way or another. By the late thirteenth century most areas of the European continent had what we can view as early red-light districts. [\(note 5\)](#) These areas are not much different than the red-light districts in parts of Europe today and were created mostly in the interest of public order. It is probable that the red-light district is the one viable solution in the operation that is often described as the world's oldest profession, provided that these districts were not run by a few men with money and power, and the workers could come and go as they please.

Legalized prostitution allows the state to tax the earnings of prostitutes and brothel operators while still publicly declaring the trade to be morally repugnant. In effect, this transpires in the U.S. today in that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is not concerned with the origins and legalities of income. Escort services often do pay taxes; mine certainly did, and as an escort service. The much publicized IRS seizure, subsequent operation, and then auction of the Mustang Ranch in Nevada is a classic example of government profiting from legal prostitution. My former business is an excellent example of government profiting from illegal prostitution while at the same time denouncing it and initiating criminal prosecutions.

In my own experience, I never encountered a state or federal agency, private business, or any individual that had issue with accepting money from my escort services. From 1992 forward, every escort service that I operated was properly licensed. In the early years, 1992 to 1996, I had an office in the City of Casselberry in Seminole County, Florida, a part of the metropolitan Orlando area. The county charged under forty dollars a year for an escort service occupational license. On the other hand, the city charged four hundred dollars per license, and I had at least four every year. Each fictitious name required its own license and to register each name with the state was fifty dollars, also a requirement. Forming each corporation was just under eighty dollars back then. In every case the type of business was stated as escort service.

I cannot allow the State of Florida the luxury of pretending that it, as a government entity and business, did not know. Every time I wrote myself a paycheck there was also a quarterly contribution to the state unemployment fund. While my corporate tax returns did usually state zero tax liability, as was pointed out by the prosecutor in trial, this was for reason: the business usually spent all of the money that it earned on expenses. If one wonders what type of expenses, examples are: health insurance; computers; the newest cellular equipment on the market; office expenses; website design; telephone book and other advertisements; another employee besides myself; and even bonuses for myself and others, including hotel bellmen, valets, and concierges. The business even paid for my training in the area of computer and telephone networks, an easy \$12,000 expense. Conversely, I never even took a vehicle expense or home office expense when it was used as such. It can't be omitted that every time a business writes an employee a paycheck approximately twenty-eight percent of the amount written must be paid in the form of a monthly check to the U.S. government. In other words, when I paid myself three thousand dollars in a month the business paid another nine hundred or so for the privilege. And then of course I personally paid income tax on the end of year total. Indeed, it was like any other business.

The expenses must also be viewed in the proper context of time. In the early 1990s a top-of-the-line cellular phone cost close to \$2000. Up until late 2000, a new and loaded model computer cost upward of \$4000. Website design in the early 1990s was a new occupation and it was not unusual to spend \$5000 a year to maintain a halfway decent website, and actually I think I spent much more. My business, Abra-Cadabra Orlando Escorts, had a website as far back as late 1993, before Disney or Toyota, or the existence of Google. I remember when my business was one of under twenty-five thousand websites listed in Yahoo in 1995. Being in on technology early is never cheap. [\(note 6\)](#)

By far the highest expense was that of telephone book advertisements, and I had plenty. For example, back in 1994, Sprint Publishing and Advertising charged thirty-nine hundred a month for a three-quarter page in color. Even with multiple purchase discounts my business spent over fifty-thousand dollars on telephone book ads in 1994; a fact brought up by the prosecutor during my testimony in trial. In this line of questioning the State of Florida prosecutor from the Office of the Statewide Prosecutor, John Craft, was attempting to establish that the business had to be a million dollar a year business and that I had hidden money. He continuously screamed: "Where is the money?" In a pre-trial hearing he had accused me of "having off-shore accounts," yet had no response when I asked where these accounts were located. It was just one of many false allegations. [\(note 7\)](#) I never did tell the jury about the blocks in area hotel PBX systems. It was a story for a book, not a trial. This book is an answer to his question.

When I recall the relentless hunt for the non-existent money that still continues, I am reminded of a 1998 telephone call that I received from the Mayflower Madam, Sydney Biddle Barrows. The call was made at the request of a friend, and was an attempt to urge me to close my escort services. Sydney informed me of her own predicament that followed the resolution of the criminal case. She stated that long after the case was over it was still believed that she had millions hidden in the Cayman Islands, though in reality she lived in poverty until she married. I explained to Sydney that I never accepted credit cards and had agency fees deposited in a business account, and always paid the IRS. I didn't listen to the lady, and never imagined that it could end the way that it did. In fact, it should not have resulted in my arrest; nevertheless, it did. Today I state to Sydney: It was a hard lesson to learn. Thank you for trying to save me the trouble.

Many questions remain as to why I was arrested to begin with. Of any escort service owner in the Orlando area, I knew all too well where I lived: conservative Orlando. I operated my agencies accordingly. Why was I selectively prosecuted and a fabricated case presented against me? Perhaps it had to do with my knowledge of the telephone number blocks in area resort PBX systems in the past, or maybe it involved a politically powerful client that did not get what he wanted from an escort. There is evidence that backs both theories.

I have no regrets from the decade that I owned escort services, and the court case and trial taught me many life lessons in relation to the criminal justice system and people. Would I do it again today? I seriously doubt it as I no longer have a young child to raise, and I learned the hard way that there is no such thing as financial security in life. It is as if I never left poverty far behind and the condition simply awaited my turn of the corner in life.

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Part One

Chapter One

Where Did the Money Go?

Jacqueline was not representative of the typical escort that one might find in Orlando. It didn't take long for me to realize that she was unique in both appearance and demeanor. Jacqueline often found herself at the center of attention. Independent and a divorced mother at age 28, she accepted her own need for the income that only came from working in the adult industry.

Jacqueline worked for several other services prior to the night she met Eric at the Waffle house in Lake Buena Vista, and was on call for another agency when he handed her our business card, a clear blue plastic card that had an outline of a naked lady posing next to the business name, Abra-Cadabra Orlando Escorts, in silver foil. There was no mistaking what we offered. When she called the following day we decided to meet at a mall. Jacqueline was the first escort that I met in Orlando as I awaited the distribution of the 92-93 Bellsouth yellow pages, and her penchant for secrecy was unusual to me. She later informed me that she watched me for some time before approaching and introducing herself. She actually considered it possible that I was a cop!

It was Jacqueline that first told me I needed an alias for the phone operation. I first chose "Linda," but she enlightened me concerning a woman that had advertisements in the phonebooks at the time and was referred to as Linda, be it her actual name or an alias.

"You don't want anyone to think that you are that Linda, believe me. She's a real nut, even by Orlando standards!"

We pondered the possibilities and both liked "Laura," as no one used it at another service, and it had a nice ring to it. From that moment on I became Laura with everyone that I spoke to pertaining to the business. This was never an attempt to hide my true identity. If someone wanted to know my real name they only had to check occupational licenses, and a business was required to have a license to place an ad in the Bellsouth phonebook. By 1995, the Florida Department of State had corporations and fictitious names listed in an online database and my real name was available to anyone that conducted a brief search.

By the time that Jacqueline and I concluded our meeting, I had to wonder if I'd made a mistake in opening the business. She had given me a lengthy rundown on how it all worked in Orlando and a who's who in the world of escort services. I anticipated encountering several cut-throat competitors and a group of agents on a task force, the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI). According to Jacqueline, the MBI had developed its own system of justice in a war on adult business in Orlando. Either Jacqueline was paranoid or I was in for the ride of my life. As time progressed I realized it to be the latter choice.

I did take the time to meet with every potential escort that contacted me through my advertisement in Bellsouth, but chose to work with only a select few. It was a month after meeting Jacqueline that I met Bethany, in early December of 1992. She looked like she would feel more at ease in a pair of jeans and sneakers than in the dress and heels that she wore to our meeting.

As I was opening my services, another agency with multiple ads was in the process of being shut down by the MBI. Bethany filled me in on the full story. She had been arrested by the MBI and was fighting the charges. At the time, the story she related sounded unbelievable. Bethany stated that the MBI had wire-tapped the escort service's telephone lines, had agents waiting outside the callers' hotel rooms, and watched the escort enter the room. The agents waited until the escort left the room and then one group of agents would bang on the client's door and scare him into making a statement against the escort that listed sex acts and money paid. The other group of agents had traced the escort's vehicle tag

while she was in the room, and then followed her home. They collected enough information on each escort to make three or more prostitution cases and then threatened the escort with racketeering charges. If the escort didn't make the statement the MBI demanded concerning the service phone operators and owners, she was in fact prosecuted on the first degree felony, but then as with most other cases they all took the deal.

All of the escorts involved in this early MBI mess did in fact make the statements that the MBI demanded. However, the strategy backfired on the MBI by July of 1995 when the Florida Supreme Court ruled that the state's wiretap law improperly exceeded federal limitations. Lawson Lamar, the state attorney in this circuit, and the MBI, argued that prostitution is a life threatening crime. Every court disagreed and the final ruling made it so that the MBI could no longer obtain wiretaps in prostitution investigations. The evidence obtained from the wiretaps in that case was tossed out.

Not long after meeting Bethany, I met Kendall. When she called my ad to set-up an interview she sounded more cautious than Jacqueline and Bethany, if that was possible. Usually I chose the place to meet, but I did want Kendall to feel comfortable with me because she sounded nice, so I let her pick the place and time. We met at a McDonalds on Highway 436 close to the Orlando International Airport. Though I was supposed to meet Kendall in the parking lot, I arrived early and saw her, as she had described herself, sitting inside with a long-haired man that looked like an undercover drug agent. Kendall saw me through the window and quickly walked outside. She was wearing a calf length gray trench coat. Kendall was petite, standing about five feet and four inches with stiletto heels on. Her shoulder length blonde hair, dark glasses, and the trench coat gave her an air of mystery normally found in a detective show or a James Bond movie. As we sat down in her silver corvette, Kendall expressed the importance that she be able to conceal her identity. I told her that she was already doing a good job and we had a laugh that broke the ice.

Kendall had worked for other escort services before calling me, and had some stories similar to Jacqueline's. One of Kendall's stories would later return to haunt her. She had worked for Walter, a crack head, as a booking agent for his escort service. Walter owned services in Orlando for years. He would later testify, on behalf of the State of Florida, at Kendall's sentencing. Walter was an MBI informant.

It was a few months after I met Kendall when she called me, asking if she could come over to my house. She stated that she had something to tell me, and show me, and wanted me to hear it from her first. She valued the opportunity to work for my agency, and I admired her honesty and integrity. I was nothing like Walter or any other service owner that she had encountered in the past. She was nothing like any other escort that I ever met. When Kendall arrived I offered her some coffee and we sat down in the living room. She took a photo out of her purse. It was a picture of her in a police uniform. If I was surprised, and I'm not sure that I was, I managed to hide my thoughts.

Kendall looked in my eyes and stated: "I wanted you to hear it from me first. Trust me; I'm not working undercover here. I just need to pay some bills and I need money."

I did believe her.

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By January of 1993, I had realized my serious error in only placing advertisements in the Bellsouth Yellow Pages. At the time of the deadline to place ads in the Sprint Phonebook, August 1992, I was not aware that it existed. Bellsouth's book was in a limited number of hotels, and only in the airport, downtown and International Drive areas. The Sprint book covered all of the Lake Buena Vista and Disney resorts and many in Bellsouth's area also. Still, I worked with what was available to me, checking upcoming conventions and conferences in all of the hotels. I also worked with numerous workers in the hotels as time wore on. This was the early 1990s and valets, bellmen, and concierges were still significant contacts for escort services. It would be many years before most people in the U.S.

were drawn to the internet.

I also placed the occasional advertisement in an area tourist publication and in the International Herald Tribune, though by far the Bellsouth Yellow Pages ads generated the most response. Workers in area resorts did contact my agency for hotel guests somewhat regularly; some more than others, and earned a commission for doing so. Sometimes I would ask the escort to pay them out of the agency fee on the way out of the hotel, and other times, if they had already left the premises, the commissions accumulated and would be dropped off to them later. The business acquired most of these contacts through a few of the escorts that viewed promotion as advantageous.

By August of 1993, when I met with the advertising representative from Sprint, Ron Seigfeld, over lunch at Steak and Ale, I was not prepared for his subtle, though effective, sales techniques. I had planned to reinvest all that the business had made to that point, and pay in full when I signed contracts for a few small to medium ads that day; it didn't exactly work out that way though. As incentive to sell, the ad reps were paid a ten percent commission on every ad that they sold. I departed from lunch after signing contracts for two large ads, and a few medium to small ads. I paid, by business check, fifty percent down and was to be billed monthly for the balance on each ad. For the upcoming 93-94 telephone books, published and distributed in November 1993, Sprint would be using color for the first time, and Ron communicated the importance of having color ads quite well. A three-quarter page in color for Abra-Cadabra Escorts ran about \$3900 a month. For that ad alone the business had a monthly billing of nineteen hundred and fifty dollars, and there were several more. I had placed my bet on the huge conventions and full hotels in the Lake Buena Vista/Disney area. It was a bet that would never pay.

By the time the 93-94 Sprint books had been distributed I realized that something was going on around here, although I couldn't exactly pin it down. It was early 1994, perhaps sometime in February, before I realized that it had to do with escort service telephone numbers being blocked in hotel PBX systems. I knew a problem existed prior to the release of the Sprint books, but had thought it to be isolated to a few resorts, and more of an anomaly than some kind of concerted effort. At the time I perceived it to be illegal. If it was legal then why would no one admit to it? Why did each person that I approached on the subject claim that it was not even possible to block a telephone number in a PBX system? I had to wonder if they were all just ignorant, in a state of denial, or hiding something illegal.

I later realized that I first viewed the situation as an anomaly only because my business had no advertisements in Sprint's book the first year, and Bellsouth's book was not in all that many resorts that I counted on the ads for clients. I had attributed the first three months being slow to little interest in escorts, phonebooks not all in the rooms yet, and less spending after the holidays. In my mind it was a combination of reasoning. But as time wore on, I grasped the fact that the problem had other roots.

I had to differentiate the type of business that I was doing from the sort of business that I was not. I was booking lots of clients in residences in the metropolitan Orlando area. I was booking clients in what I considered small, or out-of-the-way, hotels and motels. I was in fact booking a few clients in major resorts, just not in any volume at all. It made no sense to me: a huge convention, of mostly men, booked all the rooms at two resorts next to each other and no one called? How could I believe that my number was blocked though? I had booked a client at each of those same resorts just two days earlier.

The money was enough to survive on, but with the excessive ad bills that I had monthly, that was about all it accomplished. I already had a website, but I had arrived early at the internet party. Sometimes being the first to arrive at the party is not much better than being the last to arrive. I had gone to great expense to have what amounted to a three or four page website with some cool animation. The guy that designed it had been an animator out at Disney. Darrell quit working for Disney and began a career in website design with one of Orlando's earliest internet service providers. It was a unique site, and one of few in existence; the second escort service website in the world. The first escort service to have a site on the internet was in Seattle, Washington. In the early days, the majority of clients that contacted me through the website were either from Europe or the Middle East; although a

few U.S. clients did locate my business on the internet. Before late 1996, the website was more of an expense than a source of income.

I was booking enough calls to pay the bills, and at any rate that was what kept me going. In the meantime I had made it a project to understand how telephone networks worked, and more important, PBX systems; that was where my problems could be traced to. First I went the usual route in seeking help:

Since all of my telephone numbers were Sprint issued and serviced, with the exception of an A T&T toll-free number, I started with Sprint security. I met with the man in charge of security for the central Florida Sprint networks. He listened to me, but I had the distinct feeling that he thought I was a nut. I took it to task and continued my study of networks and PBX systems.

Shortly after my visit to Sprint security, I questioned my advertisement representative, Ron, on the topic. Ron told me a different story: Ron said that this was not the first time there was a discussion about telephone lines being blocked in area resorts. He told me about a woman by the name of Linda that had ads in the phonebooks. Linda disappeared about the same time that I appeared, and no longer had any ads.

“Linda was screaming about the same thing that you are. She involved the MBI, the FBI and the Orange County Sheriff’s Office. She also took it up with Sprint security. One day I walked into the secure room, where they initiated the wiretaps, and saw a room full of agents and telephone security people. They saw that something was happening to the lines, but were puzzled as to exactly what. They were terminating at a certain point. After that, no one ever spoke about it again, and I never asked.”

I asked Ron where I could find Linda.

“She just disappeared. I don’t know. I’m sorry.”

Recalling that Jacqueline had mentioned the woman named Linda when we first met, I contacted her and questioned her on Linda and the line block situation. Jacqueline had perceived Linda as being paranoid, mainly due to her constant talk about telephone lines being blocked.

“But you must understand here. She was booking calls at the hotels that she claimed were blocking her numbers. I thought she was nuts and that’s why I stopped working there. Maybe she wasn’t that crazy after all.”

I explained to Jacqueline that I saw the same thing happening and I didn’t know the formula, or key, to how and where it was being done, but I was working on it. Wherever Linda was she could be sure that her perception of the situation had merit after all.

Jonathan had been calling me frequently at this stage of the game. He was a concierge at a Bellsouth book hotel, the Stouffer. [\(note 8\)](#) The first time he contacted me, seeking an escort for a special hotel guest, I sent Jacqueline. She made a great first impression with both the hotel guest and Jonathan when she met him after the call. He had requested that the escort stop by his desk before leaving the hotel. I imagined that it had to do with collecting his commission on the two hour appointment and making sure that the escort that I sent was as described. He was quite impressed with Jacqueline, and later requested her often for his special guests, which included a few of the owners of the hotel when they visited. She was always happy to accept his appointments, mainly because she felt safe in knowing that it could not possibly be the MBI hiding behind the door.

Jacqueline had many repeat requests. She was beautiful and had a great personality, a hard combination to find in an Orlando area escort, in part due to the overzealous efforts of the MBI. Most of the better ladies were afraid to work in Central Florida. Often the ladies in the area had one or the other attribute, but rarely both. Orlando has always been different than most major U.S. cities in this respect, and anyone that has ever called an escort service here knows exactly what I mean. In the same respect, clients like Jonathan were also hard to come by. He was not just any concierge and had many contacts in the hotel industry in the Orlando area.

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In the early days the business had two employees, Tina and Donny. I met Tina through her husband Dwayne, a driver for the transportation company that I'd previously worked with. Tina answered the business lines from 9PM until 6AM, five nights a week. The first few months Tina was honest and the arrangement was beneficial to both of us, but it didn't take her long to decide that she knew it all and demand more money. She was paid \$250 per week for the five shifts and \$15 for each call that she booked, and she often booked ten or more per night. I decided that it was best to end the extortion game before it escalated, and so I successfully, and legally, motivated Dwayne and Tina to decide that it was in their best interest to move back to Ohio.

When I informed Tina that I'd pass on paying her more money, she trashed me to every escort and other agency owner that would listen. Turning Tina into the untouchable booker was not too complicated, but it didn't shut her up, so with the help of Kendall I helped her husband lose his job with the transportation company. This was simple as well as Dwayne was not well-liked at work by anyone, and was the type of man that often made crude, sexist comments and attempted to place his hands all over every woman that he encountered. We've all met someone like Dwayne. Indeed, Tina and Dwayne were the nightmare that few were aware of.

Donny ended up working for my business for several years. He was another contact from the transportation company I'd worked with, and just needed a better paying job. When Tina exited he took over her five shifts a week and also kept his collection, interviewing, and basic errand-running position. Donny was gay, so I felt secure in having him interview escorts and sometimes collect fees. The most that he ever wanted from the ladies was breakfast at Denny's on occasion. The best move that Donny made was to interview Susan, an escort that worked with my business for 8 years, though intermittently.

Susan stood 5'9" with a perfect model figure and straight, shoulder length, natural golden blonde hair. She had previously been employed as both a model and an interior decorator, but was in dire need of money at the time that she called seeking escort work. She also had a kind, understanding, and upbeat personality, and is one of few people involved in the escort industry that I considered to be genuine and real.

One thing it didn't take me long to discover was that many clients would ask the escort for her phone number so that they could bypass paying an agency fee. Susan had a unique way of dealing with this. She would explain to the client that like them, she had a personal life, and was only available when she was on-call for the service. She explained it in relation to business, something that most of our clients easily understood. Susan would state that the client must call me to check on her availability as she was not on-call seven nights a week and I could advise them of her schedule when they called. As she stated it:

“What if I am having dinner with my sister or my mother? If you called I might have a hard time explaining it to them, and I wouldn't be able to leave anyway. How would your boss feel if it was discovered that you passed out a personal number to clients and created your own business on the side?”

It sure wouldn't work for any length of time.

Depending on the client's personality, Susan might also explain it by asking them how they would feel if she contacted them whenever she felt the urge. One explanation or the other usually worked, and Susan had many repeat requests. The honesty and integrity of Susan, Jacqueline, and Kendall kept my agency alive when it otherwise would have closed due to high ad bills and too little business. These three ladies also quickly told me when a client had other escorts' telephone numbers, and all had exemplary investigative skills in pulling the information, including the actual numbers for verification purpose, out of the client. Each resented the thieving escorts as much as I did, and perhaps more. Regardless, there are always successful thieves in the escort business.

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It was often the case that Jacqueline arranged a future appointment with a client before they parted ways. He would let her know when he would be returning to Orlando and she would instruct him to contact me, and state that she would reserve the time and be available for him. Indeed, it was rare when she didn't hear from the client at the prearranged date and time. Of course one really never knows what can happen that might prevent the advance appointment.

On one particular occasion when I did not hear from a client as expected, I just tossed it up to some sort of interference, but Jacqueline didn't buy it – she was sure that she would hear from him, and when she didn't she hinted that she believed I sent someone else when he called. Agencies had done it to her before, but that was not the case here. When I finally heard from the client two days later he was calling from a payphone at a steakhouse on International Drive.

Sounding exasperated, Jack said: “Laura, I've been trying to reach you for two days and nights and all I got was a busy signal! I had an appointment with Jacqueline, – what is going on?”

“Jack, we've both been waiting for your call. I have faithfully answered the phone and other people haven't had trouble getting through. Where have you been dialing from?”

“From my room at the Stouffer. I'm here for a convention.”

“I am sorry for whatever happened here, and I'll have Jacqueline call you right back at the payphone that you're at. She really looked forward to hearing from you.”

Jack sounded relieved that we hadn't disappeared and Jacqueline was waiting to hear from him. I apologized for the problem again and we said goodbye. I called her immediately and gave her the number. Most payphones still accepted incoming calls, and in the early 1990s, not everyone had a cellular phone.

Now I was really confused. Jonathan called me from the Stouffer frequently and never had a problem getting through. More importantly, how many other potential clients have dialed and not been able to get through?

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Chapter Two

Fast Busy Signals

Several hours later I heard from Jacqueline, on my home telephone number. She was leaving Jack's room and was unable to reach me on the business lines – she had dialed the two main numbers that she knew, but each rang busy. She said that she'd call me when she arrived home and then hung-up.

When we discussed this busy signal she described it as not a normal sounding busy signal. It was a fast busy with shorter tones. We decided to meet for coffee the following day and discuss it further. After all, neither one of us was sure what was going on with my telephone lines.

Jacqueline already had a lunch appointment with Jonathan scheduled for Friday; two days away. We decided that it was best if she approached him on the subject of the blocked lines at that time. They had become rather friendly, and it would sound better than if I called him for such an odd reason. Besides, everyone that I spoke to about the problem had a clueless look by the time the conversation was over. A main point that I did not understand was that I frequently received calls from Jonathan, and the calls went through the hotel's PBX system. He never called me from a cellular phone or somewhere else. He always called from his desk. That proved one thing – it wasn't happening with all extensions in the hotel.

By Friday evening I received a call from Jonathan.

"I call you very often Laura, and my phone at the desk goes through the PBX the same as the room phones do!"

"Although I know little about PBX systems I imagined that Jonathan. I am confused on the entire matter and only ask that you humor me and try to reach me from a variety of rooms."

"Yes Laura, this is not a problem, but I must tell you that the PBX system is too old here. I do not believe that we will find out very much. I am leaving for the day now and will contact you in the morning, say about ten o'clock, if you will be answering then?"

I assured him that I would be answering and thanked him for trying for me. At this point I had no idea what was going on, but I knew that something was. The phone didn't ring all night except for a few escorts calling to inform me of their availability so I ended up going to sleep earlier than usual.

I awakened to Jonathan calling as he promised.

"Good morning Laura, I am dialing you from a room, and I have reached you!" Jonathan exclaimed.

"Yes, I see. Can you please dial me from rooms in all areas of the hotel? It is so important and I will be forever grateful!"

"Consider it done Laura. I will be calling you shortly."

It was early evening when I next heard from Jonathan, and he sounded a bit on the frantic side:

"Laura, I went to several other rooms but only got a fast busy signal when I dialed your main number. I then tried another number that Jacqueline had given me with the same result. I didn't think this old PBX system was capable of this. It seems that there is a problem. I will look into the situation and give you a call tomorrow."

I did not intend to guess at what precisely that problem was, and all I knew at this point was that whatever it was, Jonathan was not aware of it. He was not just any concierge, but had a special status with concierges in this area. I had sent escorts to the owners of the hotel when they were in town, and if they went through me then why was I having this problem? But then this was not isolated to this particular resort; it was happening all over the area. I had questions: Was it isolated to my telephone lines, or was it going on with other services also? Was it being done by another service in the phonebook so that the only reachable numbers belonged to them? Why did calls go through from some

rooms and not others? I figured I'd wait until Jonathan contacted me before I made any other moves. I realized that I was becoming obsessed with the problem, or rather the investigation, but then I had planned this business well and I had huge ad bills to contend with. I couldn't possibly forget it was happening, could I? If I tried, the ad bills jolted me back to reality. And then there were the escorts: A few were having a hard time believing that with a hundred thousand plus people in town for major conventions, I could not even manage to offer them each a call a day, and with my sizable ads and contacts it did sound unbelievable.

It was two days before I heard from Jonathan. I had resisted the urge to call him, holding to the thought that more time was the best plan of action. When I finally heard from him it was as if he let the air out of my balloon, or burst my bubble of hope.

"Laura, I am sorry. You must leave it alone! It's too big and not fixable!"

"What is too big? Please tell me what you found out!"

"I'll see what I can do Laura, but don't count on much. This was all very surprising to me and its better that you leave it alone."

At the moment my only thought was that whoever they are and whatever they have done, I would never leave it alone. Never. Dropping it was not an option. The thought that it was another service in the phonebook could just about be ruled out. I also didn't think it was isolated to my numbers, but must be implemented on other services' lines as well. Jonathan did not scare easily; like I said, he was not just any concierge. Whatever it was, it was definitely big.

I continued forward with my investigation. First I had to figure out the key to the blocks. Why were specific rooms blocked and not others? What made those particular rooms different? An acquaintance in the legal field recommended a private investigator, and at this point I was receiving too few calls from my big ads to ignore any potential avenue of investigation.

I made an appointment with John Kellman at his office in east Orlando. It was not far from the airport. When I arrived John directed me to a chair in his office and stated that he would be back in a few minutes. He was a good looking man, in a rugged sort of way. John stood about 5'11" and could easily be described as athletic. His collar length wavy, dark hair and unshaven look, as if he was working on a full beard, was reminiscent of an undercover drug agent, close to the character that was sitting with Kendall in the McDonald's before she walked outside. The office was decently, though sparsely, furnished. The walls were decorated with framed certificates and awards that made it obvious that John was a former cop, most likely an agent with the MBI drug unit, and a former military investigator. I felt as if I'd heard his name somewhere before, but I wasn't sure where. There was a certificate on the wall that reflected his work in Germany, and I had lived in Germany for many years. I started to feel as if I had spent much of my life in the same places that John had, yet never met him before. It was a bit on the strange side.

I explained the problem to John, though I didn't feel he really grasped it, which was normal as no one else had either. He said he would check into the hotel of my choice and dial all of my business numbers from the room. This sounded too simple for me.

"Can you pretend to be from a different state when you book the reservation?" I asked.

"Absolutely, and no one will have any idea that I'm an investigator. I will be in touch with you on Friday. Don't worry – we'll figure out what's going on here! Which hotel do you want me to investigate first?"

I replied that the Dolphin should be first, and then the Swan next door to it. I then handed John the two-thousand dollar retainer and the expense money that he requested. I shook his hand, thanked him for his time, and exited his office. As I drove home I couldn't help thinking that John's intended method of investigation seemed too simple for the problem at hand.

By now I had figured out how to track which conventions were in which resorts so I knew if I should expect calls or not. If there was an interior design convention in a specific hotel it's doubtful that I would receive many calls, if any at all. However, if that same hotel was filled with cardiologists, I

expected my phone to ring; the problem was that it didn't. I might book a call at the hotel, but it would be from an isolated person there on business, and not anyone with the cardiologist's convention. I knew this because I asked enough questions when I booked a call, and often discussed a potential client's business at length, mainly to determine that he did what he claimed to do for a living and was not the MBI. Now there was a new reason for all of my questions.

When Friday came John had no problem reaching me on all six telephone lines from his room at the Dolphin. I told him go ahead as planned and check into the Swan hotel the following night, but I had little confidence that anything would come of it. I considered the entire situation and decided that John had little or no knowledge of PBX systems, telephone lines, or hackers, and his approach was too simplistic.

I dialed Kendall to relate what had transpired with John this evening. She wasn't thrilled with the entire concept of hiring a private investigator.

"What? Sounds like bullshit to me! I'll be over early tomorrow so we can go take a look around, okay?" asked Kendall.

"Sure dear, I suppose we'll figure it out somehow. See you tomorrow."

**

I drove my car into the valet area at the Swan Hotel, received a ticket for my keys, and walked into the lobby. The entire lobby area was overfilled with men, although there were some ladies circulating in the crowd. Kendall and I found seats in an overstuffed chair with a perfect view of the front desk and the entrances to both bars on either side of the lobby. We watched two blondes exit the elevators and walk out the front doors with two men that had the look of conventioners. A few minutes later the blondes entered the lobby solo and passed right by us, mingling with the crowd. They both looked like pros to me. One looked down at a beeper clipped to her skirt waistband, said something to the other, and then proceeded towards the elevators.

Kendall and I looked at each other. This was too obvious, and going on right in front of an assistant manager and the entire front desk. The other blonde had already latched on to a man and was headed for the elevators with him. My cellular phone started ringing. I had all of my business lines forwarded to it. As I answered I recognized John's voice right away.

"Hello Laura, well I'm checked in at the Swan, in room 11290, and I've just reached you on your main number. I'll call back on another number in a few minutes."

I thanked him and disconnected.

"It's John calling the 9292 from room 11290," I told Kendall.

"What! By the looks of it he ought to be in the lobby. Laura, this guy isn't investigating shit. Sounds more like he's working with them!"

"Looks like wasted money, regardless."

We each ordered a double-espreso from a passing waiter and continued our watching game. A few more ladies latched on to men and headed towards the elevators; some returning twenty minutes later. Finally, our espressos arrived and I paid the waiter.

"They sure aren't spending much time with these men," I thought out-loud.

"Hey, there's John," I said, pointing him out to Kendall.

"This is your investigator? Laura, he's an ex-cop and I know him; not personally, although I do recognize him."

"Are you ready to go?" I'd had enough negativity for one day.

We decided to sleep on the problem and come up with a better plan. I had just wasted close to three thousand dollars on that stupid idea.

Several days later I booked a call at the Swan Hotel. I do not recall any conventions being there at that time. I sent Tanya to the call. She was pretty, but it was her personality that drew men to her.

Women hated her. Tanya was usually full of crap, but hilarious at the same time. I liked her. How many people can really make others laugh? She could always cheer a person up when the outlook was bleak. I wasn't sure about the client, but I sure needed some good cheer. As it was, this was not a night for happiness.

It had been close to three hours and I still had not heard a word from Tanya. The phone rang and I answered with my usual "hello, can I help you?" It was Tanya.

"You can help me alright! Why can't I get through to your numbers? I finally found the room – this place is like a maze, but I've tried calling you from everywhere possible around here. I thought you gave me the wrong room number when the elevator wouldn't take me to the floor you told me to go to. Anyway, you didn't, I'm here now, and I'll tell you about it later."

"Okay Tanya, I'll page you in an hour."

I wondered what all of that was about.

Just about an hour passed when Tanya called me from the room to let me know she was leaving. She said that she'd stop by my house rather than attempt to call from anywhere around there.

I answered the door. Tanya looked exhausted as she began to explain what happened before I could get the door closed.

"I thought I was in the wrong hotel so I walked next door to the Dolphin. All of those rooms only have three digits and the number that I wrote down had five, so I go to the payphone and try to call you. First I tried the toll-free number, then the 9292. I can't get through on either one so I hit zero for the operator."

I listened intently as Tanya continued.

"The operator said she couldn't put me through to either number, and added that those numbers will not go through from any payphone on the entire property. Next I go to the front desk and tell the guy that I can't get through to my babysitter. I ask him to dial it for me. He says it's no problem and asks me for the number. Doubting that my babysitter could have a toll-free number, I give him the 9292. He looks at it, looks at something under the counter, and then at the number again. He says "we can't dial that number from here." Instead of arguing, I gave him the room number that I'd been looking for and he directs me to the Swan Hotel next door, telling me to take a special elevator that goes to the tower. That is how I found the room!" [\(note 9\)](#)

When Tanya had finished her story I could only sit there too stunned to speak.

"Laura, I've never been through so much crap in my life trying to make a phone call! No wonder you hardly ever book any calls out there! If you need any help trying to figure out what's going on you can count me in."

I told her that I was sorry for all of the problems. We said goodnight and I was left to the silence of a phone that rarely rang. I was not sure of the next step.

**

The following night Kendall talked me into going out to a few hotels and conducting our own investigation. I had to hand it to Kendall – she had some great ideas.

"Let's try something and see what happens Laura," said Kendall as she knocked on the door of a room at the Dolphin.

"Do you mind if I use your phone to make one local call? I'll give you ten dollars and you can watch me dial. We just need to find out if a number can be reached from here?" questioned Kendall.

"Sure, come on in." He invited us into his room without further questions. The call rang right through to my cellular.

"Thank you for the use of your phone. Can I ask if you are here with a convention?" asked Kendall.

"Yep, there are about a hundred and fifty of us here until tomorrow."

"Okay, we appreciate it. Have a great time!"

“So now what? He was with a convention.” I queried Kendall.

“Yes, but a small one. Let’s keep going on this.”

This time we used our brains and asked the questions before offering the ten dollars. For the rest of the evening we found no one that wasn’t there alone or with that same small convention. We had no problem getting through on any of my lines. Kendall and I agreed that we were on to something, although we weren’t getting anywhere with this small convention group. It was time to head home and come up with a new strategy.

We returned the following night figuring it was a good enough of an idea to work at it for a while. We used the same plan of action at the Swan Hotel. The gentlemen were all there with a rather large convention for a Detroit auto-maker, and had approximately nine hundred rooms reserved, from what we were told. We went to a total of five rooms and dialed two of my business numbers and one other service’s number from the room phones. None of the calls went through, and in every case we got the fatal fast busy signal. At least the results gave us more information to work with. It was time for both of us to go home, clear our heads, and figure out what we knew and what we didn’t know. It was time to separate the facts from the possibilities.

**

I had been spending my spare time reading, mainly Bellcore telephone network training manuals that I had ordered at this point, and also some material on the topic of PBX systems. I quickly learned that there were a variety of manufacturers, and that different models had distinct features. One feature was a blocking tool that permitted the system to be programmed to block a list of telephone numbers from being dialed by all end users within a specific block of rooms, or rather with specific extensions in that block of rooms. As an example, a company would reserve nine hundred rooms. The rooms were not scattered throughout a two thousand room hotel; they were in blocks. The people attending the convention signed in and were assigned a room. The end result was that the attendees were assigned rooms on floors one through five, and extensions in that block of rooms were unable to dial any numbers on the block list. Indeed, it was interesting. The new question was what group was furnishing these conventioners with escorts?

The practice of blocking telephone numbers in PBX systems was most likely not isolated to escort services. I did encounter transportation company operators that had reason to believe that it was widespread in this industry also. All of those that I spoke with owned limo services. It sounded like some group had quite a monopoly going between escorts and limousines! Kendall and I had watched it, and it went on in front of management and the front desk. It was too obvious.

I decided to call an old friend, Tommy. We had worked together in the airport before I opened the escort services, and now Tommy was a concierge at the Swan Hotel. I explained my current dilemma and the phone block puzzle to Tommy. He stated that he knew something was going on at the hotel, but no one had let him in on it as of yet. He told me about frequent dinners with, on the average, eighty to a hundred men present.

“I’m noticing the call girl types there, sitting on laps, and going from one person to the other. It’s like a smorgasbord of some sort. I’m not sure where they came from, but they were never around until our food and beverage director returned from a three month excursion to Nevada. He’s a real shady, crafty type of guy.”

Tommy added that one night he walked in on one of these dinners and was practically thrown out, which was not remotely understandable in that he is a concierge. We discussed other things in our lives for a while, and then Tommy left with the promise that he’d let me know if anything new came up.

**

“Was Jonathan able to help you at all?” asked Jacqueline.

I told her the latest on the investigation, and stated that I had not heard from Jonathan.

It was several days later when he called.

“Laura, it’s great to hear your voice! I haven’t been in touch because the hotel has been rather slow the last few weeks.”

“I am sorry to hear that. Any luck at all about the PBX situation?”

Jonathan’s response was predictable.

“I am afraid not Laura. It seems that this has been accomplished by someone quite unapproachable. I didn’t want you to get your hopes too high as I doubted that I would be able to do much for you.”

I replied by thanking him for trying and stating that I would ask no more. After some small talk we said our goodbyes. I was left with the thought that he only called to see where my mind was on the subject, but I offered no clues. Several issues and questions crossed my mind: Who is quite unapproachable – government, or big money, or both working together?

I found it interesting that Jonathan had lost interest in Jacqueline, and just as quickly he had run out of special guests. I would not hear from Jonathan any time soon.

In the meantime, I was receiving reports that several Lake Buena Vista area resorts were directing a couple of employees to take a straight-edged razor and remove the escort section from the Sprint yellow pages. I did have my contacts in some resorts and heard this from a security guard, a security supervisor, and a maid in three different resorts.

It was time for me to redesign my website, and put it to better use. I found a new internet service provider and website designer that charged much less and would make changes any time that I requested. I gave Jason my design plan and the text that I wanted in the website. Most important, I had him create a flashing banner that stated, in all caps:

OUR PHONE NUMBER MAY BE BLOCKED IN AREA RESORTS. IF YOU GET A BUSY SIGNAL, DIAL FROM A CELLULAR; USE A CALLING CARD OR A PAYPHONE OFF THE HOTEL PROPERTY. WE ARE HERE!

The email address and the telephone number were immediately under this flashing banner. It was a beginning, and if nothing else, I know that I really angered some group of people! I would wait for them to crawl out of the woodwork.

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Chapter Three

Parallel Services

I knew most of the agency owners with ads in the phonebooks, and if I didn't at least know a little about them, one of the escorts that worked for my business did. For that matter, several other agency owners were my former fellow employees at the transportation company. There was Hal that opened an agency shortly after I did and Felice and Cortland arrived at the party six months later.

Felice and Cortland opened an agency at first and then later opened one of those non-licensed massage parlors referred to as body scrubs. At least the attendants were not licensed and worse yet, it was located in the City of Orlando. Cortland was a comedian, and funnier than any that I have ever heard, either on stage or on television. Felice was a natural redhead and had that mythical red-hair temperament. She began her career in the adult industry by working for my business on occasion. Felice and Cortland became what I must refer to as gym nuts and spent every spare minute in the gym. I would describe them as health conscious, except that they also ate fast food on a daily basis. To be so concerned with your body that you spend hours daily in the gym is great, but to shove a sack full of McDonalds or Taco Bell down after the workout is weird.

I asked around and figured out that none of the agencies were busy, and I had more ads than any. All of the owners were blaming each other, for one reason or another. Many blamed me and believed that I was doing all of the business. Kendall had friends in the strip clubs that gave her information about what was going on in adult business in the area. A dancer approached her and gave her the phone number for an escort service that was actively seeking ladies to work. According to her contact, they were a very busy agency. Kendall called me to tell me that she had called the number that she was given and made an appointment.

She was to meet with an Asian woman at a TGI Fridays in east Orlando, but it wasn't a plan to work somewhere else. Kendall was playing the investigator. The woman drove a red Mercedes, though Kendall was directed to meet her at the bar. The plan was for me to be sitting at a nearby table and leave a few minutes after she arrived so that I could get her tag number and follow her. I exited the restaurant on cue and followed the woman as she zipped through the traffic eastbound on Highway 50 to what looked like an office in a strip mall. Kendall recounted their conversation to me on my cellular as I drove:

"She said she was really busy and needs me to start tonight. I told her I'd call on about eight in the evening. I asked her where they advertised but she really never answered me. They take MasterCard, Visa, and Amex. More important Laura, she said that sometimes they will put me in a room in a nice resort and when a client seeks a busty blonde, they'll send him to my room. She said not to worry – the room is free, to me and to them!"

Kendall was excited; the thrill of the chase and all. I checked the woman's tag and it came back to a William Rosell at a Tampa address. I called a phone company in Mississippi that I knew to furnish a number and name when given an address. It all matched. I then called a friend that could run a check on William for me. I'd have my answer the following day.

In the meantime, Kendall called me and we had a problem: She had called on with the woman and was given a residential client. This was not good. I told Kendall to skip it and we could just wait for the background check, but no, she wanted to try anyway. Kendall feared she would be recorded on video, and maybe it was some sort of blackmail scheme. So she went to the appointment, but in a cautious mode.

I listened on the cellular line she left connected in her purse. After some conversation she exited the residence. She had seen a lighted red dot on what could have been a video recorder. I thanked her for trying and assured her that we would know more soon.

The following day I learned that William Rosell had owned escort services in Tampa in the past. He went to the University of South Florida; he was a hacker, and he was currently under federal investigation. He had some sort of past connection to a group that called themselves "Sherwood Forrest." I called Kendall with the information and we both decided that we wanted to see what was in that office that I'd followed the Mercedes to. We agreed to meet at my house at one o'clock in the morning and proceed to the office from there.

We were both dressed in solid black and had on running shoes. I wasn't sure what we were going to accomplish, but we were dressed for sneaking around in the dark and anticipated that anything was possible. We brought binoculars and the hope that we could see what was in that office. Once we arrived we walked around the back of the building and located the telephone company box. There were ten lines going into that office, which was unusual, except for the situation. The outside lights were at a perfect angle, and shined through the front window. I saw a wooden shelf on the wall that was about four by six feet, and with rows of slots to insert papers. There were about four going across and twenty going down, each having a white label with the name of a hotel or resort. Kendall and I returned to my car not sure what to do next, but we were tired and decided that it would help to sleep on it.

**

The scene at Denny's was different. There were ten of us; all escort service owners except for Kendall, and all drinking coffee around one of those long tables usually used to seat big families. We were discussing our telephone problems and the potential solutions. I had decided that the next step was to contact other owners that I knew personally and get some feedback on the strange office situation. Between all of us there was a low level of trust. It was a competitive business and everyone had the predisposition to believe that it was possible it was another agency causing the phone line block problems. The one thing that everyone collectively agreed on is that there was definitely a problem.

Only six of us decided to follow through and watch the office people. The other four owners were interested, but had one reason or the other for their inability to participate. Kendall intended to join us in the investigation. The goal was to figure out what these office people were up to and what part they played, if any at all, in our telephone problems. We decided that if we watched them day and night for a couple of days we would probably have our answers. Kendall, Natasha, and I had the first shift and we would be relieved by Felice and Cortland at seven in the morning.

Kendall left by three o'clock in the morning just after the two people in the office departed. Natasha and I were bored and decided to go dumpster diving. When these people left the office they threw out enough trash! Some of it was shredded and some of it wasn't, so we gathered it all together and planned to go through it later at my house.

Natasha had worked for my agency on occasion, and she also owned her own. She was from Trinidad, was raised in an atmosphere of success and money, and had a private school education. She didn't need to tell anyone this; it was obvious every time that she spoke. Natasha always dressed with class, even as we hid in the shadows stalking the office people and jumped in the dumpster searching through their trash.

As morning broke and our relief arrived we headed for my house. Natasha and I spent hours sifting through some very interesting garbage. It was office trash so it wasn't at all messy, and we even managed to piece together some of the shredded paper, at least the parts that looked important and had scribbled writing. Put together, the pieces exposed an elaborate scheme involving cargo; small airplanes that flew in and out of a local airport frequently, pilot schedules, flight schedules, the weight transported, and contact names. From what we saw it was obvious that the cargo was cocaine. It was all

interesting, however, was of no help in relation to the reason that we were there.

Still curious about the hotels named on the slots, free rooms in resorts and their odd hiring practices, I got hold of their fax number and spent the next night faxing them pieces of their garbage. A man called me by dialing my fax number back and threatened to call the Orange County Sheriff's Office if I didn't stop my faxing. I advised him to read his own garbage before he dialed.

We kept up our watch plans and by the following morning there was a parade of people carrying out stacks of file boxes and computer equipment from this office. I wrote all of the tag numbers down just in case we needed them later. I have no idea what those people were up to, but somehow doubted that it had much to do with escort phone lines being blocked in area resorts.

**

We did have some new arrivals in the area: A large family from Brooklyn intent on purchasing ads in the Sprint phonebook that was already distributed. Joey called me to inquire if I had any ads for sale. I responded that I did not at the time. In the next few weeks I heard from him on several occasions. They sounded like nice enough people, but I doubted that they had any idea what they were getting into in Orlando.

Joey said that his brother, Carmine, was a professional chef and invited me over to dinner one evening. Carmine made grilled chicken with fettuccine Alfredo and fresh asparagus. I departed with the belief that Carmine was in-between jobs, and had owned a restaurant in the past. The meal was right up there with any that I'd experienced in Little Italy! At any rate, they did manage to find an ad for sale and I felt that it was always better to know something about others in business in the area.

Everything seemed to be quiet for the next couple of weeks.

**

I sent Jacqueline to a new client in a residence near Universal Studios and she called to let me know that she was leaving. It was three in the morning, but Jacqueline asked me if she could stop in to see me, hinting that it was important. I made us some coffee so I could be fully awake and within twenty minutes she was at my door.

"That call I just left – he gave me this business card," she stated as she handed me the card.

It had the name of a convention services company and underneath it read: A Destination Management Company.

Jacqueline stated that she believed the client was running escort services, and apparently she had passed his test because he asked her if she would be interested in working for his business.

"He said that he had many conventioners that requested the services of a lady like me and I would be kept very busy. Something is going on with this Laura; I feel it! He was not at all interested in the things that men usually are, almost like he was bored. He didn't want me to tell you and said that it was some kind of secret. I agreed to meet him late tomorrow night at the bar in the Peabody Hotel. If I remember correctly your lines are also blocked there."

It was interesting alright. Jacqueline and I finished our conversation as she had to get up early for a class. She decided to spend some time exploring Steve's enterprise to see if there was any connection. It was beginning to sound like there were several different situations going on around here, but this one had more potential than any others that we discovered.

Late the following night Jacqueline came over to my house to fill me in on her evening with Steve. She told me that Steve was a part of an organization that furnished escorts to conventioners, but not only in Orlando. She had tried to find out more by expressing an interest in working in another area, but the only cities that Steve spoke of were L.A., Manhattan, Chicago, and Miami. She was left with the belief that there were more cities though. Steve made it clear to Jacqueline that there were many

problems with the operation in Orlando. At some point in the conversation Steve became unsure about Jacqueline and everything came to an abrupt halt.

“Did he say anything at all about PBX systems or line blocks?” I quizzed.

“No Laura, it was very difficult to find out what I did. He became more talkative and then suddenly stopped. I might have sounded too curious and I doubt that I’ll hear from him again.”

Jacqueline and I agreed that we seemed to get closer all the time to finding out what was going on. Whatever was going on had many players and was happening in other cities too. I told Jacqueline how much I appreciated her pumping these people for information. I realized it was far from easy.

“No problem Laura. I’m trying to help myself at the same time. I refuse to work for anyone else in this town, and I do need money. I wish Jonathan would call back. I think he found out something real big and fears we’ll question him further. I think I’ll give him a call and ask him out to lunch. I’ll let you know what happens.”

I replied that this was actually a great idea. They did always have an attraction beyond business so it wasn’t an improper thing to do.

**

Kendall and I had been shaking the tree hard and as the weeks went by, the harassment only got worse. At this point I was getting far too many calls from the MBI. The phone would ring off the hook, but it was usually them. They seemed to be trying every far-fetched scenario that they could come up with in their attempts to get an escort to come out. The caller with the British accent, claiming to be from London, would accomplish the mission.

He was at a Lake Buena Vista resort, the Grosvenor, and wanted someone to arrive at ten in the evening. He stated to me that he had to shower and get ready to go out for the evening before she arrived. He requested an escort that closely fit Kendall's description. It was supposed to be an out-on-the-town type call.

Kendall arrived on time and called me to let me know that she was there. About fifteen minutes later the phone rang; it was Kendall whispering that the Londoner couldn’t get her to take the money and was in the bathroom with the shower running, and there were hangers from Bumby Cleaners hanging in the closet. This was a downtown Orlando dry-cleaner that was not anywhere near Lake Buena Vista.

“He sure didn’t shower before I arrived. I think he’s on his radio asking other agents what to do,” Kendall said jokingly.

I practically begged her to leave, but she refused.

“I haven’t done anything wrong. Why should I leave? He doesn’t know what to do so I’m going to play games for a while. Screw them!”

About fifteen minutes after later Kendall called again. She stated that they had a problem and the Londoner wanted to speak to me and handed him the phone. He was mad because she refused to take his money and states to me, “is this a rip-off service?” I asked him how it could be a rip-off when she refused his money and told him that she was leaving. I asked him to put her on the phone, and then told her to get the hell out of there and quit playing with them. Objecting all the way, she said that she would.

I heard from Kendall again about five minutes later. She was in the lobby.

“There is someone hiding behind a plant, pretending to read a newspaper and watching me. This is weird! I need to get out of the lobby. I’ll call you from the Chevron station down the street.”

It wasn’t more than ten minutes later when the phone rang again. The caller ID reflected a payphone number. It was Kendall.

“Laura, I’m at a payphone at the Chevron. Something strange is going on! There’s two cars circling around, watching me, and I know one belongs to the MBI. Oh well, I didn’t do anything wrong. I have to pick up Sam at the Grand Floridian, and I’ll call you when I get home. Sam is working an off-duty

there.”

Kendall’s husband Sam was a cop. An off duty is what Orange County sheriff’s deputies do for extra money.

The next time I heard from Kendall was more than two hours later, and it was a collect call from the Orange County jail. She was charged with “tampering with a witness” and the bond was \$20,000. I assured her that a bondsman would get her out as soon as she was in the system. I met Tom there several hours later. When he entered the jail to do the bond paperwork he walked out five minutes later, with a strange look on his face. They added five-hundred dollars to the bond for the charge of “failure to obtain an occupational license.”

Kendall was the first escort in the area to be charged with that one, and she had no clue what the first charge concerned. She hired an attorney and soon found out that the “tampering with a witness” charge was a sealed warrant. Within ten days the attorney had it unsealed, and then shortly thereafter dismissed. It involved an informant that she had unknowingly tried to help; an escort that worked for Walter’s agency. The occupational license charge stood.

More than six months after the encounter with the agent in the hotel, if that is imaginable, the state attorney’s office filed two other charges: 1) offering a massage without a license; and 2) entering a structure with the intent of committing prostitution. She did not plead guilty to any charge.

**

We were in World Cup Soccer season, and Orlando was a host city. It was early summer, and I was actually doing business for a change. I did manage to toss the problems to the side, have a good time and make some money. The phone lines all rang off the hook day and night, but then this was not conventions. The entire area was packed with people that booked their own rooms, and there wasn’t a room in town at any price. The money I made during the spring and summer of 1994 lasted me into the next year, and the bills were paid. It was a much needed change.

One evening, rather late, I had a lengthy conversation with a woman that called herself Marla from Los Angeles. Marla owned escort services in L.A. and claimed to be having problems similar to my own. I did listen to her for about fifteen minutes and then responded by telling her a little bit of what I had discovered in relation to what rooms had the blocks. She said that it was not only her lines, but also involved friends’ lines that also owned services. Marla said that they were all investigating. We both agreed that during World Cup Soccer, in the cities that we each operated in, there was not a block problem. I could never be sure who she really was, and only knew that she dialed from a L.A. number, and was reachable at a later time on an escort service phone number in L.A. For the most part I believed her.

In early 1995, I decided to write a letter to a top-notch hacker in an attempt to enlist his help. I figured it was time to go to someone that would not state that it was not possible, as I’d clearly been speaking to people that knew less than I did if they believed what they were saying. I mailed the letter to a New York address. Approximately two weeks later I received a call. The caller ID reflected an “out of area” call, which could have meant a cellular or someone using a calling card. The caller stated in a gruff voice:

“If you want to know what’s going on with your phone lines be at the payphones in the food court at the Lakewood Center mall in Lakewood, California at 5pm tomorrow!”

“What if I’m late? I don’t even know where it is! Who are you?”

“Be there! That’s the message. It’s up to you!”

He hung up.

I looked up Lakewood on the internet and noted that it was not too far from L.A. I then called several airlines to check on flights from Orlando to L.A., but the only one that would have hopefully made it on time arrived at two o’clock. Lakewood, as I was told, is about ninety minutes from the airport,

taking traffic into account. I decided that there was not much room to move, considering I'd never been to California and would have to get a rental car. What if I got lost and couldn't find this mall?

Between my father and Kendall trying, they convinced me that it was possible that someone wanted me dead over the telephone line situation. My father brought up my son and asked how he could ever explain to him what happened to his mother if I disappeared. Kendall thought my dad was right. We had been screaming all over the place about the phone blocks. I couldn't know for sure that the call had any connection to the letter that I had mailed. It was possible that Marla was one of them and had only called to find out what I knew, and now this was the way to lure me to Los Angeles.

Kendall added: "Someone could grab you and throw you in a van or something like that. Just because they said the food court doesn't mean they don't already know what you look like and wouldn't grab you in the parking lot. It is California, and crazy things happen out there! There are a lot of nuts there. Take my word for it! This doesn't even sound right – don't worry – we'll figure out the phone crap."

And so I did not go. The truth was that I had responsibilities, mainly to my son. Put in proper perspective it was about money, and money is just not that important compared to life itself. The phone troubles continued and I never heard from the caller again.

For a while the phone problems seemed to change. For a week at a time the phone didn't ring at all, and then all of a sudden it was like someone turned on a faucet and the phones rang off the hook for one or two days. Then they'd turn off the faucet for a week. I had so many ads and so much overhead that I was sinking, as if in quicksand. Just trying to figure it out was driving me insane!

**

For an entire year I received about forty to eighty calls a month on my main toll-free number wherein the callers requested a free book about Jesus that they had seen advertised on a Christian program on television. I was always nice, and explained that it was a business line and I had no such ad. I advised them to call the program and question them about it. This was no big problem and only added about twenty or thirty dollars to my monthly bill. After about a year, things suddenly changed: The phone would ring off the hook with calls coming in from all over the country. The callers were responding to an ad for free phone sex that ran on USA Network affiliate stations everywhere. Some stated that they saw the ad in a magazine as well. The callers described an ad with ladies almost entirely nude except for a small piece of lingerie. They all repeated my number to me, and the phone rang constantly with this crap from around eleven in the evening until two or three in the morning.

After about two months of these harassing calls I had the number disconnected. Every time I picked up the phone the billing started, and it was ten cents a minute. It was seriously running up the bill. I never actually saw the ad on television, but an escort that worked for me did and called me and described it to me. This was a toll-free number that I'd had since opening the business, and many repeat clients called it, usually from out-of-town numbers. When I thought about the situation I realized that the free book about Jesus ad had not served the purpose that someone intended: To get me to turn the number off. Regardless, someone dug into their deep pockets and finally achieved the desired result. I was never able to get a person on the phone at any affiliate station that could direct me to anyone that had the advertiser's information. This was an intelligent maneuver deliberately used to prevent me from receiving toll-free calls from clients, and it was successful.

**

Several months after Jacqueline's plan to have lunch with Jonathan I did receive a call from him. It was an interesting conversation, to say the least:

"Hello Laura, I do hope that all has been well with you! It's been so long since we spoke! I had lunch with Jacqueline about a month ago and have intended to call you ever since. I have just been so busy

that you cannot imagine!”

“Jonathan, it is so nice to hear your voice! I hope that all is well with you also! I am still seeking answers concerning the phone line situation, of course. I have found out quite a bit more since we last spoke. I know how, when and where, but I still have no answer on whom. You wouldn’t care to fill me in, would you?”

“Laura, I promise that I would if I could. It would create too many problems. I do hope that one day you will understand. But you see, I am still calling you for girls and have some very special clients at the moment.”

“I have no issues with you on the matter Jonathan. I understand that you are in a position, and must remain silent. You are always welcome to call me for your special clients!”

“Laura, the clients are wanting girls for all night. One is the owner of Hollywood East, and the other two are friends that are partying with him tonight. It will be for a black-tie dinner event and then out to the clubs, or wherever they might wish to go. The girls must be very pretty and have the proper wardrobe. I will need them by seven this evening. Will this work?”

“Yes, it will work Jonathan, but do they understand the correct rates? The hourly rate must apply, though I assume that you understand that from our past business.”

“Absolutely Laura! They would not want discount girls therefore I would not request a discount. You do accept credit cards by now? Of course the entire tab would be put on a card.”

“I am quite sorry, but you know that I would never take credit cards. It creates a list for the bank and the government is able to subpoena it whenever they want to. I would not want the owner of Hollywood East to be on a client list. It is still only cash here. I have not changed Jonathan.”

“I am very disappointed Laura. No one has such sums of cash lying around to pay girls. I am afraid that I must call a real service that can take credit cards.”

“Please do be careful Jonathan. There are some very strange things going on around here. I only wish you well.”

I hung up the phone. The entire conversation was insincere, on both our parts. He could have given me the answer when he first discovered that I was right, but instead he used the knowledge for his own benefit and joined the conspiracy. The primary reason that Jonathan contacted me to begin with had everything to do with my refusal to accept credit cards. The man was not a simpleton. The days of sending him escorts for his guests, or clients, had been long over. That was the last time that Jonathan and I ever spoke.

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Chapter Four

“The Amnesty Program” and Other Intimidation Strategies

Joey was becoming an infamous man around town. We no longer spoke, but I heard more than my share of stories. A man had called me for the third time after stating that Joey had recommended my business to accept credit cards through the company he worked for. The man had a thick New Jersey accent, and a hard time taking no for an answer.

“I have already told you that I am not interested in accepting credit cards!” I stated.

“Why not, if in fact your business is legal? What do you have to hide?” he questioned.

“Don’t try to bully me into anything. I’m not stupid. But if you really want to know, I will tell you: I believe that it violates the clients’ right to privacy. His name will be on a list that can be subpoenaed by any government agency. At my agency a person gets their privacy whether they want it or not.”

The pushy caller then told me that it was the first time that he had ever heard that reasoning and he would respect it and not bother me again. I thanked him and hung-up the telephone.

In the same time frame that I was hearing from this pushy guy I had cops, presumably the MBI, calling under the pretense that they were clients. These so-called potential clients would ask the rates and then ask if I accepted credit cards. When I stated a firm “no, not at this agency,” they would respond with some form of the statement “oh, I understand – you’re avoiding paying taxes.” This continued to the point that it was comical. After a while I started hanging-up the phone as soon as they inquired about credit cards. Considering that my ads were close to the only ones in the phonebooks that had no credit card emblems, it was beyond ridiculous!

In short time I would find out that the phone calls from the guy with the thick New Jersey accent were a part of a nationwide IRS sting operation. Everyone that agreed to accept credit cards through this company and signed on the dotted line was charged with “credit card factoring,” “money laundering” and “racketeering” by the MBI in state court. The MBI worked with IRS and created the agency's own operation referred to as Operation Plastic Empire. Some of the many defendants had a lengthy list of charges. ([note 10](#))

The IRS was working with the MBI in the Orlando area and it was easy to conclude that the plethora of calls from the so-called potential clients were from MBI agents attempting to push me into signing-up for the Operation Plastic Empire sting operation. As it turned out there were only two other agencies, that didn’t already accept credit cards, that refused the agents’ offer, and both were owned by people that I had pushed my opinion on; one came close to getting involved, but did not.

Joey and a couple of members of his family were dragged away in handcuffs live on television. There was some type of chase involved. I did briefly speak to his brother later and he told me it was the way it was done that was so unreal. Even though there were children in the house, the MBI went in wearing solid black, with masks on, with assault weapons drawn, and there were between ten and fifteen agents. He wasn’t sure that it was a police operation until it was over.

The sting operation itself didn’t sound like it was legal to me. I know the hard-sell that I received, and how could anyone know that the company that processed the credit cards couldn’t legally do so? A judge in Tampa would later agree with me. The one attorney here that fought for the client involved in the federal or state operation is Nick Sinardi. He is a Tampa area attorney and he handled the original case from Hillsborough County wherein defendant Padilla appealed his conviction in the Tampa court over the very same credit card sting operation by a Tampa area law enforcement agency. That case went on till 2000, when a Florida Appeals court reversed the judge's conviction and sentence. Thanks to Sinardi, Padilla prevailed. That case is *Padilla v. State*, 753 So.2d 659 (2DCA 2000).

I was acquainted with most of the defendants in this case, although I'd only actually met a few of them. I did know one defendant well though, so I heard the story of the credit card merchant sting and subsequent arrests firsthand. Diana was convinced to sign-up by an agency owner turned co-defendant that made each of the escorts that worked for her sign the paperwork and accept credit cards as an individual when she gave them calls. She showed me her packet of papers when she did it, and I didn't find anything illegal, although I advised her not to go through with it for other reasons.

They never served the arrest warrant on Diana. The last time that I spoke with her, she called me from South Carolina to inform me that she'd narrowly escaped arrest. She was out somewhere when the MBI arrived at her rented home to serve the warrant. Her twenty-year old son called her to warn her that they had the warrant and she took off for her real home in South Carolina, never returning to the Orlando house. She did get pulled over in Georgia on her way north for speeding by a trooper, but after holding her for over an hour the trooper returned her drivers license and told her that although the bond on the Florida warrant was \$50,000.00, it was only a Florida warrant. He let her continue on her way. Either the warrant was too new and MBI had not yet added this to it or the trooper was mistaken. She stated to me that she was never returning to Florida, and most likely she didn't as I noticed in the court file that the fugitive warrant wasn't dropped until 2003. Diana was lucky!

Once the MBI had a list of clients that had used the cards through the agencies, the clients were convinced to testify; both locals and others dragged in from different states. I did read court documents in the colossal collection of files from the case that reflected this, though at some point, years later, everything that pertained to the credit card sting was removed from the files. The fact that it was all removed reveals that the charges didn't hold up; however, other than reading the Appeals Court and Florida Supreme Court summaries I have no information on specifically what transpired before it all reached that point.

**

I started receiving monthly subpoenas as a witness in Kendall's case. I never understood why as all I was a witness to was that she accepted no money and left with the agent calling the service a rip-off and me correcting him. But then the MBI claimed that there was no tape of the phone conversation, and their version was quite different. This was my solid initiation into the club of many that know the MBI to be liars. Until Kendall's case I didn't believe that cops lied, at least not in court and on official documents. But then most agents do not have any need to create a case when none existed to begin with. Indeed, the MBI is a unique agency in this respect. To be fair, they don't do this in all cases, but they sure did with any case even remotely connected to my business.

I had been accepting the subpoenas by calling a number on a business card left under my office door in Seminole County. The deputy would then meet me at a nearby Denny's where I signed for the paper. It was the state that called me a witness but I usually just dialed Kendall and asked her if it was trial time. I did get served on a monthly basis, and had no intention of showing up to be told to leave. I felt that this was just one more tool in the MBI toolbox of harassment.

The one day that I did go to court with Kendall, I was attacked by a prosecutor that called me elusive and demanded that I be deposed before I left the courthouse. I stated to the judge that this was out of the question as I wanted my attorney to be present. The prosecutor argued, and the judge asked him, "She is your witness, right?"

The prosecutor continued, arguing that they would never locate me again. I informed the judge as to exactly how I retrieved my subpoenas. The judge then spent about fifteen minutes reading through some law books on his table, and he then started quoting a section to the prosecutor about my right to have my attorney present if I'm being deposed. The prosecutor demanded that the bailiff be allowed to serve me right then, and I accepted the new subpoena. Shortly thereafter, Kendall's case was reassigned to a different judge; one that was MBI and state friendly.

**

It was only March, yet 1996 had all of the elements of being a memorable year. The MBI had completely taken my mind off of the phone line block investigation. They called me so often, and from so many locations, that it was easy to depress the memory of the lost conventioners. The business was in a drought financially and the ad bills were overwhelming. I was predominantly booking clients in residences, to the detriment of myself and others. The MBI would make their first valid case of an escort offering prostitution services from my agency.

Dusty Rose had not worked for my business for very long. She was 5'11", had the perfect model figure, and long blonde hair that reached to the middle of her back. Prior to meeting me, Dusty had worked for a stripping type of company, like Strip-o-gram, and had mainly done stripping for parties and birthday surprises. She also had worked for a couple of escort services in Brevard County; however, did not find either to her liking. The stories were all true – there were several lunatics that owned escort services in Brevard County – it was a different place. A mutual friend, Jean in Cocoa Beach, introduced us. Dusty drove from nearby Brevard County to Orlando to work as an escort.

On this particular night, in March of 1996, she was in dire need of money but not feeling quite herself. The client sounded valid enough though, and she drove to the east Orlando condo to see him. About fifteen minutes into the encounter, MBI agents in black clothing and masks burst in through the door from the garage. Indeed, it was a valid prostitution arrest, as such arrests exist, and Dusty was taken to the Orange County jail.

I saw to it that her bond was posted and she was able to retrieve her car. Dusty then came to my house to explain what happened and to tell me a story that neither one of us would understand for four years: She immediately recognized one of the masked agents that entered from the garage. She added that the agent that had posed as the client, Paul Winsett, did everything legally correct; an uncommon occurrence for the MBI.

She soon pled guilty to the charges, accepted a one year call-in probation, and then relocated to Europe for the year. Dusty wanted to distance herself as far as was physically possible from the MBI. It was the recognition of the agent that frightened her.

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I was surprised that with one valid arrest of an escort in three and a half years of business that the MBI could justify attempting to threaten and bully me into closing, but they managed. Dusty had even made it clear to them that her actions were entirely her own, and I later learned that they referred to the screaming threats as “the amnesty program,” although no one ever told me what I was being offered a pardon for.

On an afternoon in early April of 1996, Agent Ray Peters of the MBI called me screaming:

“WE DEMAND YOUR PRESENCE IN OUR OFFICE ASAP! WHEN CAN YOU BE HERE?”

“Do you have a warrant?” I asked.

“YOU’LL FIND OUT WHEN YOU GET HERE!” he yelled at the top of his lungs like a Marine drill sergeant.

“Well, I’ll have to arrange it with my attorney. He will call you back!”

“WHAT’S HIS NAME AND NUMBER?”

I gave him the information that he demanded, hung-up the phone, and called John. Now John had been my attorney for the years that I was in business. He said that I shouldn’t worry about it and that he would take care of it. The following day he called to inform me that he had left two messages at the MBI number and no one returned his call as of yet. He thought that I shouldn’t even think about it, and so I didn’t. It wasn’t that hard to forget the MBI.

It was not long before I heard the full story and found out what they wanted. They had simply gone through the phonebook, dialed everyone that had an ad, and screamed the same thing at them. And I had thought I was special! From what I heard I was the only one that did not run down to MBI headquarters, although one service owner that I spoke with brought her attorney with her. As far as I know, that one service owner was one of two that did not agree to do as they demanded. At the time there were not all that many people left to begin with – the credit card sting operation closed at least fifteen of them. There were a lot of ads, but most owners had three or more each.

The big “amnesty program” was the MBI offering not to arrest and prosecute the agency owner if he or she signed an agreement that the telephone lines would be immediately disconnected, they would never open an escort service in the State of Florida again, and they agreed to forfeit any and all tangible property that belonged to their business. Tangible property was defined as any telephones, computers, real property if the business owned it, cars, and client lists. Money was not included.

This demand was not presented to these agency owners in any normal manner, but instead as a vicious threat. It was better that I didn’t go as demanded because if I had, I would have looked them straight in the eyes, told them to go to hell, and then got up and walked out the door. There was little doubt that the MBI reaction to such a statement would be too scary to contemplate. I was never one to hold my tongue with that group regardless of consequences.

A longtime friend, Hal that I had worked with in the airport, went to see MBI as demanded. When we spoke after the initial phone call I told Hal to call an attorney and skip the MBI visit, but he didn’t listen. He later told me every word that was stated to him. Agent Brant Rose threatened to put him in a Florida prison for at least ten years if he didn’t comply, and when that didn’t work and Hal told Rose that he had four kids to feed and couldn’t turn off the telephones, Rose stated:

“I’ll make sure your wife Louise spends ten years in prison too and your kids are taken away by the state.”

It was that threat that caused Hal to concede. But he didn’t concede to the MBI: Less than two weeks later Hal’s wife found him dead. Louise stated to me that one day earlier Hal had made her promise that if anything happened to him she would turn off the escort service phone lines.

Less than a week after Hal’s funeral, Agent Rose called me demanding his home telephone number. Rose screamed:

“WHAT IS HIS NUMBER?”

“He’s dead!”

Rose, sounding surprised and frantic at the same time, stated: “That’s not possible! I just spoke to him less than three weeks ago and he was fine.”

“Yes, I know that you did. I heard all about it.”

This agent continued, stating that he still needed the number so that he could speak to Hal’s wife and conclude his case. I screamed some obscenities into the phone, added that I’d give her the message, and slammed the phone on the table. I did give my friend’s widow the message.

Hal’s death could be directly attributed to the actions and words of the MBI. Over the years there were many deaths at the hands of the MBI; some a direct result of their actions and others an indirect result. For the MBI it was business as usual though.

**

The week ended on a much better note. I had not heard from Jacqueline in quite some time, and chose not to bother her believing that she must be busy with life. She was busy, but in a good way. Jacqueline called to inform me that she met a wonderful man, through college, that was visiting the area on business, and it was very serious. She would soon be relocating far north, close to the Canadian border. They were planning a wedding! I wished her the best in life, advised her to put all of this far behind her, and we said our goodbyes.

**

The day came that I had to deal with doing the deposition in Kendall's case. It was done the easy way: in my attorney's office on a speakerphone with Kendall's attorney on one line and the state's attorney on another line. A simple conference call and I didn't have to see anyone except for my own attorney. The line of questioning was unexpected and odd though. The beginning was just the state establishing that I owned the business and which section of the phonebook my advertisements were placed in. After that there were not many questions about Kendall, and nothing about the call itself. The central theme of the questioning was her husband, Sam. They wanted to know if he had ever run checks on people on my behalf or otherwise assisted me. The answers were easy because I hardly knew him and he never helped me with anything. I later found out that they would have charged Sam with a felony if I had said yes.

Kendall was no longer able to work for my business. The MBI had her followed everywhere – talk about a waste of time and money! I would never have imagined it, not over a couple of created misdemeanors that never happened to begin with, but they absolutely despised her. On more than one occasion they actually followed her in a helicopter. After some reflection, I did realize that it was the law enforcement connection that was such a problem to the MBI, but I never considered it an issue one way or the other.

In the meantime, Kendall was on her third attorney; the first two took her money and then exited the quagmire. It was not long before the third one did the same, but at least he refunded most of the money she had paid. He told her that he could not even tell her why, but he just couldn't help her. We surmised that he was being pressured by the state attorney's office, the MBI, or both. In every situation the amount of money demanded to accept this misdemeanor case was unbelievable. Before it was over it would cost her more than a hundred thousand dollars. Finally she ended up with well-known Miami attorney, Ellis Rubin. (note 11) After a couple of hearings, Rubin turned the case over to his partner, Robert Barrar.

By the time that Kendall had hired attorney number three she had run out of money. She made the decision to work at a brothel in Nevada in order to pay for her defense, and to cover her bills in the interim. The main reason that Kendall pursued her defense at all costs was not the matter of the misdemeanor convictions alone, but was the loss of her law enforcement certification if she was convicted of any morals related crime. And then there was the point: She did not do anything illegal. If in fact Kendall had done anything illegal, she would have been arrested and detained on the related charges right then and there at the Lake Buena Vista hotel. Filing these charges almost a year later, after the "tampering with a witness" charge had been dismissed spoke volumes.

**

The MBI persisted with the harassing telephone calls to my agency day and night. One morning I awoke to the phone ringing almost non-stop for more than an hour. The caller had dialed eight times, each time ringing the line for ten or more minutes. I was jolted from my sleep by the thought that it must be some type of emergency. I looked at the caller ID and saw that the calls had all come from a Shreveport, Louisiana number. I answered the line to hear:

"Hello, we've been trying to reach you. Are you open?"

I stated that I was and asked what I could do for him, out of curiosity more than anything else. I wanted to know more about the nut job that dialed so frequently and let the phone ring so long. I had no intention of helping anyone that would do such a thing.

The caller stated: "There are three of us so we're going to need three girls, but it's for later this evening. We're in an RV on the way there and just wanted to be sure you're going to be open tonight.

We should be in town around six o'clock."

"Yes, we are here, but I'll need you to call me with about an hour notice from your hotel, after you check in, and I will have the escorts on the way."

"We're just three guys coming out to play golf for the weekend and wanted to have some fun. We heard your ladies are a lot of fun. We were just starting to get worried that you might not be open."

"We aren't open until after five in the afternoon. I suppose that you could say that everyone is fun around here, but I guess that depends on what type of fun you're talking about. Just give me a call when you're checked in the room and I'll let you know who specifically is available," I stated. An edge of sarcasm crept through as I spoke. I couldn't hide it. I had plans for these nut jobs.

"Okay, I'll be calling in a few hours," he stated.

I hung-up the phone before he could say anything else. Just as I was sipping my first double-espreso, the phone rang again, from the same Shreveport number. Having already stated that we didn't open until five o'clock, I let it ring, and it rang for the next forty-five minutes. I decided to pick it up, as after all, I liked games too, and I would have some fun tonight!

"Laura, I've been trying to reach you! What happened? We wanted to be sure that the girls can meet us at the hotel at seven o'clock."

I know I didn't tell him my name.

"Dear, I have already told you to call me when you're checked in the room and we will go from there. It will take about an hour for the escorts to get there, wherever you are in the area."

"Can't you have them meet us at the hotel? We'll be staying at the Peabody. We are referred to your service," he claimed.

Not a chance dude; you chose the game and you are in for a long night.

"Really, and who exactly referred you?" I asked.

"I told you we were from Shreveport. We were referred by our good buddy, Shaquille O'Neal."

"Really, Shaq referred you? Look guy, I know positively that I have never helped him, so I'm not sure why you're throwing his name around! Regardless, I have already told you more than once how the booking process works at my service. It has nothing to do with who you know or who you do not know! Either you go with the program, or you don't! The ball is in your court!"

My temper was flaring and I'd already heard enough from this idiot. If I was supposed to be impressed by his name-dropping, it had quite the opposite effect.

"Wait – I didn't mean to upset you. We just want to be sure we will have some fun tonight. Please don't get angry. I'll call you when we get to the Peabody, okay?"

"No problem guy, just call when you're checked in."

I hung-up the phone before he could respond. I figured I would just ignore the phone later. Sometimes I'd screw with them too much, like making them set up in a hotel room and wait all night, and they would get really angry. I wasn't sure that I was ready for the backlash. This was what I tried to stop Kendall from doing on the night she was arrested for nothing, but it is hard to resist at times. I saw her point. This one tried my patience.

At around six o'clock the phone rang and I saw on the caller ID that it was a payphone at Rachel's World Class Men's Club near the Orlando airport, so I answered it. It was my buddy from Shreveport now in a payphone:

"Hello Laura, it's us again. We decided to stop by a club on the way to the hotel and look at the girls," he chuckles. "If you're not going to have the escorts meet us at the hotel, we could probably bring some from here."

"Dear, if that is what you want to do, please feel free. I have explained too many times how this works."

"We would rather use your service Laura. It came well-recommended, so we'll just call you from the Peabody."

"I'll look forward to it. Bye."

I hung-up the phone figuring that I'd give them exactly what they deserve. About an hour later he called to tell me that they just got their room numbers and they were on the club-level.

"Okay, I'll call you back in the room and let you know who is available," I stated.

"Laura, why don't you just have them meet us in the bar? We decided that we'd like to relax and have a few drinks."

Once again he was attempting to direct me.

"I'd be happy to do that, after I call you back in your room to let you know who is available," I said.

He called back about thirty minutes later from a room on the club-level. I called him back and gave him descriptions of three non-existent escorts and assured him that the escorts would meet the three of them in the bar in about one hour. He described the three of them and their attire and hung-up the phone. The guy was sounding worn-out at this point, but the night was still young and it wasn't over yet. They continued calling at thirty minute intervals until well after midnight. Occasionally I would pick up the phone and state that the escorts were on the way, or sound worried that they had not yet arrived.

It may be hard for anyone to imagine, but I went through similar crap with the MBI on a regular basis as they tried desperately to get an escort out. I always knew that it was the MBI because Orlando is their territory. No other agency operates here unless they are working with the MBI, and, obviously, a normal client would not conduct their self in any such manner. On this particular day and night I played the game with them, leading them to believe that they would get the escorts they wanted so much if they followed my procedure. I wasted as much of their time and money as they wasted of mine. They prevented me from answering the phone with the constant calls, and I left them hanging. I knew that they couldn't call it a night until they were positive that no escorts would be arriving.

The following evening I received a phone call thanking me for the night before. The call came from a Tampa area payphone and the caller stated:

"Thanks for last night bitch. We will see you buried! You can't fight it bitch! Your day is coming soon!"

I was not sure if "buried" meant six feet under the ground or buried in legal proceedings.

**

It was a combination of the constant harassing calls, the line blocks in area resort PBX systems, and the high ad bills that resulted in my turning off my main telephone number in the middle of 1996: The Abra-Cadabra line. My attorney had assured me that Sprint would not pursue me on the ad bill if I shut the number off. I did still have a third of a page ad for Valentine's, and by then I had renamed the website Valentine's. I was in the process of opening a photography studio, and had made the decision to ignore the escort business unless it was a repeat caller: someone that I already knew. I'd also help the occasional new client from my one ad left in the phonebook.

On their website the MBI claims to have successfully shut down hundreds of escort services over the years, and they include Abra-Cadabra on the list. If we count harassment as a tool in the MBI toolbox then they are telling the absolute truth. If they deny that the harassment ever happened, then how did they shut it down? ([note 12](#))

The form of harassment that I endured was criminal.

**

Kendall's trial was in the heat of the Florida summer and lasted for several days. It took place in the old Orange County courthouse, in a courtroom wherein the air-conditioning had stopped working before the trial began. The jury found her not guilty on the charge of "offering a massage without a license." The MBI did not find my ad in the massage section of the phonebook and Kendall did not

offer a massage; she offered a non-therapeutic rubdown. She was convicted of the other two charges: "failure to obtain an occupational license," and "entering a structure with the intent of committing prostitution." I was called by the state to testify and tried to accept blame for her not having a license. I never told her that she needed one and believed she worked under my business licenses; however, the state kept cutting off my testimony every other sentence so the jury never got to hear the story. Kendall was also convicted of the last charge, which is something that I will never understand.

Either a person solicits to commit prostitution, or they do not. Unlike murder, there is no in-between. How could the state claim that even though she didn't accept money or offer prostitution services, she entered with the intention of doing so? She did lose her law enforcement certification and was subsequently sentenced to forty days in jail, six months probation and ordered to pay two-thousand dollars for investigative and court costs on each count. She posted an appeal bond of \$2500 and waited.

**

By late October of 1996, I received letters from both Bellsouth and Sprint Publishing and Advertising that they had removed the "Escort Service" heading in the upcoming 96-97 phonebooks. Sprint sent me a check refunding me the fifty percent deposit that I had paid for the Valentine's ad. I had not placed an ad in Bellsouth, so it was more of a notification letter. The letter from Sprint came from their Overland Park, Kansas office, and was dated October 23, 1996. The part that was of main importance stated:

The terms of the Directory Advertising Order applicable to your ad state that Sprint Publishing retains sole discretion to determine whether any particular portion of a directory will be discontinued. The decision to remove this heading was made after reviewing evidence produced by the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation; an Orlando based multi-agency task force with representatives from local city and county law enforcement agencies. The MBI contends that in 18 years of investigating the escort service industry in central Florida, it has never encountered an escort service that was not involved in an illegal activity. The MBI made a clear and convincing case to Sprint Publishing that the escort service industry in central Florida is rampant with illegal activities.

Sprint Publishing will no longer allow escort service related advertising to appear in the Directories. In addition, we will be working with the MBI to develop new standards and requirements for advertisers under other headings in the Directories in order to prevent escort related advertising from appearing there. These standards and requirements will be communicated to our advertising sales force as soon as they are completed.

There was no actual signature on the letter and the company name was typed at the end. I immediately picked up the telephone and dialed someone that I knew in an executive position in the Overland Park, Kansas, headquarters.

"All I really got out of the letter is that MBI says this and MBI says that. What really happened?" I asked.

He said that he would only tell me if I never told anyone where I received the information, and I never have. "Jim" stated: "I'll tell you a story."

I listened while he related the following story:

"One day, about two months ago, an agent posing as a client called and requested to place an ad in the upcoming directory under the "escort" heading. The representative called him back and arranged an appointment. You know that our reps go to you, not you come to our offices, for your convenience. When the time came, the rep went to the residence of the client. The client allowed the rep to talk him into large color ads. The rep prepared the contract and showed the client where to sign. Before signing, the client turned to the rep and said: "My business is selling sex. That's what full service means and that is what my business offers." Jim continued, "The rep stated that they just sold ads, Sprint just

published ads, and it was up to him what he did with his ad. Of course all of this was captured on video and audio. The MBI then contacted Sprint's legal department and threatened to take the company down on RICO charges if the "escort" heading wasn't removed from the upcoming directories. The rest is in your letter. Apparently someone in legal was convinced the threat was a possibility. So, how's that for a story, Laura?"

I thanked Jim for the truth and told him to call me when he was in town and we'd go out for lunch.

[\(note 13\)](#)

After deep thought I decided that it was probably for the best that I would no longer have any ad bills, and would have no need to book any new clients. The cost of maintaining the website and one telephone line was minimal, and the pressure was over. The website had the flashing banner denouncing the line blocks in area resorts' PBX systems, and in a sense, the investigation into the problem was over for me, at least for the time being.

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Part Two

Chapter Five

Sleeping Giants

There were major advantages to not having an advertisement in the yellow pages. Foremost was that business expenses substantially diminished, and another was that I rarely heard from the MBI anymore, and if they did call they only reached my voicemail. I stopped returning calls on the business line unless I knew the caller. Of course the serious disadvantage was the lack of business. Susan was the only escort that was still around from the so-called boom-times, and even she found other things to do most of the time. I was enjoying my photography studio, but realistically I knew that it was not a moneymaker. The studio turned out to be a money pit.

Kendall was working in a brothel in Nye County, Nevada, and her appeal was still pending in the case. The appeal was as costly as the case and trial, and she had little choice but to come up with the money. She flew back and forth between Orlando and Las Vegas frequently, working for a month and then coming home for a month.

Leave it to Kendall to bring back the element of excitement. We met for lunch one day and she had a few stories to tell, the most important about a secret she had learned in one of the brothels that she usually worked in. According to Kendall, there was this organization that was referred to as “the circuit,” that operated in major cities around the country. The girls were recruited in the brothels of Nevada and then each committed to specific schedules, working as prostitutes, in other cities, including Orlando and Miami. Kendall stated that it was by referral only, and she was offered a referral. She was told that the main contact in Florida was “Kathy” in Miami, and that there were serious problems with the Orlando operation. For some reason that sounded familiar. Needless to say, we both speculated about the potential connection to the phone line problem.

**

By the middle of 1997, the MBI was back in the news, and busy working with the IRS and a Seminole County agency raiding body scrub shops in Seminole County. Fearful of working for my escort service, my friend Felice had been working at one of the body scrubs. Felice and Cortland had closed their own service during “the amnesty program,” and she was petrified of the MBI. She thought that she was safe in Seminole County since it was out of their jurisdiction, but then the MBI gets involved anywhere that they can. I had warned Felice that she was a sitting duck in one of these places, and could be held responsible for things that other people did, but she felt that it was safer than my agency.

What the MBI did in these body scrub cases was unprecedented. Oh, charging the owners with racketeering was what they usually do; however, in this situation they also charged the workers with racketeering. Felice was charged with three counts of prostitution and one count of racketeering. The average person would believe that they must have had three solid cases of prostitution in order to file the charges this way, but that was not the case. When we realized what the MBI had done we were in a state of disbelief. They had followed customers after they left the body scrub and convinced them to cooperate. Having heard stories about the MBI tactics used to convince someone to become their witness, it was easy to understand how these men signed the statements that they did. As usual, the men were not charged.

In Felice’s case, they had one customer alleging that he had visited her on three separate occasions and she gave him a hand-job. Felice told me that this was not even true. The MBI, working with the

state attorney's office, generously offered to drop the count of racketeering if she pled guilty to three counts of prostitution; otherwise, they claimed that they would take her to trial. Imagine someone going to prison for up to thirty years for an accusation of giving a man three hand-jobs and it's easily understood why she took their so-called deal.

**

By the end of 1997, Dusty had returned from her self-imposed probation exile to Europe. She had no intention of ever working in Orlando again and informed me that she was opening her own service in Brevard County. Dusty called me after obtaining her county occupational license to let me know something interesting: a license in Brevard was good in any touching county.

Orange County had passed an ordinance that imposed a strange list of rules on escort services, and I no longer had a license. The rules included: 1) the escort service must close by ten o'clock in the evening; 2) a requirement to keep records of services, charges, client names and addresses, escort names, addresses and occupational licenses that are available for inspection by law enforcement at any time during business operations; and 3) a requirement that the escort sign in and out with a hotel front desk employee when seeing a client in a hotel. Obviously no escort service could comply with the ordinance without violating the clients' right to privacy – and that was the point. The MBI pushed to have it passed, and they were successful. I chose to rent an office in Brevard County and obtain my license there.

When Dusty and I met for lunch, she suggested that I place an ad with Bellsouth. I thought it was a great idea so we met the Bellsouth representative together. Bellsouth did not offer display ads for the "escort service" section (they never did in Orlando books either), and I just paid for an in-column ad. The phonebooks would be distributed by late April of 1998.

By mid-April my father had developed a serious health problem and all of my attention was on him. He died in late June, never coming home from the hospital. I was very close to my father, was distraught and seriously depressed, and never made any use of the ad in the Brevard books. All that I really recall of this time is that the phone kept ringing, I did not want to hear it, and I used call forwarding to transfer the number to Dusty. I told her to just keep any money that she made.

About two months later I was jolted back to reality when I received a call from Dusty's boyfriend, Rocky. He told me that she threw him out because of a simple misunderstanding, and begged me to let him answer that phone line. He said that she left him broke and on the street, hoping he would have to sleep in his car. Dusty said that all of that was true except her reason for doing so. She never answered that phone line anyway so I granted his request and transferred it to his cellular. He sold some of his jewelry and moved into a condo shortly thereafter and I transferred the Brevard number to the landline in the condo. All of this transpired over the course of only two weeks.

I have never understood why when a couple breaks up a relationship each wants the other to suffer severely. Why leave the guy with no means of income when he was the one that answered all the phone lines to begin with? That, of course, was the short version of a lengthy story. They fought a lot and both had recently returned from Europe. They had worked in sex clubs in Amsterdam, and several cities in Germany, doing live shows. Dusty left at one point and worked in Switzerland on her own. They always ended up back together and I did not want to get in the middle of that fight.

It was about two weeks after I first transferred Rocky the line when Dusty called me to advise me that I had no clue what he was saying to people on that phone line, and should protect myself and take it back. I decided that she was correct, regardless of her motives. Almost immediately I contacted Rocky to inform him that I had no choice except to take back the line. He responded that he wanted to buy it as soon as he could find the money. I told him I was taking it back, but whenever he had the \$2000 that I wanted for it, I would transfer it to his name through the telephone company. It took Rocky about an hour to call me back and state that he was on the way to Orlando and had the money. The price I

charged Rocky was equal to what I had spent for the phonebook ad, business line connection, the monthly charges since I had connected it many months earlier, and on the state paperwork. I did not profit by a dollar, and probably lost, but I was still depressed and wanted nothing to do with their argument or the phone line.

During the years that I was in business I actually did this many times: I turned on a telephone number, did licensing and fictitious name paperwork for a specific name, placed an advertisement in a phonebook and paid for it in full. I would then turn around and sell the ad and telephone number. I always did it with a small in-column ad and usually sold it for the figure of two-thousand dollars. Sometimes the buyer had to purchase a new license for the name, and other times I just transferred the license to them. There was nothing mysterious about it, and I had simply changed my mind somewhere in-between the time I placed the ad and when the phonebooks were distributed. Anything might have come up in the four or five month period that one waits for distribution. I did this several times that the MBI knew about and many that they didn't. There's nothing illegal about it though, and every person that I sold a line to certainly wasn't my partner.

Dusty and I did not speak at this point. She was angry that Rocky did not have to suffer. I did speak to him on many occasions; usually when he called to ask how something worked related to paperwork or the phone line. To me he was a real nice, mild guy – but then I never dated him or lived with him, so that's not saying that Dusty was wrong.

**

I was getting over my depression by early 1999, and started hanging around with Tanya with the bubbly personality. We had been going out to clubs and in general, having a good time. I was also trying to answer my Orlando phone line and make some money. I did start booking new clients on occasion. An old friend in Miami, Kathy, had referred Terri to my agency. Kathy just said that the girl had been driving all the way to Miami to work and actually lived in Brevard County, but refused to work there. The rates were much lower in Brevard and many of the agency owners were strange. Kathy thought she would do us both a favor and give the girl my phone number. It initially worked out for both of us – Terri had a shorter drive and I had an escort that wanted to make money.

Kathy was someone that had known since the mid-1980s. I knew her to be an animal lover: she had many cats and dogs, probably ten or more of each. I interpreted her position in life to be one of a struggle, and she was always about to have her phones cut-off for non-payment. She also had serious veterinarian bills. I never connected her with the Kathy from Kendall's story about "the circuit," but then I never even knew Kathy's last name. Kendall had suggested to me that the connection was possible, but I seriously doubted it. If they were one and the same person then Kathy had been hiding behind a shield of poverty and lies for more than a decade. If this was the situation it was a good cover.

Terri had worked for my agency for two months when her father died. I jumped through hoops to help this woman as she seemed to have no friends. That should have given me a clue. When she received the news from her father's wife on the phone she called me devastated and crying non-stop. I dropped everything that I was doing, drove to Brevard to help her, and then took her and her brother to the airport at six in the morning. I responded to her constant calls for help while she was in Maryland also. She insisted that his body be flown back to Brevard, without regard for his new wife, and caused quite a disturbance over it. I paid for the food for the gathering after her father's funeral. We weren't friends, but then I was never one to slam a door on a person in need. Dumb me.

Within a short time after Terri's father's funeral we stopped speaking on a regular basis. She had money left to her by her father and had opened her own service. Actually she did this before everything happened, but had put this business entirely in her mother's name so that no one would realize it was hers. Once the phonebooks were distributed, after the funeral, she turned rude. After all, she no longer needed me or anyone else.

There was a lot that I didn't know about Terri until Dusty, Rocky, and I started comparing notes. Now I had met Terri though Kathy in Miami, where she had been driving to work. Dusty knew Terri from another agency that she had worked for before her own ad was out in Brevard. Rocky knew Terri from her calling Dusty's business line looking for work. Once we compared notes on the woman, I realized why she had been driving to Miami: Every agency in Brevard knew that she was a nut and a drunk, and no one would get near her. The only question left in my mind was: How did Terri get my friend in Miami's number? It was unusual in that there were over thirty pages of in-column ads in the Miami Bellsouth phonebook, and Kathy owned only a few of those little ads.

Still, I had no idea what I was in for. One day I awoke to a constantly ringing phone. It was Rocky. He stated:

"Laura, something strange happened to my telephone line. I just hung-up with the telephone company repair. They've been working on the line at the office, and he said that the line was cut at the box."

I explained the inner-workings of a telephone line when it's remote call-forwarded to Rocky – the line is actually forwarded from central office, so the office and the physical line have nothing to do with it. If it was cut at the box it would only matter if he was answering the line in the office.

He laughed and said he had made a big mistake, but still the line was cut at the box according to Bellsouth repair. He had called Terri's number and told whoever answered the phone that he was going to have them locked up for tampering with his line. He figured she had done something to the line because she had caused him numerous problems recently, and continuously spread lies to people about him. I asked him what was said after he made the accusation.

"Some old lady started screaming at me, telling me to fuck off, and then she slammed the phone down!"

"That would be Terri's mother," I said.

That minute my phone beeped in with another call, and Rocky and I hung-up. I answered it and Terri was on the other end.

"Laura, you wouldn't believe what just happened! Your friend Rocky just called over here and threatened to break my mother's arms. I'm going to have him locked up!" she screamed.

"I just hung-up with Rocky and he did no such thing. He accused you of tampering with his phone line. As a matter of fact, he was going to call back and apologize for jumping to conclusions, but your mother went off on him, making apologies impossible."

"Are you calling my mother a liar? She taped the conversation and I'm telling you he threatened to break her arms!" she shrieked.

"No, I'm not calling your mother a liar! I'm calling you a liar! If she taped it then why don't you play the tape?"

"You're calling my mother a liar! How can you say that Laura?"

"Why don't you stop the crap and play the tape Terri?"

Of course he had never said such a thing and there was no tape. Terri was an actress, capable of any role she chose. Her favorite was the poor abused me role. I had caught her in a game, and in many lies, and then confronted her. This was why we no longer spoke. Dusty later told me that I should never have confronted her about her lies and backed her into a corner. It was a serious mistake, and Terri was dangerous. Now Terri threatened:

"If you don't help me get rid of Rocky, I'll get rid of you too!"

This went on for hours – I would just hang-up and Terri would call back screaming and threatening at the top of her lungs. She was obviously plastered. She called just over one-hundred times that night from her AT&T wireless phone. I dialed her house number twice, leaving a cease and desist message. Several days later Terri called the Brevard County Sheriff's Office and made a complaint against both Rocky and I, claiming that she was a witness in a case and we were threatening her.

It was about six weeks later that Rocky called me to ask for my help.

"Laura, Agent Reynolds just called me and stated that Terri made a complaint against us for all sorts

of things!”

He sounded alarmed. I told him to calm down and assured him that I'd call the agent back and deal with it.

“She called me over a hundred times from her cellular that night. There's a record of her harassment. What is the agent's number?” I asked.

Sounding relieved, he gave me the number. We both agreed that we were lucky Terri was stupid. I reached Agent Reynolds, heard the accusations that Terri had made, and laughed. I told him how many times she called screaming at me and gave him the cellular number that the calls came from. Reynolds said that he wondered why it took him six weeks to get the report on his desk. Rocky and I were not the only ones that knew Terri was nuts. The report was delayed because the responding deputies decided that it was baseless. When informed of this several days later, Terri made a complaint against the responding deputies, alleging that one had “touched her ass and made crude advances.”

Several days later Reynolds called me back to let me know that the entire matter was over. He had called Terri and asked her to come down to his office. He then repeated my response concerning the hundred plus calls and she agreed to sign a “no prosecution affidavit.” He then asked me if I would like to make a complaint against her, but I stated that she already had enough problems so I didn't want to have her arrested. I figured that it was all over. [\(note 14\)](#)

The escort business can be competitive in any area, but was excessively aggressive in Brevard County. Most escort service owners despised Rocky. He attributed the hatred to jealousy, and with the evidence of his success and his rapport with clients; I was inclined to agree. He managed to find the best ladies in the area and book more calls, and he thought nothing of bragging about it. In fact Rocky often expanded his importance and the extent of his reach in the adult industry. When combined with his inflated ego it was a recipe for disaster.

It was a rare occasion when Dusty and I spoke during the year that followed. She was too angry that Rocky didn't suffer and then became her worst nightmare in the area of competition. She befriended Terri briefly and the two of them conjured additional problems to throw at Rocky.

Rocky and I met for lunch once in a while and he filled me in on the gossip from the escort industry in Brevard. We both forgot about Terri and her threats against us.

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Chapter Six

Stacking the Deck

“Laura, there was a subpoena slid under my door while I was asleep today. It states that I need to call the MBI at (407)836-5555 when I receive it. What could this possibly be about?” Dusty asked.

“I have no idea and that’s an odd way to serve a subpoena. Did you dial the number and ask?”

“Not yet, I figured I’d call you first. I haven’t even been in Orange County in several years, except to the airport to pick-up or drop-off relatives a few times. What could they want with me? I can’t afford an attorney, so I hope it’s not much!” she said.

I asked her to call me and let me know what she found out and we said our goodbyes. It was almost a week later when Dusty called me back. I didn’t think about her subpoena again until I heard from her.

“Laura, as strange as this sounds, they wanted to know why I disconnected the cellular phone on your account! I have to go to their offices next week to answer some questions. What’s it to them, I wonder?” Dusty questioned.

“You got me on that one dear, but I would bring an attorney if I were you. You know how they are.” I said.

“Well, I’m absolutely broke and there’s nothing to tell, so I’m going alone. Wish me luck.”

“Dusty, with them you need more than luck. Be careful, and call me if you have a problem.”

Dusty and I were in contact so little since the disagreements concerning Rocky that I couldn’t imagine why the MBI would subpoena her. Brevard County was not MBI territory, so there was little doubt that it had to do with me. She stayed in Brevard and took care of her business, and I stayed in Orlando and dealt with my own. There were many stories that circulated about Rocky, but I never saw him exhibit the type of behavior that Dusty or Terri had claimed, and he was their competitor, which must be taken into account. The guy did more business than both of them put together, and they each had more lines.

In so far as the cellular phone goes that the MBI wanted to know about, the explanation was simple: When Dusty returned from Europe she had some credit problems so I signed as a guarantor on a contract with Bellsouth so that she could get a cellular. It was not my account though, and was billed to her at her address. My name was under hers on the bill, and if she didn’t pay it then I would be responsible. The week before she received the subpoena she had cut the phone off after having service for two years. She now had good credit and could get a better deal from AT&T. Of course the MBI never considered such a simple explanation.

Dusty’s interrogation would turn out to be something else. She immediately recognized the interrogator as one of the masked agents from the night of her arrest in March of 1996. Most of the questions related to that cellular phone. She told them the truth, and about the better deal with more minutes from AT&T. Let’s face it – why else would she turn it off? What business was it of the MBI’s? None of this made any sense whatsoever. The other questions were about me and she told them that we had only spoke on a rare occasion in the past two years. They did not believe her, for whatever strange reason.

Dusty stated that the interrogation lasted for almost two hours. She said:

“Agent Rose threatened to subpoena me every month, lock me up in a cell, and not call me until the end of the day. He said that he would repeat this process every month until I tell him what he wants to hear. I was accused of coming to Orlando to work for you. My response to Rose was that I told him the night that I was arrested that it would cost me my job. Rose would not believe anything that I said. Towards the end of the interrogation I looked at Rose and said: You really have a vendetta against

Vicky! He screamed: "I DO NOT HAVE A VENDETTA!!" He then threw a chair, turned beet red, and stomped out of the room." ([note 15](#))

Rose also neglected, or ignored, the fact that Dusty had her own agency in Brevard County, and had since she returned from Europe. She did have an occupational license, state fictitious name paperwork, and a couple of ads in the phonebook at this point.

About the same time that Dusty received the subpoena in her door I had, accidentally of course, sent an escort, Maria, to the MBI at the Hyatt Grand Cypress. From what Maria told me when I picked her up at the jail to take her to pick-up her car, it was probably a valid case. The agent spent a good twenty minutes convincing her to take more money for a sexual act, and she eventually accepted the money. The rest of the agents then swarmed in from the connecting room.

Maria was poor, and the offer of so much more money was an easy lure. She had several children to support and received no help with child support. I felt sorry for her. She did hold a regular job, working about thirty hours a week as a rental agent in an apartment complex, but needed more money than she made there. To clarify: To the state it was potentially a valid case but to me it was not. I felt that the MBI, in spending this amount of time to convince her, had created the so-called crime. The agent solicited Maria, and not the other way around.

It was a couple of weeks later when I heard from a frantic and upset Maria. She stated that Agent Rose and another agent had come to her work place and Rose plopped himself on the couch, stating: "I can come here anytime I want to." He demanded that Maria make a statement about me, but her response was that there was nothing to tell and she needed to get back to work. Rose and the other agent left, and Rose declared, "I will be back!" on his way out the door.

It was several days later when Maria telephoned me again:

"What am I supposed to do with this man? He came back again today, again plopped himself on the couch, and said that he would come back every other day until he got what he wanted! My manager and two other leasing agents were here this time, and this is embarrassing."

Maria emphasized that she told Agent Rose: "There is nothing to say about Vicky!" and Rose responded that he had thirty witnesses. She pointed out, "Then you don't need me!" Rose would not leave her office though. Maria said that she asked him: "What do you want me to do, lie for you?" Rose did not respond. She asked me to help her and informed me that she would be fired if he came there again.

I attempted to make a complaint to a variety of people, though no one would accept it. I never heard from Maria again. ([note 16](#)) It was in August of 2000 when Agent Rose called me and started a conversation:

"I met your mother and she's a real nice lady."

"How dare you talk about my mother?" I screamed.

"I am the government, and I can do whatever I want!"

I screamed something else and hung-up the phone, and then called my mother to ask her what this man was talking about. She admitted to me that Rose and another agent showed up at her door one day back in May. She didn't tell me because she knew me well enough to know that I would attempt to do something about it, and there would be problems. She told me that Rose said I was an organized crime kingpin and he was going to put me away for at least thirty years. She said the agents were eyeing everything in her place, from the oil paintings on the walls purchased from an artist in the Montmartre section of Paris in the 1960s, to the furniture. She said nothing much to them and only let them come in because they were loud outside the door, and she didn't want her neighbors to see or hear them. I told mom that I would take care of it and hung-up the phone.

I immediately placed a call to MBI, still very angry, and reached the voicemail, a common occurrence when calling the MBI. I left a message that I wanted to make a complaint against Agent Rose.

The following morning, very early, the constantly ringing phone awakened me. It was an attorney for the MBI on the line, Joe Cocchiarella. I blurted out my problem and complaint, though I was half

asleep. This attorney then screamed at me that if I did not close my business immediately I was going to be charged with racketeering. He never accepted or responded to my complaint, and instead provoked an argument. I was so mad that the provocation worked well. We had a screaming match and I slammed the phone into the receiver. So much for daring to make a complaint about an MBI agent. The MBI does not accept complaints. ([note 17](#))

**

The rest of the year passed without incident, and my son and I spent Christmas and New Year's in Manhattan. Since the night that Maria was arrested I had hardly picked up the telephone, and certainly not after my problems with making both complaints. By March of 2001, I had received a call from Kendall:

"Laura is there something that I should know? Agent Peters just delivered a subpoena to my house, and you know where I live."

Kendall and her family had moved about an hour west of Orlando, to another county, several years earlier. She had lost her appeal, had to spend the time in jail that she had been sentenced to, and had something horrible happen in her life: the suicide of her seventeen year old son. She was not in any condition to deal with the MBI, and they knew it.

"No Kendall, there is nothing going on that I know of."

I then explained my attempt to file a complaint, but it didn't justify the subpoena – Kendall had not worked for me for many years. The MBI knew exactly where she had worked up until the death of her son. They had followed her out to Nevada; actually got on the plane. Why not – the State of Florida could afford the trip to Vegas under the guise of an investigation.

"Well, I told Peters that I'm not going to take anymore crap! The subpoena is to come to their offices next week, and I'm calling an attorney. What do these nuts want with me after all that they did to me?" Kendall stated in disbelief.

We talked for a while, but she sounded like she was flipping out. The following week Kendall called me:

"Laura, I didn't get an attorney because they all wanted too much money to go with me. I'm on my way there by myself. If you don't hear from me in four or five hours, please start dialing my cellular and find out what happened to me."

I assured her that I would, no matter what happened, but I feared for her. They were dangerous, and she had been through way too much. Finally, several hours later, she called me.

"It's a long story and I have to go home and gather some papers. They claimed that it was an investigation about you, but they only asked two questions about you the entire time that I was there. They asked me if I had seen you and if I knew what you're doing now. The answers were no and I have no idea. All of the questions were about Sam. Internal Affairs was there. It was weird!"

I told Kendall that if I could help her by saying once and for all that Sam never gave me any information, to let me know. Kendall said that she would call me back in a while and let me know if it was necessary. She did call back, and I made the clear statement on the phone. They seemed to want rid of Sam, and did not like my answers. Kendall later told me that, on the sly, Peters informed her that a high-ranking Orange County official (Sheriff Beary) walked into MBI offices and told them to do whatever they had to do, but to get rid of Sam once and for all.

We later found out that Sam had been having an affair with that high-ranking official's married sister. ([note 18](#))

**

I made it a frequent practice to read through posts on an internet message board, the Big Doggie.net

board for Orlando, and look for any posts that concerned my business. I never in any way advertised on that board, though I did post on occasion, rarely revealing who I was or that I owned an agency. One day, in late March or early April of 2001, I read a statement that I determined to be posted by the MBI. The poster claimed to be a potential client and stated that he had heard negative things about my agency. He requested that repeats of Valentine's "step up to the plate and tell about their experience."

This was a MBI tactic in attempt to locate any clients of my business. I immediately posted under his post that this was a cop trick, and that they were desperate to locate anyone that used Valentine's. I asked that no one reply as I needed no new clients and no defense. A girl that worked for my agency, Staci, posted a lengthy defense of me and my agency. She also called cops hypocrites and stated that some were frequent users of services. I immediately picked up the phone and called Staci.

"Staci, please remove your post. I do not want or need a defense. That's the only reason that I posted there – so no one else would!"

"Why should I? I haven't done anything wrong! You have a legitimate business. What are you afraid of?"

I responded that if the MBI saw her post, they would track her down like a dog and hand her a subpoena. Staci later told me that she couldn't remove the post and she refused to give me her password so that I could. I told her to expect them at the door.

Less than a week later, the MBI showed up at Staci's door and she called me screaming:

"I'M NOT GOING! THEY CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO ME! I NEED MY PILLS AND I CAN'T GO TO JAIL!!"

That was the last time I ever spoke to Staci. ([note 19](#))

**

It was in June of 2001, when I booked an MBI agent at a Kissimmee Hotel. I sent Mai to the call. When Mai checked in with me she said that everything was fine, but about twenty minutes later the phone rang: It was Mai's cellular number on my caller ID. I answered the phone, but heard what sounded like arguing or yelling in the background, so I listened. There were people talking – woman's voice and several men's voices. Within a minute I realized that they were MBI agents. They were plotting to come to my home, and trying to get Mai to bring my agency fee to me. Mai was telling them that I would think that was strange because I never collected my fees that way. They then threatened her with bringing television cameras to her house if she didn't do it. She talked them into letting her call me first and asking if she could bring the fee to me. The phone beeped in from the hotel number and I disconnected the call from Mai's cellular.

I had listened to this crap for about twenty minutes. I picked up the phone as I normally would and listened to Mai ask me if she could come to my house. I told Mai that I had no clue what she did for the money, but I didn't want the fee. She kept trying, stating that she was coming over, but I told her I would not be home and didn't want the fee anyway. I had no doubt that everyone in that room was left puzzled by the conversation.

Mai called back ten minutes later and this time I told her not to dial me again, and hung-up. Mai was not arrested and about two weeks or so later, she called me from her home phone, so I answered. I knew she had children and would not let the MBI set-up in her house. She stated to me that Agent Rose had just called her, threatened to charge her with "obstructing justice," and gave her one hour to get to their offices.

"What is obstructing justice, Laura?" I explained it to her in relation to the call from her cellular that night. I quickly added that I knew it was not done on purpose, and recited a previous experience with an escort having a cellular in her purse and a button accidentally being depressed connecting her to me, the last number dialed. We imagined that the MBI must have somehow found out about the call. I advised her to bring an attorney with her to MBI offices and we said goodbye.

About an hour and a half after Mai and I had hung-up, the phone rang, and this time it was Mai's cellular number on the caller ID. I knew where she was. She asked if she could bring me that agency fee by, and I went off. I stated loudly that I had shredded every piece of paper that mattered in the house, put it all in a trash bag and covered it with coffee grounds and maple syrup. I added that I had already removed my hard drive from the computer and smashed it in pieces with a hammer. I didn't do any of that, but I didn't want the MBI in my house. I continued, screaming that I knew the call from the cellular that night was an accident, because she wasn't smart enough to do it on purpose. She was trying to shut me up, but I was on a roll at that point. I had plenty to say about anything that popped into my mind. It was my intention to accomplish two things: get their minds off of Mai; and make them realize there was no reason to come in my house. I succeeded with both goals. [\(note 20\)](#)

**

During the course of the summer I heard from Joey's brother Carmine and he had just been released from prison. I knew from Florida Department of Corrections records that he was in a halfway house. Now Carmine calling me was surprising, but I dealt with it. I felt as if he was put up to it by the MBI, but then they couldn't stop the real conversation because they were listening secretly on the line. I asked him how Joey was doing and stated that I wrote Joey a letter immediately after his arrest, but never heard back from him.

"Well, he never received the letter," claimed Carmine. "The only reason that we all pled guilty to the charges was because Agent Rose told us that you made a seven-page statement against us."

"Rose is a liar! Why didn't you ask to see this statement? It does not exist!"

"We considered that, but Joey believed the MBI."

"What did I know about your business, except that you had one?" I asked.

"I know, I know. I tried to point that out, but no one was listening," he responded.

"Carmine, it was the Korean girl, the one that answered your phones, that set you up for the MBI. I knew it about two days before it all happened, but if I had called and said this no one would have believed me anyway."

He was shocked, but finally understood what had really happened. Four years in hell later, they got the real story. And I realized that this whack-job MBI agent was running around telling people, that he claimed were such a danger and carried guns, that I had made a statement against them. Carmine said that Rose had asked them: "How do you think she manages to remain in business?" Did the MBI want me dead? I was viewing it that way at the moment. I didn't think they were dangerous, but the MBI claimed that they were. I also had to wonder who else Rose had stated this crap to. I wished Carmine the best and we said goodbye. That phone call didn't work out at all like the MBI planned either.

On September 5, 2001, I received an email from a client that had used the service a couple of times before – Stan, and he was interested in an escort coming to his home the following evening. We were back and forth in email several times and eventually set a time for Kelly to arrive. Stan gave me his address and I mapped it for Kelly. Stan was a real nice man, and we had lengthy conversations in the past. He was a new technology aficionado and a photographer. Stan had seen Mai on more than one occasion. [\(note 21\)](#)

Kelly arrived as scheduled and called to let me know that she was there. I stated that I'd call her back in an hour. I repeatedly dialed both Kelly's and Stan's telephone numbers an hour later, though to no avail. It made little sense, but obviously something was wrong. I pushed it and left a message on Stan's voicemail emphasizing that I would have no choice except to contact the police if I didn't hear from Kelly in five minutes, and in the meantime I jumped in the car and headed for Stan's house. When I arrived I saw that the house looked deserted. Now I really didn't get it. Finally, as I sat on Stan's street, Kelly answered her cellular. She was crying and obviously shaken.

"Laura, they took my cellular and when I got it back it had scratches all over it! What did they do to

my phone? Stan turned out to be Agent Rose! It was horrible! He really hates you! He said that you are a real bad person and involved in all sorts of crime! He said I didn't know you at all!"

Kelly said that Agent Rose was screaming at her like a madman.

"He was going through my purse and yelling "where's the condoms?" I told him that I didn't offer any services that required condoms and I didn't have any! He demanded my mother's telephone number and address, and told me he would make sure that I got no bond if he didn't get it. I was crying and so upset that other agents entered the room and said that it was not working. A woman agent spoke to me nicely for a minute, and then they took me downtown and asked me all kinds of questions!"

Indeed, Kelly was thirty-two years old, so Rose demanding her mother's phone number was a clear intimidation tactic and the threat of no bond was not even slightly believable to me. Kelly had worked for my agency for close to four years, but had never encountered a man like Rose.

Six days later Kelly called to inform me that Rose would not leave her alone and was demanding a statement from her. He called her continuously, stating that she would have to come to MBI offices and make a statement so that they could drop her charge. She said Rose threatened to file racketeering charges against her if she didn't say what he wanted to hear. The last time Kelly and I spoke she was in fear of Rose.

Her statement, submitted into discovery in the court case, was dated September 12, 2001; the last day that we spoke, and a week after the problem.

**

At about this same time, Rose had been spreading the lie that Dusty was his informant. He would drop hints to this effect when he made arrests of escorts in Brevard County, or rather tagged along on set-up operations. However, Rose did not do the most damage in this respect: It was Terri that passed the word around Brevard so successfully. Terri would tell clients that called her agency that Dusty's service was a set-up or simply warn the clients, if she knew them, that she had heard from a reliable source that Dusty worked with the cops. A couple of clients that knew Dusty better than to believe such lies called her and repeated the information. Both Terri and Rose also spread the word as far as possible that Dusty had AIDS – an outright horrible lie.

Between Rose and Terri, Dusty lost many friends as the word got around, and many more former or potential clients. The word spread fast in Brevard County, like a wild fire. They were trying to ruin her. Rose and Terri had also been spreading lies about me, but they amounted to a heap of garbage in comparison. I attribute this to the fact that I really knew few people in Brevard, and neither Rose nor Terri had any influence with the services that remained in Orange County.

At this point I had all that I ever intended to take from the MBI. I had reached my limit! I closed my business around the 20th of September. After September 11, 2001, I knew the government could only get worse, and Rose get even more power, and I was correct.

In early October, Dusty and I decided to fix the storyteller, Terri. I did my own investigation and found out that Terri was in the middle of a custody battle. Dusty and I located her ex-husband in Kentucky and offered him every bit of information that we had on her. He didn't even know that she owned escort services. As it turned out, the children's paternal grandmother was in bad health and had been denied any access to her grandchildren for over two years. Terri did not even allow the children to speak to their father or grandmother on the phone. He used the information to gain immediate access to the children, and eventual custody. Dusty and I felt better: We gave Terri some problems to deal with, for a change.

**

I contemplated moving to another city, or maybe another country. I was considering my options when

it happened. I was getting up early every morning, usually by eight a.m., to check out the stock market and make a few early morning trades. I had been trading online since 1997, and it had become a habit, sort of like gambling. It was November 20, 2001, a day that I will never forget. I was attempting to place a trade, but my account wouldn't put it through. I received a message that my password was invalid. Since I had been doing this same thing through Datek for four years, I knew something was going on. It had never happened before. I was a platinum customer, so I was able to get support on the phone in one minute. Support told me that there was nothing they could do except to mail me a new password.

"What?" I asked, "I've never heard of such a thing. Just let me reset it."

I heard loud knocking on the door, and yelling outside, but I ignored it to talk to Datek support. It got louder and now they were outside my bedroom window, screaming:

"WE KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE!"

I hung-up the phone to find out what was going on. They were creating such a commotion outside that I didn't bother to change out of my nightgown. As I opened the front door I could see Agent Peters. He had a piece of paper in his hand and five other agents behind him. All of them were on my screened-in front porch by then.

"You're under arrest! declared Peters.

"For what?" I asked.

"I don't know. For your business!"

An agent behind Peters was screaming:

"WHERE'S YOUR GUN?"

Peters chimed in, "WHERE'S YOU'RE GLOCK?"

If I had been thinking, I would have told them that I never owned a Glock. I wondered where they got that from. There were five of them that pushed me into the house. As they did, I stated clearly:

"If you don't have a warrant to search, you do not have my permission!"

No one responded to that statement. There was a lot of screaming going on, with them not me, and one agent in particular (I never learned his name) was shrieking at the top of his lungs like a drill sergeant. They kept demanding my gun, and I finally remembered where it was and pointed to its location in the closet. A couple of the agents made jokes about taking me to jail in my nightgown, but they generously offered me the choice of changing in front of them instead.

"So what should I wear?" I asked.

Peters, sounding impatient, told me to just find anything and put it on. My son was home, off of school, and they allowed me to scream to him to wake-up. Of course he was already awake. He was fourteen at that point, and I asked him to call his grandmother, my attorney, and my bondsman. I named names and he wrote. Peters reminded me that I needed my driver's license, or I'd never be released. I pointed to it and he grabbed it. I was in handcuffs by that time. I was put in a car with a deputy. I believe his name was Marlon Buggs, but I couldn't be sure. He had a crate or something like that, filled with mail on the front seat. It had a recorder under the mail though. He stated that he had to meet another deputy and give him this crate of mail. I had a hard time holding back on that one. Now they're delivering mail in the middle of an arrest? He wanted to play questions and answers, so I humored him, and let him ask. He wanted to discuss investments, so I obliged. I had the guy figuring I was nuts by the time we made it to the jail. Did he think I was going to confess to having those off-shore accounts, or what? They all might have been expecting me to cry or something, but that was not happening. I was pissed off, not in fear.

When the car pulled around the back of the jail, people came out of nowhere to stare. I turned heads, that's for sure, and the jail was alerted to my arrival. They put me in a cell with a woman that was in need of her drugs, and handed me my booking papers. My bond was \$100,000. The woman was flipping out because she had a two-hundred dollar bond, so I showed her my paper. She backed away, and stopped banging her head on the door. The officer that had directed me into the cell opened the

door and thanked me for calming her down.

“No problem. I’ve dealt with the MBI for years so I’m used to lunatics.”

I was moved to a bigger cell, near the phone call cell, but not quite there. There were about ten women in it and probably six were street hookers. I think they had been busting on Orange Blossom Trail. They served lunch and someone wanted mine.

“Everything except the cookies,” I said.

The rest of it was a mystery. A few of the girls told me I’d want it before long. I laughed, shook my head and stated:

“I don’t think so.”

There was a cop put in the cell with us. I had a great time busting her chops about the MBI, and had everyone laughing. I just made harmless jokes about them, but it was obvious that she, in her undercover capacity, did not think that it was humorous.

I wouldn’t go so far as to say that it was fun, but it was interesting, like one of those sleepovers with the Girl Scouts or something. The bondsman was there quick, but it took the jail until 1 a.m., fifteen hours later, to get me in the computer. I figured that the MBI had something to do with it. The people at the jail were actually nice to me.

While I was in the holding cell I saw a list of names written in chalk on a blackboard, and Rocky's full name, Robert Mihalek, was under the list for “showers.” I couldn’t help but to wonder what that was all about. I’d call Dusty and ask as soon as I was released, I thought.

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Chapter Seven

While Awaiting Trial

In two days it would be Thanksgiving and I had yet to go to the grocery store. I intended to the day before, but then my plans were interrupted by the MBI. The cocky attitude and joking around had worn off, and I was entering a state of depression; something I could always recognize and at least try to get a grasp on before it worsened. It was not working this time though, and I had a feeling of doom in my near future. I had no idea what this case was about, and as far as I knew there was no legal reasoning behind my arrest.

My first clue that legalities were not all that I would have to contend with was in the grocery store. With my son's shopping list in hand, I entered Publix. Alex's list was lengthy and had me back and forth and all over the store. When I write the list myself I put items in the order of type of food, and usually I'm throwing things in the basket and out of the store in thirty minutes or less. I didn't rearrange Alex's list before going so I was everywhere four times, spending well over an hour in there. It was easy to notice an odd character near me everywhere that I went. He had one of those plastic hand baskets, the type that you grab if you only need a few items. I'm at the seafood counter, and he's looking in the freezer next to it. I'm hunting for a specific type of cereal, and he's reading the back of cereal boxes. I'm looking for a particular brand of olive oil, and he's in the same aisle. I'm in produce, and so is he. This continued for the approximate hour and a half that I was in the store. He ended up at the check-out next to the one that I was at. He had only spaghetti, oil, oranges, water, and a small bottle of juice; all non-perishables except his drink.

Why would the MBI care what groceries I buy? I really did not understand, but I thought that it might have to do with how I paid for them, so instead of paying in cash as I'd planned, I used a credit card.

We took everything for Thanksgiving dinner over to my mother's place and I cooked dinner there. My mother was in a state of shock over the recent events, but would soon get the enlightened version of how government works. Her apartment complex started to look like a game of musical agents; they appeared immediately following the holiday. One moved into the building next door to her, but only because her building had no vacant units. In the meantime, my long-time attorney had filed a not guilty plea on my behalf. I figured that I would see some paperwork soon, and probably more agents to watch my every move at the same time.

**

I received the 120 page "warrant for arrest affidavit," and it read like Rose's wish list. I do not believe that I have ever read such an unprofessional and grammatically incorrect document in any court proceeding; I doubted that one existed. Most of the information contained therein was entirely false. I went through it page by page, marking the false statements. This was not a case at all and Rose, the undersigned, had simply made-up what did not fit. It consisted of nothing more than abstract theories throughout. I started to feel much better about the entire mess.

The most damning part of the document was my angry statement when Mai had called me from MBI offices after she had been threatened with an obstruction of justice charge. No wonder she had tried to shut me up. Still, the statement had nothing to do with the charges, and I stated nothing incriminating, so I could overcome the problem. If a person listened to the tape of that statement, instead of just reading the transcript, it was clear that I had been speaking to the MBI, and not Mai, and she sure knew that my words were not directed at her.

The awful statement revealed how angry I really was with the MBI. It was analogous to someone kicking a dog repeatedly for years; about eight years at that point. Eventually that dog is going to viciously attack the abuser. The unfair part is that the dog is held responsible, regardless. Not that I'm a dog in any way, but the similarities of the problem were clear and I had obviously snapped. I had to ignore it and move forward with my own investigation.

**

Before November of 2001 had passed, I received a taste of the future with this court case. I opened the door just as the stranger was about to knock. I heard his vehicle stop on the street in front of the house.

"Can I help you with something?" I asked.

"I'm from the cable company and I need to get in your backyard," he said.

"That won't be a problem, as soon as I see some ID."

"Uh, it's in my car. I'll be right back," he stammered.

The stranger moved at a quick pace, down the driveway and to the roadway where he had parked. He jumped into a black Jeep and took off so fast that I couldn't see a tag number. I wondered what was in my backyard.

**

Dusty and I decided to meet for lunch at Victoria's, a little Greek restaurant that we had both been to before. We were cautious of the telephone and did not name the restaurant, but instead referred to a date that only meant something to us. I knew how to shake a tail without a problem, and so did Dusty. The funny thing is that our method of doing so was quite the opposite. She drove as slow as a turtle; I flew like a bat out of hell, and both methods worked. Sure that neither one of us were followed, we checked out the menu and ordered lunch. As our drinks arrived, Dusty leaned over and whispered:

"Don't look now, but the guy at the table right behind you is straining to hear our conversation while sucking on an iced tea. I know he wasn't here when we got here, but I didn't see him sit down."

"No one was here when we got here, and we were looking at the menu for ten minutes. No wonder we didn't notice him. Do you recognize him?" I asked.

"No, I don't, but he's dressed like he just got out of bed. He's got on some old bed shorts, a dirty and wrinkled tee shirt, and flip-flops," she laughed.

Not thinking, I quickly turned my head around to look at him. There was my strange character from Publix. One might consider it possible that this was a coincidence, except that Victoria's is on Merritt Island – forty-five miles from the Publix that I was shopping at near my house. As I looked at him, he looked the other direction, at the wall.

"Laura, you weren't supposed to look back! Now you ruined the game!" Dusty said smiling.

"I'm sorry. I wasn't thinking. That's the guy that was following me around Publix last week. He's still dressed in what looks like yesterday's bed clothes!"

We were whispering about him and otherwise saying nothing at all. After a few more drinks of his iced tea, he left. When we finished our lunch we left Dusty's car at the restaurant and drove away in mine. We stopped at a convenience store that was off the beaten track. As soon as Dusty walked inside, I noticed him get out of a pick-up truck and go in after her. I never saw him follow us though, and that was unusual. I'm normally pretty good at stuff like that, and I had been looking around.

I now realized the point in following me around Publix. The way my house was situated a person could never tell if I was at home or not. I always parked in my double-car garage and had the door down about ninety-five percent of the time. I had heavy drapes with shears on all the windows at the front of the house and the backyard had a privacy fence. Unless a person had watched the house

ceaselessly, they would not have a clue if my son was still inside or had left with a friend or with me. It was plausible that they put a tracking device on my car that day when I was in Publix. They must expect me to lead them somewhere, I thought, and I guess I did. Though it really was not a laughing matter we had a few more laughs about it. When Dusty got into the car, she asked:

“Did you see him go into the store?”

“Yep, you can’t miss that outfit,” I laughed.

“They must wake these people up telling them to hurry: “we overheard them saying they were meeting for lunch, go, it doesn’t matter how you’re dressed.” Can you picture that Laura?”

We both cracked up laughing right there in the parking lot in front of the guy.

“Now we need to lose him! It’s time for him to go home and get dressed anyway,” I joked.

**

Dusty received another subpoena, but this one was from the Office of the Statewide Prosecutor, and not the MBI. She was looking for an attorney, but they scheduled her deposition for the week of Christmas and there didn’t seem to be an attorney in town that was available. The prosecutor refused to change the date until after the holidays.

The MBI had attempted to plant someone in her life, and though they hardly succeeded, he caused as much interference as was possible. Dusty called him Santa Clause – in part because of the interference he attempted to cause before Christmas Day, and also for his resemblance to the real Saint Nick. When Santa drove Dusty to the prosecutor’s offices on the day of her deposition he had assumed that she did not find an attorney. As Dusty got out of his car, Santa wished her luck. She turned around and looked at him, stating:

“Thank you. I sure hope my attorney is on time.”

She said that Santa looked stunned. No one expected her to locate an attorney. When Dusty entered the prosecutor’s offices they assumed that she had no attorney, and greeted her in kind. Minutes later her attorney walked in and when the prosecutor came out to get her, the game was on. Craft made his try at getting rid of her attorney, and the guy looked like he was leaving. Dusty looked at him and stated:

“Oh no you don’t; you are not leaving me here alone with these people!”

The prosecutor and the attorney went into another room, leaving Dusty standing there. A few minutes later they returned. The attorney never spoke a word during the entire deposition, which lasted close to four hours, but at least he was there as a witness and she felt better with him present.

During Dusty’s deposition the prosecutor had threatened to charge her as a co-defendant, with racketeering and conspiracy, if she didn’t say what he wanted to hear about both Rocky and I, but thus far had not come through on the threat. Agent Rose had made this threat already, so she wasn’t positive that she would be walking out of the prosecutor’s offices and returning home. They made all witnesses feel like they had the power to do anything if they didn’t receive the answers demanded.

**

Dusty and I were having similar problems. With me it was people claiming to be with the cable company that were trying to get into my backyard. With her, it was people claiming to be from the phone company. We both noticed that we were frequently being followed also. The entire situation was volatile.

Rocky was another story, and we couldn’t do much of anything to help him. That was his name that I saw on the blackboard when I was in jail, but his bond was initially set at \$900,000. He hired an attorney and had a bond reduction hearing in early December 2001. Instead of reducing the bond, the judge, Anthony Johnson, signed a “no bond” order. In other words, no amount of money or property

could secure his release. This is a status normally reserved for people charged with murder, and even they sometimes had a high bond set. The state had filed, and Judge Johnson had signed, a Nebbia Order. They froze Rocky's assets: his condo and bank accounts, and made sure that he had no access to any money.

I spoke to him on several occasions when he called collect from the Orange County jail. In one such conversation Rocky was crying. He told me that Agent Rose came to see him, and told him that if he didn't state that he was in business with me, Rose would see to it that he never got out. He would be locked up for at least thirty years. He cried:

"They know we weren't in business together! Rose wants me to lie!"

So far Rose had proved himself to be capable of just about anything. I suggested to Rocky that he should do whatever he needed to do to get out of jail. I told him not to worry about me. By this point, Rocky's former girlfriend, Mandy, had been charged the same as we were. She was the third co-defendant in the case.

Mandy had moved back to Colorado before we were arrested, but that didn't stop Rose. The agent flew to Colorado to speak with Mandy before the charges were filed, intending to use them as leverage, but Mandy stated the truth: she did not know me, and Rocky and I were not business partners. She told Rose about the one occasion that she had met me, when he brought her to my house for dinner and introduced her as his new girlfriend. Rose was good to his word and charges were filed.

According to public records, Mandy was arrested on an Orange County, Florida fugitive warrant for racketeering on December 11, 2001, in Aurora, Colorado. Mandy was able to post a bond, but apparently she did not show up in Orange County as ordered. On December 23rd she was charged with "Flight-Escape" in Fort Collins, Colorado. I know that she made an agreement with MBI and the prosecutors to return to Florida, plead guilty, and testify against me, and they dropped the escape charge. ([note 22](#))

She later told me a story about meeting Rose in a Colorado hotel, and him throwing her down on the bed, handcuffing her, and having Colorado police take her to jail – all because she refused to state that Rocky and I were partners.

**

The State of Florida listed so many witnesses in this case that I was overwhelmed attempting to investigate them: mentally and financially. I had never met, and had never spoken to, the majority of the listed witnesses. With a conspiracy charge the state was saying that it didn't matter that I didn't know these people. They had worked for Rocky, and the state claimed that Rocky was my partner in business. First on my agenda was to find proof that this was a false accusation, and it wasn't that hard to accomplish. When I submitted this proof into discovery I assumed that the state would drop it all, however, that was seriously incorrect: They already knew the truth.

In January of 2002, a girl that had been living in Rocky's condo while he was in jail, Angel, was so angry about Mandy's return that she handed Rose and the prosecutor Rocky's business records. He kept a client book with names, addresses, and phone numbers. She also gave them access to his computer. The state then listed these items in discovery, and I received copies of all of it. Rocky had accepted credit cards through his corporation, and I received copies of all these records as well.

Rocky and I originally shared an office, but with separate leases, at a Merritt Island office complex. He had to get his own lease to get an occupational license. By January of 2001, I had rented a different office, but the state claimed that we shared an office under one lease throughout the time in question. I went to the complex and got one of the rental agents to give me copies of all my leases and all of Rocky's. The particular office manager that the state listed as a witness was not even working at the complex when I rented the office, or for quite some time thereafter. She just said what Rose wanted her to say, disregarding the facts and her own files that were easily findable and correctly filed in her

office.

Rocky and I had different banks also. I never accepted credit cards, but he did from the first year that he was in business. Terri was the main escort that claimed to have worked for both Rocky and I. She had made a statement for Agent Rose in January of 2001, alleging that Rocky and I were partners. Once I read Terri's lengthy statement of lies and misinformation, I submitted the proof to the court that she had attempted to have us both arrested long before, but instead was caught in lies and signed a "no prosecution affidavit."

The same leasing agent from the office that copied the correct files for me also told me a story about federal agents coming to the office in January of 2001, and questioning the manager about Terri. The manager gave the feds access to Terri's office in the same complex. That was all of the information that she had though. I also submitted Terri's Florida driver's license record into discovery: During the time period that she claimed she worked for my agency, an eight month period, her license was revoked. Yet in her statement, Terri claimed to drive to Orlando to go to hundreds of calls for me. The truth was closer to eight calls in a two month period, prior to her father's death.

Terri also claimed to have met me through Rocky. Of course Terri had actually been referred by Kathy in Miami. After my arrest I did call Kathy to inform her of Terri's part in my entire mess. She was quite apologetic, and I realized the situation for what it was: Kathy had simply tried to save the woman a long drive to Miami. I was curious as to why Terri had never mentioned Kathy in her statement, but then that would mean that she didn't meet me through Rocky, and that was the base of the entire prosecution. Were Rose and Craft aware of this lie that was at the very root?

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Needing a break from the investigation, my son and I decided to drive to Miami and visit a friend for a couple of days. The drive to Miami was uneventful; however, the return trip was the opposite. I noticed two different SUVs following me from the south west area of Miami to just north of Fort Lauderdale on I-95. There was also a helicopter hovering overhead throughout this ride, but it too deserted before the West Palm Beach exits. I exited to get something to eat, and they resumed the pursuit when I re-entered the interstate. Trust me; these vehicles and the helicopter were tracking my car. I now knew for sure that this was connected to why I was followed around the grocery store that day. There was no other way to put a GPS tracking device on my car. The car was always in my garage.

It was around midnight when we pulled into the driveway. My son first noticed something odd: The outside light was on, but we both knew that I didn't leave it on; I never did. I left the car in the driveway and entered the house by myself. I walked in every room and determined that no one was in the house and then I pulled the car into the garage. Alex did what he always did: He ran inside to beat me to the computer, but this time he ran out of the room, yelling:

"Mom! It's all plugged in! You unplugged everything like you always do! Someone was in the house!"

I calmed him down, told him not to touch anything, and looked around. He was right. Everything in the computer room was plugged in. I went through some important papers and valuables and decided that everything was there. Nothing was missing, but there was a stack of papers that had been moved: I'd left them on my dresser, and now they were on a bench at the end of the bed. I had this obsession. When I left the house for more than a couple of hours I unplugged everything. It was more a fear of fire than anything else. I would unplug all of the computer equipment from the wall: the modem; printers; and two PCs. Nothing was left plugged in. I couldn't have forgotten to do this if I had wanted to. I tried to pretend that I must have just not done it this time, but my son told me that I could pretend whatever I wanted to – he knew that someone was in the house. At any rate, on the surface it didn't look as if they had stolen anything. [\(note 23\)](#)

In the week that followed I returned home one day to find my son scared and upset.

“Mom, while you were gone a van and a car pulled all the way up in the driveway, but when I opened the curtain to peek out, they must have realized someone was here. They took off so fast that I couldn’t see the tag!”

I asked him what the van and the car looked like and he said:

“The van was a light tan color, maybe beige, and it said Sears Home Repair on it. The car was a gold color. It was kind of a newer car. The van looked older than the car.”

Now I was alarmed. Obviously the visit to my house, with my son home, had been agents from somewhere; either federal or state. I knew for a fact that Sears Home Repair no longer existed. The company was now Sears Home Central, and they had new white vans. I decided that I was no longer able to leave Alex at home alone. He would soon be fifteen years old, and would no doubt have issues with going everywhere with me and being forced to leave his home because agents continuously attempted to break into it. Moving him to my mother’s was not a solution; agents had entered her place as well. She was positive about that.

Several days later I caught the Sears Home Repair van pulling into the driveway myself. As soon as I opened the drapes slightly, it ripped out of the driveway too fast to see the tag. I wondered what they wanted inside my house. This scene with the Sears Home Repair van was repeated on two more occasions.

Another strange problem going on at the time involved hovering helicopters. Between late December of 2001 and late January of 2002, I counted helicopters hovering over my roof sixteen times. Usually it would not hover for long, but in each situation it was directly above the house and yard. On a few occasions this would go on for a period of between five and ten minutes. I was sure the MBI had the power to direct a helicopter unit from the Orange County Sheriff’s Office to do this, but when everything else was taken into account it was adding up to federal, not state. I was never sure of the origin of the attempted or successful break-ins, or where the helicopters came from.

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By now Rocky had been released from jail. He agreed to testify against me, and comply with numerous other stipulations in a lengthy plea agreement. I received a copy of the transcript of his deposition from my attorney. It was wild, and by the time I finished reading this lengthy statement I decided that he was on some serious drugs. He was all over the map for hours. But how could he be on drugs? He had gone directly from the Orange County jail to the prosecutor’s offices. [\(note 24\)](#)

Rocky actually stated that I “had trash bags full of cash buried in my backyard.” At least now I knew why all these people were trying to get into my backyard, but I couldn’t imagine where they heard such an outrageous lie. Rocky couldn’t possibly have made it all up without help; he just wasn’t capable, and they were trying to get in my yard long before he made the statement. None of it made sense.

Agent Rose made an agreement with Rocky that in exchange for his testimony against me, his bond would be reduced to something that he could easily pay and there would be no forfeiture. Rose, as usual, was true to his word: Rocky was taken into court that same day and his bond was changed to \$20,000. He was released shortly thereafter. Rocky went from being so dangerous that he couldn’t get any bond at all to being released for \$2000 in cash.

In the meantime, I had some serious telephone problems going on at my house. A few long-time friends, including Dusty and Tommy, the concierge, had come knocking on my door. Both had dialed my home telephone number for several days and received either a busy signal or a strange error message. Neither one of them remembered my cellular number.

There was definitely a problem with my Bellsouth service. At the time I also had fast internet access and my email through Bellsouth. I had made a complaint and emailed it as instructed. The complaint was against the MBI and was submitted to a government complaint center in Washington D.C., however, I never heard back from them. I went to a payphone and called John, whom I had spoken to

previously. He too had been trying to reach me for days, and had never received my email that he expected. He said that Bellsouth servers were refusing email from his server. He discovered this when his emails had been returned undeliverable. He faxed me the entire printout concerning the server refusal; faxed it to Office Depot, that is.

Shortly thereafter I made the decision to cancel my home phone service. Periodically I couldn't get a dial tone either and even my mother would have problems reaching me for days at a time. In all of the years that I had lived in that house there was never any problem with telephone lines until after my arrest.

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My attorney called me and asked me to come to his office, so we set an appointment for the following day. He had done little except file my not guilty plea in the case and pass the discovery on to me. He also spoke to the prosecutor privately a couple of times. Now he viewed the case as a conflict of interest. When I saw him I decided to let him off the hook. My case needed to be actively handled even though I was stuck dealing with the investigation myself. I told him that I decided I wanted to represent myself. In my opinion there was some sort of pressure, but I'll leave that alone because the bottom line was that I couldn't make him actively represent me. I thought about Kendall and the many attorneys she went through. I admit that I resented this though, as he had been my attorney since I had opened the business. He also did not return a single dollar. He filed the paperwork to withdraw as attorney of record.

The prosecutor, Craft, heavily objected to my attorney withdrawing. Craft had several motions in store for us at the hearing. One motion was for a Faretta hearing. My attorney was allowed to withdraw as he had represented two of the state's witnesses in past which could be considered a conflict of interest, even though one (Dusty) had signed off on it. In a Faretta hearing the court determines if a defendant is competent and if the consequences of self-representation are clearly understood. Craft bordered on calling me incompetent, but then stopped at a point because he couldn't prosecute me if this was true. The court kept trying to push me to accept a public defender. The problem was that my house was collateral on my bond, so I couldn't sell it. I had some money, but not enough to pay for this case. I'd already spent \$10,000 cash on the bond, thousands on discovery and investigation, too much on my former attorney, and I didn't have enough cash to start fresh with a new attorney. The court refused to lower my bond so that the house could be removed, I could sell it, and pay a new attorney. No, they all clearly wanted me to have a public defender. After thirty minutes of questioning, Judge Johnson determined that I could represent myself since I had refused the public defender. I didn't want to represent myself, but at the moment I felt that it was better me than no one.

I filed several motions: demanding missing discovery the state kept claiming they had; requesting disclosure of electronic surveillance; requesting serviceable addresses for a few state witnesses; and demanding Brady or exculpatory evidence. They were all granted except the one requesting serviceable address. The state had the defense delivering witness subpoenas to Agent Rose! I had already complained that Rose was threatening the particular witnesses in question: Kelly and Maria. No one cared though. The state claimed that there was no exculpatory evidence, were no deals made, and also was no electronic surveillance. Within a few months the prosecutor tired of dealing with me. I didn't scare as easily. Craft brought up the bond reduction motion that I had been denied on before, and the bond was lowered.

If I had known that I could have had the public defender that the judge had appointed as standby counsel, I would have said yes to the idea to begin with. The problem was, as soon as the state saw that Greg was actively pursuing my case they would have replaced him with someone more MBI and state friendly. Greg was a great guy, and I could not possibly have written the motions I did without his help. He recognized the situation as a railroad job rather quickly, and helped me in a way that I cannot

reveal.

I'm not knocking the P.D. office in any way, except that they are overloaded with cases and my case was a mess that required more attention than could be given. My two co-defendants both had state appointed attorneys at this point. The attorneys that each had hired had abandoned ship, for one reason or another. It is my opinion that the attorneys appointed by the judge to each of them were ineffective.

About this time in the case I read in the Brevard newspaper, in the marriage announcements, that Rocky and Mandy had married. Dusty saw the notification too and called me. She was devastated by the news, and believed that Rose had engineered the entire event. Her conclusion was not as far-fetched as many might think: Rose had been deeply involved in the intimate details of his witnesses' lives. Rocky later told Dusty that they only married so that Mandy didn't have to testify against him. But this made no sense at all, as for one thing, they had both already pled guilty; for another, Florida law precludes the requirement of a spouse to testify concerning events that occur during the marriage. They definitely were not in love though, and it had something to do with the case.

I sold my house myself the first day I planted the sign in my yard. I closed on the deal and received my money in less than three weeks. More important, I had already located the attorney that I wanted to hire and gave his office a deposit to formally sign onto the case. I was referred, by a friend, to Harley Gutin, in Cocoa, Florida. Harley turned my case over to his partner, but informed me that if I later decided that I'd rather that he conducted the trial it would not be an issue. So I hardly got to know Harley, though I'm sure that he is an excellent attorney. Harley's partner, Stephen Wolverton (Steve), took over my case from that moment forward.

I had no issue about selling my home, given the recent occurrences. I made the decision to send my son to his father's in South Texas. His father rented a U-Haul and loaded up most of the contents of the house, and they drove back to Texas. It was better for my son not to see any more of this strange case and the situation. I didn't want my son to believe that the actions of the MBI, and Rose in particular, were representative of all law enforcement. I needed him to understand that this case was unusual. I also felt that he was in danger.

From the moment that Steve began representing me, it was as if a huge burden had been removed from my shoulders. I still had to participate in the case and investigation, though he now handled it for the most part. I just read the discovery, corrected the misinformation, and composed the questions that he needed in order to depose the state's witnesses, including Rose. I had not noticed anyone following me as often either, and the MBI agents seemed to disappear from sight, for the most part. Before Steve there were always eight or more agents present at every hearing, and there were quite a few hearings. The MBI had finally stopped harassing me for the first time in eight years.

They were still pushing people into Dusty's life though. She had closed her own agency months before. By this time, several of the escort service owners in Brevard County were informants and spreading the word that Dusty was the culprit. I had to believe that this was done to take the heat off of Terri. She was the root of everyone's problem.

I spent some time going through the entire case and concluded that there was not a case at all. On my side there was Dusty, Maria, Kelly, and Mai. Kelly's charge had been dropped and Mai was never arrested to begin with. Not one of these ladies could, or did, claim that I knew about or promoted prostitution. There was no tape of me stating anything illegal whatsoever, and Rose had threatened each of these ladies with thirty years in a prison if they didn't testify for the state.

On Rocky's side there was a list of escorts, but only one on the entire list had actually been arrested through his agency. The rest either were not arrested at all or were arrested through another service. There was solid documentation that showed that I was not Rocky's partner in any way. Mandy did not know me at all and had already expressed this in a deposition. Rocky? Well I didn't see his testimony as an issue, regardless of what he would say. The only problem was Terri the liar witness, and Terri was a great actress. I concentrated my efforts on digging-up dirt on Terri. It wasn't too much of a problem. Terri was covered in dirt.

There were also witnesses listed by the state that I would categorize as “other” if there was such a thing. There was Staci McCormick that had posted on the message board, but when we finally received her statement in discovery I could understand why the state held onto it: It didn’t reveal me to be guilty of anything. There was also Cheryl Traywick, a woman that had owned her own services in the Orlando area since the same time that I opened mine. Something had happened with her through her own agency and I felt that she was being threatened by the MBI. The state had named her as a witness from the beginning, though the tape and transcript listed in discovery were never sent, no matter how many times both were demanded at this point. I didn’t view Staci or Cheryl as a problem for me.

The state had also listed a woman by the name of Elizabeth Hanstine, and in her statement that we received in discovery Elizabeth claimed to have worked for both Rocky and myself from 1995 until 2001. Rocky didn’t even get into the business until I sold him that ad in the late summer of 1998, he lived in another country in 95-96, and I knew that he was in Europe with Dusty in 97; they had returned together in December of 1997. After some investigation I figured out who Elizabeth was and the probable reason for her involvement.

When my ad came out in the phonebooks distributed in Brevard in April of 1998, I met Elizabeth at a shopping center on Merritt Island. Right there in the strip mall she had an independent contractor agreement signed and notarized for me: I found the agreement. My father was in the hospital, but not knowing that his condition would worsen and he would not return home, I met her on that day. Three days later I contacted her, stated my apologies for wasting her time, informed her of my father’s situation, and told her that I would not be answering the phone. She asked if I knew anywhere else that was hiring and I gave her Dusty’s phone number. I did this entirely as a courtesy to Elizabeth because I had wasted her time. She had never worked for me, and Dusty had never heard of her either. Dusty and I guessed that when Elizabeth dialed the number, Rocky must have answered the phone and secretly sent her to calls. My investigation also revealed that two days prior to giving Rose this statement, Elizabeth had been arrested for felony probation violation.

Rhonda Liphart was an additional witness listed by the state, and in her statement she claimed that she worked for me from 1993 until 2000. Now Rhonda was simply a liar, and it would be easy to prove. I knew exactly who she was, and she had worked for me for about one month in 1993. I had sent her to a call with Kendall and asked Kendall to collect her fee for me. Rhonda was doing drugs with both of the men and Kendall twiddled her thumbs for thirty minutes. Kendall then called me and stated that she was sorry, but the girl was a druggie, she was leaving, and she didn’t want to collect the fee. I told her to just leave and had her hand the phone to Rhonda. I made sure that Rhonda felt safe, and really wanted to be there, and she did on both counts. I spoke to Rhonda the following day, but decided to let her keep the fee and never called her again.

Rhonda had worked for half of the agencies in Orlando, but after we parted ways she opened her own agency. In the fall of 1995, Rhonda was arrested on racketeering, money laundering, and credit card factoring charges, along with Joey and half of the other agency owners in Orlando. I still had the newspaper article from the arrest, and Rhonda was listed. She made a plea deal, and part of that deal was to assist the MBI in anyway they deemed necessary. I obtained a copy of the agreement from the file. She also had been in jail in Ocoee, an Orlando suburb, when Rose obtained the lengthy false statement from her. Rose and Rhonda knew each other from the previous case. My attorney, Steve, discovered why she was in jail:

Rhonda was on felony probation in Volusia County (Daytona area) for “abuse and neglect of the elderly or disabled.” She had violated the probation, landing in jail. I obtained a copy of the judgment and the arrest affidavit in the original felony case. Rhonda had abandoned a physically and mentally disabled man that she was contracted by an agency to care for over the course of a weekend. The man’s sister returned home to find him alone and in deplorable conditions. The sister then called the police and it was tracked to Rhonda: She had left to go purchase drugs and had never returned. That would have jury appeal!

One other important issue was an allegation by Rose, in the arrest warrant, that he had dialed an ad for “Valentine’s Escorts” in the Daytona Beach Bellsouth phonebook, and it was my voice that answered the phone. This was the main reason that the Office of the Statewide Prosecutor (OSWP) took the case rather than the regular state attorney’s office. Now the OSWP is the Florida equivalent to the feds: They have the power and the money to do whatever they want. They cross jurisdictional boundaries. I demanded a copy of this ad during the discovery process that Rose claimed to call on numerous occasions. They never came up with such an ad because there wasn’t one. I had never placed any advertisement in a Daytona Beach phonebook and had never answered a phone in any ad.

This case was voluminous, but it had no substance whatsoever. There was little truth stated in the “warrant for arrest affidavit,” or in the state’s witness statements. A few of the state witnesses had been heavily threatened, or they would not have spoken to Rose. Those witnesses did not really incriminate me. A few others had made lengthy, and wild, statements that were easily proved as false, and did so to get out of their own serious legal problems. And then there was Rocky – he fit in both categories.

In the late summer of 2002, Bob contacted me through Dusty. Bob had a deposition from a civil case wherein Rocky and his new wife Mandy were being deposed. Rocky spoke about this case and me in this deposition, and Bob offered to sell it to me for his cost: \$110.00. I raced to Titusville, met Bob, and purchased the document. Rocky had stated to the Suntrust Bank attorney that he was out on bond and that it was a long story. In Rocky’s rambling he included:

“Rose said I’d do thirty years in prison if I didn’t say I was in business with Vicky, but I was never her business partner....”

The statement went on and on, and now the court reporter was added to the defense witness list.

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There was other breaking news in August of 2002: Federal indictments were handed down in “the Circuit” case. The news articles all named Miami, New Orleans, Los Angeles, Chicago, “and half a dozen other cities,” as where the organization operated. No article ever named all of the cities, or mentioned any connection to the brothels in Nevada. The feds apparently had wiretaps on the phones of the alleged madams in this nationwide network, and first approached a woman by the name of Kathy that ran the Miami arm of “the Circuit,” to offer a deal and enlist her assistance in setting-up the other participants. I searched through court documents and discovered that the wiretaps originated with one placed on Kathy’s phones in early 2002. [\(note 25\)](#) I had warned the Kathy that I knew about Terri within a week of my arrest: in late 2001. I decided that something didn’t smell right in this entire picture.

Dusty recalled that Terri had gone to Nevada to work in a brothel when she couldn’t find anyone else that would hire her in Brevard County. Dusty thought that it was in 1998, but wasn’t positive. I met with Kendall to show her a photo of Terri and ask a few more questions about this “circuit.” Kendall identified Terri as working briefly in a Nye County, Nevada brothel at some point in 1998. I now considered it possible that Kathy in Kendall’s story and the one that I knew might be one and the same after all. If that was the case and Terri had helped the feds set-up Kathy and this “circuit,” then that also meant that Rose and the prosecutor knew that Terri did not meet me through Rocky.

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August really turned out to be an interesting month. One evening Dusty and I decided to meet at the Barnes and Noble on Merritt Island. We did this often, always meeting in the café, and having coffee and dessert. This day was no different than all the others. We ordered large mochas and espresso brownies, and Dusty, stating that it was her turn, paid the tab. We sat down at a table and continued a conversation that we had started on the way in. About half-way through the mochas and brownies,

Dusty leans over to me and quietly says:

“Don’t turn around or move, but we are being watched. I’m scared.”

I was afraid to look as I sensed that she meant it this time, and it sounded serious. She whispered: “There is an officer at the counter, an undercover looking guy talking to the manager by the magazines, and a few other cops walking around. They’re all pretending not to look at us, but they are!”

We were sitting at a table by a window, so I just looked out the window, hoping to catch the reflections in the glass. Instead of reflections I saw about eight Brevard County Sheriff’s Office vehicles in the road, between the parking lot and my window. I looked at Dusty and said in a normal voice:

“I don’t know what is going on here, but I want to leave! Just get up and we can slowly walk out the door.”

I stood up first, she followed, and real slowly we walked towards the front door. All eyes followed us. One by one they walked out the door and got into their vehicles. The undercover looking man got into the gold SUV.

Dusty had to be at work shortly across the bridge in Cocoa, but said that she was afraid they would follow her. I assured her that I’d follow her and make sure that she made it there, alone and okay. We had parked next to each other so we each got into our cars. It looked like all the deputies had disappeared from the parking lot, and gone in separate directions shortly after we walked out the door. That gold SUV was parked in front though, and he followed Dusty out of the parking lot, and I followed him. She drove slowly, and before we reached the Cocoa bridge about a mile down the road, he did a u-turn and went back the direction that we came from.

A little birdie, that sometimes gave me information, told me that the MBI was trying to get a warrant to arrest me for “tampering with a witness,” but the judge would not okay it. The key was that Dusty had paid for the mochas and brownies. To imagine that these people could consider it to be bribing a witness if I had paid floors me! Good thing it was her turn and she had money on her.

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The agents were crawling back out of the woodwork and my break from harassment was short-lived. It might have had something to do with Rocky’s civil deposition that Steve submitted into discovery, and my clear refusal to even discuss any deal. I was living at my mother’s and felt like I was being watched every time I entered and exited. It was destined to get worse though, if that was possible.

Steve had received a document, in early October of 2002, from Craft, that announced: “State’s Twelfth Supplemental Discovery Response,” and the worst part of this case for me had now officially commenced. The realization that I had no intention of talking deals, and the fact that the main witness, Terri, could not really testify, induced the MBI to come up with several brand new witness statements. These new depositions from the state were all whoppers, but one in particular seriously distressed me: It came from Terri. It was listed on this document as: “Statement by V. Gallas to witness Theresa Isaacs – substance: During domination prostitution calls Ms. Gallas loves to wrap a whip around a male customer’s penis because it makes them scream like a pig.” I almost fainted on Steve’s office floor when I read this reprehensible and perverted statement.

I had never gone to one of my calls, and never met any client, with the exception of having dinner with a couple of regular clients of the service on a rare occasion. I did not even book domination calls and had no escort that was interested in doing domination calls. From beginning to end it was created entirely from the minds of Terri and Rose. Perhaps it was something that interested one or both of them, or maybe they watched movies with such scenes.

I could not even have dreamed up such an accusation – and that explains the difference between them and me. I will reveal, for the first time, what I considered doing about it: Knowing exactly where Terri

lived, I contemplated suicide, but I would have taken her out first. Someone needed to put the wretch out of her misery! Instead, I drove to the beach, to the end of Jackson Street in Cape Canaveral. I considered jumping in the water, and swimming out until I could swim no more. Then it would all be over with; finished once and for all.

As I approached the bench that sat on the pathway to the sand, I noticed a man walking away. He left his wallet on the bench in plain view. I ran after him, but he must have already entered his condo. I approached a man working on his vehicle in his open garage at the same condos, opened the wallet, and showed him the driver's license. He pointed to a door, so I knocked on it, saw that the man at the door was the one from the license, and handed him his wallet. He talked me into waiting for a moment while he poured us a drink, thankful for the return of his wallet. We sat on the bench by the sand, drinking cognac and talking for a while. He was an attorney and I told him of my troubles, but not why I had come to the beach that evening. He was encouraging, and by the time we finished our drinks I decided to just go home. Besides, I was too intoxicated to swim.

Steve had already deposed the agents involved in the case, the witnesses that mattered, and had made several attempts to serve subpoenas on Terri, Rocky, and Mandy. Each of these witnesses were to be served through Rose; however, he was absent from the picture for the moment for unknown reasons. Steve sent a process server to Rocky's condo in Cape Canaveral. Both Rocky and Mandy answered the door. I quote from the sworn affidavit later given to my attorney by this process server, "Sandy":

“... They told this process server that they are husband and wife. Mr. Mihalek said that this case was bullshit and he did not want to go to this deposition. He asked if he had to go. I showed him on the subpoena where it says if you fail to appear you may be held in contempt of court.... He said he did not know anything about Vicki Gallas. Mrs. Mihalek said this was all because a MBI agent fell in love with one of the girls. Mr. Mihalek stated that it all started when Vicki Gallas filed a lawsuit against Disney. He said that he was in jail on a \$1 million bond and that Brant Rose made a deal with him, saying that if he testified against Vicki Gallas that he would get his bond reduced so he could get out of jail. Mr. Mihalek said that he “made up shit” and he just told them a “bunch of lies” so he could get out of jail. He said all of the girls lied too. Mr. Mihalek stated that after he gave the information and agreed to testify against Vicki Gallas, his bond was reduced to \$20,000. Mr. Mihalek expressed that he did not want to go to this deposition because he lied about the information that he gave to the agent but he just had to get out of jail. Mr. Mihalek stated that he never had dealings with Vicki Gallas. Mrs. Mihalek mentioned that their children were in Colorado. Mr. Mihalek told me he had two bulges behind his ears (and showed me) when he was in jail and that after he got out he suffered a stroke. He stated that he is suffering from the experience and sees a psychiatrist. Mrs. Mihalek said she went to Circles of Care.

Needless to say, that is when the shit really hit the fan with this case. As soon as my attorney submitted this statement into discovery, Rocky, Mandy, and Sandy the process server were attacked. Shortly thereafter it was Steve's turn. I could not speak to Rocky or Mandy at this point, so all that I knew was that I had received another one of those “State's Supplemental Discovery” motions, listing a new tape that agent Rose made of Rocky. It was a somewhat lengthy tape, but throughout, it had been stopped and started. It was obvious that Rose told Rocky how to respond to just about every question. Rocky sounded as if he was operating at less than half capacity. [\(note 26\)](#)

Of course I never had any lawsuit against Disney, or anyone else for that matter. This was misinformation put in Rocky's mind by Rose. Rocky couldn't have made it up if he had wanted to. I have no idea about the agent being in love part, and cannot imagine where Mandy heard it. After all that had been done to Rocky and Mandy, there was no doubt in my mind that they were both under psychiatric care, and he did have a stroke shortly after he was released from jail.

Within days they went after the poor process server. She was a former deputy sheriff with a solid reputation. The woman did not lie. She also did not question anyone, and only went there to serve the

subpoena. Next I received additional discovery: the transcript of a lengthy deposition/drilling of Sandy. I believe that it was a four hour plus deposition.

Next they went after my attorney. They started by accusing him of being a part of a scheme to tamper with state witnesses, and it only worsened from there. Suffice it to say that he came out ahead in his situation as well. If Steve had ever believed that this was a regular case and they were nice and normal, as they had been presenting themselves to him, what they did next was the equivalent of throwing hot coffee at him, but it is a story that I must leave for Steve to tell – if he ever wants to.

It was three days before my trial started when Steve was finally able to depose Terri. She was a champion at avoiding process servers and creating reasons to cancel scheduled depositions. In her lengthy deposition Terri stated “I do not remember” or “I don’t recall” often. She also refused to answer some questions, stating that she “plead the fifth and refuse to incriminate myself.” There was not much that could be done about this response when given during a deposition, though it would not be acceptable in trial. A witness cannot plead the fifth. Still, Terri was well-spoken and an excellent actress. I would be devoid of reality if I didn’t admit that I was scared to death.

The case was overwhelming, the MBI and the state capable of just about anything, and I faced up to sixty years in a Florida prison. In a hearing in December the prosecutor had once again expressed that a deal was offered. The judge then questioned my interest in a deal and Craft made a new offer: one year and a day in jail and no probation. I shook my head in a strong no motion. It was beyond too late for any deal – they had done too much. I had already stated that I would rather be dead than plead to anything in this case, and I meant it. If I was found guilty of either charge the judge would have sentenced me to between twelve and twenty years. I had researched his record and I knew.

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Chapter Eight

From the Defendant's Perspective: A Bizarre Trial

It was January 6, 2003, and the trial was set to begin. After Judge Johnson got his probation violation hearings out of the way, a jury pool of approximately forty people entered the court room. Choosing the jury is the most important part of any trial. During voir dire both the defense attorney and the prosecutor have a chance to speak with the potential jurors to determine possible biases, or any other reason that a person should not serve on the jury. One woman was excused when she admitted to having seen my photo in the Orange County Sheriff's Office. Several potential jurors stated a problem with the requirement to serve for three or four days; the prosecutor's estimate of the trial time. As many witnesses as he had on his list, the calculation of four days maximum sounded conservative, but then what did I know? I was just the stupid defendant.

My attorney had most of the jury pool smiling and laughing when he asked a few individuals questions and spoke to everyone. He kept the process upbeat and quickly developed a rapport. It was clear that Steve was comfortable in the courtroom. The prosecutor, John Craft, was indeed at ease in the trial environment, but appeared to be more the lecturer. Craft began a rather lengthy speech that sounded like an instructional lecture. He informed the jury pool of their obligations under the law more than anything else. No one smiled or laughed for Craft. Within a couple of hours the jury had been chosen.

In Florida, unless the trial is for a capital offense, there is a petit jury that consists of six jurors and an alternate. The jury was given some directions by the judge and then all were sworn-in. The jurors truly looked like a jury of my peers. Both Steve and Craft made their opening statements after the late lunch break, and by then it was too late for the state to begin calling witnesses. During his opening statement Craft consistently referred to each escort as my employee, even the ones that worked for Rocky that I'd never met. Independent contractor was not in Craft's vocabulary.

The trial would resume on Tuesday, January 7th, at nine o'clock. When I exited to the hallway it was hard to miss that there were thirty plus people all over the place. I recognized about five, including Dusty. When I arrived on the ninth floor just before nine o'clock on Tuesday the crowds were just beginning to arrive, and the only people that I recognized were Dusty and Mr. Smith, an elderly gentleman that she brought with her. I had no idea who all the people were that started to fill up the ninth floor, but I entered the courtroom and whoever they were, they remained in the halls. I noted that six or seven MBI agents sat down in the courtroom. I pointed them out and complained to my attorney; at least a few were on the state's witness list and couldn't watch the trial. Craft informed Steve that he did not intend to call the agents as witnesses. That figures, since none recalled anything that mattered during defense depositions, I thought to myself. The lack of ability to remember anything at all had me considering that these agents were all Alzheimer's victims; really – that is how they sound in the deposition tapes.

The state called their star witness, Terri, first. She was dramatic if nothing else, and almost everything she stated while on the stand was a lie. Within the first fifteen minutes Terri's phone started ringing; no doubt her escort line. All eyes in the courtroom looked towards her. I wondered if she was going to answer it. After about an hour of question and answer, Steve worked towards the questions that resulted in her stating "I plead the fifth" in the defense deposition. Terri had claimed to do hundreds of calls for me during 1999, and it was time to find out how much of this big money she reported as income to the IRS. Terri obliged and stated: "I plead the fifth." The judge informed Terri that a witness could not plead the fifth and asked her if she would rather not testify. She stated that she needed to speak with her

attorney and Judge Johnson called for a long lunch break so that she could reach him. Court would resume at two o'clock.

When I entered the hallway I was surprised: there were people all over the place: in chairs; sitting on the floor; walking around; and standing in groups laughing and talking. At first I assumed that they must be from another trial in a different courtroom on the floor, but I quickly recognized a few of Rocky's escorts from the videos, Rhonda, Mai, and Kelly. Dusty and Mr. Smith were sitting in two chairs by a window where I'd left them when I entered the courtroom. There was a group of escorts waiting on Terri, and all were dressed like street bimbos. With the exception of the few women that I knew, most of the women in the hallway looked like street hookers. I had no clue who the great majority of these women were, or where they came from.

Steve and I returned from lunch early, and he entered the courtroom while I pulled up a chair to speak with Dusty. The hallway soon started filling with people again. Dusty recognized several as escorts that worked for Terri and pointed them out to me. Terri was standing with about six or seven more women dressed as bimbos, joking and laughing. Dusty told me that the prosecutor's office had demanded that she was there at nine a.m. on Monday, and then made the same demand again for today. She stated that the scene in the hallway had been a real circus all morning, and added that she'd try to find out who all the people were.

Once the lunch break was over, Terri was directed to resume her place on the stand. She stated to the judge that she had been unable to reach her attorney, but she decided that she definitely wanted to testify. She looked rather gleeful about it all. Steve started by questioning her about her 1999 attempt to have Rocky and I arrested. When she denied that it happened, he produced the "no prosecution affidavit" that she had signed, and she claimed to have forgotten about it. He then started questioning her about the plethora of 911/police calls from her house, addressing several individually. Terri had called emergency 911, police, to her house over 160 times in a little over a two year period. He picked up the pile of documents that were the police reports from all of her calls. The jury looked as if this had their attention. Finally – proof that she was a crackpot that tried to have anyone and everyone arrested, from her own mother to her next door neighbor to the escorts that worked for her.

One of the judge's clerks had been making faces at Terri, but over to the side where she could only be seen from the defense table and by the jury. A few held back laughs, including me. Terri loved calling the police on everyone; even a deputy that refused to arrest someone for her. By the time Steve was finished with that line of questioning, Terri had motioned to the Bailiff that she needed water and then sat there, while we all waited, drinking it for over five minutes. She looked worse than the garbage at that point.

Steve changed the line of questioning to another area of discussion. He was digging around about when she met Rose and if he helped her in any other case wherein she had been charged. Terri once again stated: "I plead the fifth." The judge offered her the chance to answer, but she repeated herself. Judge Johnson then asked her to leave the courtroom. She walked quickly out the door.

The state then called one witness that I didn't know; an escort that had worked for Rocky. She admitted that she had never met me or spoke to me. She didn't have anything nice to say about Rocky though. The next witness called by the state was Rhonda. I had noticed her in the hall with someone that looked like a boyfriend. Steve cornered Rhonda with his questions almost immediately. She looked mesmerized by Steve, and like she was not paying attention to what she was saying at all. He is good looking, but one would think that she would have concentrated at least a little bit on her answers. The questions turned to her violation of probation arrest that happened immediately before she gave Rose the statement. Rhonda denied it so Steve offered the records. She also denied being arrested for the initial felony wherein she had been charged with "abuse and neglect of the elderly or disabled." Steve brought out the arrest affidavit, but all Rhonda could say was that she had forgotten. The jury did not look thrilled with Rhonda! Steve established what Rhonda was really doing for the seven years that she had claimed to work for me, and then she was excused.

Day two was over and court would resume on Wednesday, January 8, 2003.

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The halls were still filled with people that I didn't know. I got to hear all about the commotion in the halls from Dusty as we walked out of the courthouse. She had been told by Agent Rose to return again at nine a.m.; her third day. Dusty said that by the time Terri had pushed the door open and walked out the day before, tears were rolling down her face and she was sobbing hard, but Rose brought her into a private room to console her.

Before the day was over, a juror had stated to the Bailiff that she needed to inform the court of a problem, and was now recounting the situation for the court. The woman juror was using the bathroom when Terri entered, more than an hour after her testimony and not long after her consultation with Rose. Terri started crying to the juror. The court was offering me the chance for a mistrial. The judge left it entirely up to me, but the prosecutors, Craft and Roman, both looked like they were the ones that wanted the mistrial. I stated that I would rather continue with the trial and no mistrial was necessary. Terri had done that on purpose, and in my opinion, as directed. The jury didn't look stupid to me, and a mistrial would have given the prosecution another chance. Jury tampering was a new low for Rose and Terri, but neither was charged.

According to Dusty, Terri had remained in the hall with all of her girls, answering her escort line; Dusty and Mr. Smith heard her. When Rose told Dusty to return again the following morning, he stated: "they're putting on shenanigans in there!" She also said that Mandy and Rocky had both arrived, he went into a room with Craft and the other prosecutor, Roman, and Roman exited the room rather quickly, followed shortly thereafter by Craft and Rocky. She overheard Rocky being told by Craft to wait in his car in the garage until he heard from him, although she had no idea why, but it was clear that Craft was angry.

The mess in the halls only worsened the following day. On Wednesday the usual groups of people, most unknown to me, were all over the halls; Terri, however, was no longer with us. There were a few faces that I recognized: Mandy, Maria, Kelly, Mai, Staci, Elizabeth, and of course, Dusty and Mr. Smith. In all there were over forty people: agents and various groups of sleazily dressed women. When the jurors walked by, their conversations and laughing grew louder. Rocky was not anywhere to be found though.

Dusty was taking care of Mr. Smith after his recent surgery. He was around ninety years old, and was enjoying himself just listening and watching the hall circus. Indeed, it was more interesting than the courtroom. When Dusty and Mr. Smith finally left for the day, a female MBI agent followed them to the car.

From his opening statement up until Mai's testimony, Craft repeatedly referred to her being raped at a call that I had sent her to. Each time that he spoke about it he would point at me and tell the jury that I did not care what happened to anyone, and only cared about money. When Mai testified, she stated the truth: The man was a repeat caller and she was the only one that had seen him before, and she had later told me that he was so nice. They had played pool for most of two hours. How could I know that the guy would transform from Jekyll to Hyde? Steve tired of Craft continuously blaming me and when he questioning Mai, he asked:

"Did Agent Rose or Mr. Craft ever ask you the name of the man that raped you?"

Mai thought for a minute and then looked at the jury and stated:

"No."

Rose had been so happy to hear any information that reflected negatively on me that he never even bothered to ask about a real crime. Asking the rapists name and address had skipped Craft's mind as well. When Craft returned to the courtroom after a break, he glared at me and stated:

"I just asked her who the rapist was and she did not remember, and we'll never know because you

have no records!”

Was it supposed to mean something to me that Craft asked almost two years later? Craft and Rose both originally questioned Mai just two weeks after this occurred and the rape was discussed in a deposition at that time. Of course Mai remembered who attacked her and where he lived! The night it happened I had stated to her that we could call the police if she wanted to; however, they would be more concerned with her and I, and it’s unlikely that anything would ever happen to the guy anyway. That was the truth – Rose proved it by not even asking her the information two weeks after it happened, and when she revealed it during his interrogation. He was too busy verbally threatening her.

As Steve continued questioning Mai, he asked her if she ever feared me, or if I ever threatened her in any way. Mai stated:

“No, she was always very nice to me.”

Steve then asked: “Did you ever fear Agent Rose, or did he ever threaten you?”

Mai looked directly at the jury, with her eyes wide, and declared: “Yes – seriously!”

Steve had complained to the judge, who then questioned Craft, about the mess in the halls. Craft responded that he could not do anything about it and it was not within his control. The judge then directed the Bailiff to see what he could do about it as it was causing problems with the jury walking in and out. But it only got worse later in the day.

The state called a total of five witnesses that day, and one was Staci. Her testimony changed from her original deposition: Instead of going on a total of about twenty calls in the five months that she worked for me, it was now at least a hundred, and with big tips for sex. Steve brought up the differences in the sworn testimony, but Staci wanted to stick with the high figure. Somewhere during her testimony she stated that she was on Medicaid, during the entire time that she worked for me, because of health problems. Steve then had her calculating how much she earned from these hundred plus calls and ended the questioning by clarifying that her income had been over \$60,000.00 during the period of time, yet she received Medicaid. The calculations didn’t even include the tips she claimed to have received for sex. Staci looked frozen. The prosecution had flown her in from North Carolina to testify, but they need not have bothered.

Another of the state witnesses called on Wednesday was Cindy, the manager of the office complex. It didn’t take Steve long to expose the inconsistencies in her testimony. He handed her the files of Rocky’s leases and she looked surprised that they existed. Steve asked her when she started working at the complex since the leases had all been signed by the former manager. She answered truthfully, but looked confused. I didn’t understand why the state even bothered to call Cindy: Steve had submitted all of the leases in discovery. She just looked stupid, sort of like Rhonda denying a felony conviction when everyone had the paperwork well in advance of the trial, or Terri pleading the fifth on the same questions as in the deposition prior to trial. Did Craft think that we would just skip it all, or what?

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By Thursday the circus in the halls had become worse, if that was possible. The prosecutor’s office had ordered my mother there for the second day in a row. My mother had informed me the night before that several of the hooker-looking women in the halls worked in Craft’s offices. One of them, Jeannie, was Craft’s clerk, and Jeannie had given my mom incorrect directions to the courthouse on Wednesday. She had tried to call Jeannie after being lost, but no one answered the phone number that she had. Now she saw why: Jeannie was with four other women laughing in the halls. My mother was seventy years old at that point, and not happy that they forced her to testify to begin with. The state gained nothing from her testimony and Steve asked her no questions.

Steve, once again, brought the hall mess to the court’s attention. There were two Bailiffs, but neither seemed to know what to do. He asked if the state claimed a scheduling problem. Rose was roaming the halls, laughing and talking to everyone about what was going on in the courtroom. He was also

discussing rescheduling the flights of witnesses from California that were nonexistent. Witnesses were talking to each other all over the place. Elizabeth had stayed in a hotel, paid for by the state, for the night. Someone's mother was complaining to Rose that her daughter was being abused, and Rose responded that "this was all very stressful." Dusty said the mother's name was Elaina. I believe that Elaina is Kelly's mother.

Dusty was angry that she had been ordered to return to the courthouse at nine o'clock for the fourth day in a row. The state finally called her to testify that afternoon, but they would, without doubt, be sorry that they had forced her to be a witness. Dusty quickly tired of Craft's badgering and screaming and pointed to her purse under the defense table. When the Bailiff handed it to her, she retrieved a notarized document and passed it to Judge Johnson. That was the point that everything stopped. Within a few minutes the jury was escorted from the courtroom, and all the parties involved were handed copies of this seven page statement. The prosecutor demanded that it be sealed in the court file, so the jury never saw it. It was a damning statement, for sure. I posted it on my blog on December 31, 2009, with the title "Dusty's Sworn Statement".

About an hour later the jury returned to the courtroom. We had been instructed to pretend that none of this had ever happened and Dusty was not allowed to mention the contents of her statement during the remainder of her testimony. Craft asked only a few additional questions. Steve established that Dusty had not worked for me since the night of her arrest in March of 1996 and that I had not known about or directed her to commit prostitution that night. Dusty was excused.

Shortly after Dusty testified, the court adjourned until Monday. The judge had plans to go flying for the long weekend. When I walked out of the courtroom, I promptly noted that the hall crowds had departed. For the moment the MBI had abandoned the hall circus plan: There were only two or three people, sitting in chairs, and all of the agents and office workers were gone. They were all busy investigating Dusty's allegations, and even served the notary that had notarized her statement with a subpoena. I can only surmise that they believed I was with Dusty when she had it notarized on her way to the courthouse that morning, and that I had encouraged her to write it. As they soon found out, their assumptions were way off-base. Dusty had already informed several attorneys over the previous year of the same story. However, no one knew what to do, and they did nothing. Craft would soon confirm this with all those that had heard Dusty's account of events.

When we all returned on Monday for week two of the trial everything was different. There was no circus in the hall, but Rose's wife sat in the courtroom; I suppose as some sort of show of support. I caught her glaring at me when I walked by in the hall or turned my head in her direction in the courtroom. Her glare revealed that her hatred ran as deep as her husband's, but I never understood why: I was not the one that finally threw the proverbial hot potato! I never repeated Dusty's story to anyone because like the attorneys that she told, I had no idea what to do.

All I did in relation to Rose was to repeat the threats that many others stated to me. People came to me for help, many people, asserting that they were threatened. When the story doesn't vary much between eight people that do not know or speak to one another it would be far-fetched to believe that each had made it up.

Kelly didn't recall much of what she had stated to me the night that Rose arrested her. She looked as if she was about to have a break-down on the stand, and resented being asked. Gee, let me volunteer to go to prison for twenty years so that you do not have to deal with it all, I thought. She did manage to remember that she had worked for me for almost four years and returned the clients' money and left the calls about fifty percent of the time. The fact that she still worked for me when this happened consistently spoke volumes, regardless of everything that she forgot.

Maria, that had begged for my help after Rose left her workplace, didn't remember much either. She did recall that she was fired though, making my statement believable, but seemed afraid to say it; I was ecstatic that she did! As Maria testified, she looked petrified, and there was no telling what she had been threatened with prior to her testimony.

One state witness that I had thought nothing about was Jerry, a woman that worked for Rocky. For one thing, every piece of paper that we received from the MBI spelled her last name a certain way, and neither Steve nor I found anything when we investigated her. Also, her original recorded statement revealed the truth: She had never met me and did not work for me. She stated that she had spoken to me on the phone once, when I called looking for Rocky, and that was true. Dusty had asked me to call, stating that Mandy and Jerry refused to put him on the phone and she needed to talk to him. This was another one of those simple explanations.

The only reason that we didn't discover anything about Jerry was because the MBI consistently spelled her name incorrectly. Before Jerry was brought into the courtroom the jury had been sent out at Craft's demand. She was in leg-irons and had come from the jail, and the state wanted to hide this from the jury. Jerry's testimony was close to the opposite of her original statement. She now claimed that she had gone to calls for me, we spoke at least twenty times on the phone, and we talked about her having sex on her calls. I found this transition interesting, considering the irons. She was not believable to begin with, especially once Steve offered a comparison of her sworn statement and her testimony on the stand, but it only got worse: Jerry suddenly stood-up, almost falling forward from the restraints that chained her legs – the jury couldn't miss it. Craft didn't look very happy at all. She was attempting to make some verbal point and was pointing at me. She actually threatened me as deputies escorted her past me and out of the courtroom, but I just stared at her.

Mandy's testimony was unique. It had changed from her original deposition, however, was so off-the-wall that it didn't matter much. She thought that I had sold Rocky a franchise, like McDonalds does – who knows where that came from. She did admit that Rose threatened to see her locked-up for thirty years if she didn't testify against me. This was important in that the state attempted to hide the amount of prison time that I could be sentenced to if found guilty. Craft tried to make it all sound like a minor problem, like I'd end up with probation or a few months in jail. Steve was not allowed to tell the jury the actual consequences of a finding of guilt on either charge.

The last witness the state called was Rose. He testified for many hours, but all I really heard was the usual MBI rhetoric: All escort services are fronts for prostitution. I say she's guilty and you must find her guilty. He tried to present himself as an expert witness of sorts. The reality of it was that he had worked briefly with the MBI on "the amnesty program," but other than that, his sole experience was with street hookers. He did not join the MBI until 1995, and was assigned my case a short time later. I was more of an expert than he was. Rose stated that I was of superior intelligence and had evaded prosecution for many years. To me this was somewhat laughable as I had only a GED at the time.

Rose had all of these props and organizational charts, and constantly used the phrase, "organized prostitution" and spoke about umbrella companies, phone drops, and mail drops. He showed the jury all of my occupational licenses and fictitious name paperwork, but left out all of Rocky's. He also referred to the nonexistent ad in the Daytona Beach phonebook, but did not produce it. Rose called Kendall a prostitute and claimed that she was arrested on a prostitution charge, and then had the audacity to claim that when I was offered amnesty back in 1996, I called the MBI and stated that I "was waving the white flag," but never showed up for my appointment. He claimed that all of his witnesses "voluntarily cooperated."

Following Rose's testimony, Craft declared that he had no more witnesses. Naturally everyone was waiting for Rocky's testimony, and this came as quite a surprise. It didn't shock me though: Rocky was not capable of getting on the stand and recounting a bunch of lies as they had demanded, and I knew that. I considered him to be a lousy, and unbelievable, liar. He would get mixed-up when he tried to lie, most likely because of the psychotropic drugs. Most of the case had been a build-up to Rocky, so it was a big let-down when the state didn't call him, or even offer any excuse for not doing so.

Now it was Steve's turn and I was the first witness to be called. My testimony went smoothly with Steve: He was trying to clear-up the misrepresentations made by the state. But then it was Craft's turn at me, and that was another story. This very experienced and skilled prosecutor drilled me and

screamed at me for the better part of the afternoon. On several occasions I screamed back and we ended up in a shouting match.

Craft's big question was: "Where is the money?" The second biggest question was: "Where are your client lists and books?" The first one was an exercise in accounting. We went over the costs of my phonebook ads, and my other expenses. I did not bring-up the phone line blocks – the story was too involved and the trial was not the place for the big debate. In response to his second question, I stated:

"It was back in 1996, when I closed Abra-Cadabra, that I looked at the stack of tablets with escorts' names and phone numbers and clients' personal information and decided that the books could never do anyone any good. They could never do the clients any good, the escorts any good, or me any good, so I decided to barbeque them. I lit-up the barbeque, and then one at a time I put the books in the fire. With any business that I did after July of 1996, I only kept accounting type books: the escorts' stage name; the fee owed to the agency; and the Hilton LBV; or whatever hotel the call was at. This was just so I knew what a person owed, and once it was deposited in my account, I put a line through it. Or sometimes I collected in person, and then put a line through it. I threw these sheets in the garbage within a week."

Craft looked livid! He continued, asking me about the hard drive that I said I had bashed with a hammer on the recorded call with Mai. I stated:

"I never did that. I still have it, but there's nothing on it that matters. I didn't keep any business records on my computer."

Craft screamed: "YOU LIED?"

"Yes, I was on a secret call with the MBI, and not under oath!"

When he drilled me about why I would lie, accusing me of having something to hide, I stated:

"I just didn't want the MBI in my house. I HATE THE MBI!"

There were loud gasps from the MBI section of the courtroom audience. It then turned into quite a shouting match, and eventually, I was able to tell the jury why I hated the MBI.

When I told Craft that I still had the hard drive he neglected to ask where it was: It was sitting in the trunk of my car in the courthouse garage as I spoke. I had given it to my first attorney, and when he removed himself from the case, he gave it back with all of the other documents and discovery material, and the hard drive never made it out of the trunk. But there really was nothing on it that pertained to the business.

When my testimony was over, Steve informed me of a few issues that required decisions. We had a witness list of a Brevard deputy, an agent, the process server that Rocky spilled his guts to, my accountant, and Dusty. He said that he didn't need to call any of them, really, and Florida law allowed him the last fifteen minutes if he called only the defendant or no witnesses at all. Steve said that if he called no one else, he would then make a closing argument of 45 minutes to an hour. Craft would then make his own closing argument using approximately the same amount of time, and then Steve would get the final fifteen minutes. He wanted to do it that way, believing that having that final fifteen minutes would be necessary after whatever Craft had to say. If Steve called any other witnesses there would be no final fifteen minutes. I agreed that his way was the best way.

By the time the closing arguments were all finished on Thursday, January 16th, it was late in the day. Judge Johnson asked the jury to go talk for a short time and see if they felt that they could reach a decision before going home. About fifteen minutes later the Bailiff escorted the jury back into the courtroom: It was announced that they wanted to go home and wait until they returned in the morning to discuss the case.

When I arrived on the ninth floor of the courthouse on the morning of the 17th everyone looked frantic, especially Steve. I was late because I couldn't find anywhere to park in the parking garage, and besides, I didn't see what the hurry was. How could the jury have reached a verdict in less than thirty minutes? They had not, but they had requested to view a video tape again and listen to the awful recorded call with Mai and the MBI secretly on the line one more time. Apparently I had to give my

permission, and of course I did. By the time the prosecutor got a VCR and a tape player up there it was almost ten o'clock. Before eleven o'clock, the jury reached a verdict.

Quite frankly, it had all been overwhelming to me, and I was not in great mental shape. I trembled as I stood there, waiting to hear the verdict. Would I be doomed to die in a Florida prison? I kind of thought so. When the Bailiff read the verdict on the "racketeering" count, he stated:

"Not guilty!"

Still, I did not have high hopes on the other charge. The Bailiff read the verdict on the "conspiracy to commit racketeering (RICO)" count:

"Not guilty!"

I was such a complete mess that tears flooded my eyes, Steve hugged me, and then I fell into the chair sobbing uncontrollably. Within fifteen minutes I ran from that horrible courtroom, papers in hand. I did sit on a bench in the hallway and speak with Steve for a little while before running out of the courthouse. For me the hell was over!

I never did get to thank the jury or say a word to any of these six intelligent people. They saw through the MBI lies and the state's many attempts to pull the wool over their eyes. They saw the case for exactly what it was: a railroad job.

I drove straight to Rocky's condo in Cape Canaveral, and then spent almost two hours crying with Rocky and Mandy. They told me their horror stories and what had been done to each of them throughout the ordeal. Their stories answered a lot of questions for me, but I was about to collapse. We decided to talk again before their sentencing set for just over a month later.

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Part Three

Chapter Nine

The Civil Suit and Disappeared Files

A primary misconception in relation to the U.S. criminal justice system is that a defendant is innocent until proven guilty – nothing could be farther from reality. In the federal and state criminal justice systems the overwhelming majority of cases are resolved with plea deals; the figure is close to ninety-five percent. Few defendants ever experience the trial, and most attorneys work hard to avoid a trial. But when the defendant pleads guilty it doesn't necessarily mean that he or she is guilty at all, and often is a simple situation of weighing the options. On one hand, the defendant could face up to sixty years in a prison if found guilty by the jury. On the other hand, the prosecutor is offering the deal of two or three years in prison, or better yet, five or ten years of probation. Of course, for the defendant, every deal has its consequences.

My co-defendants both took the deal, and agreed to comply with lengthy substantial assistance agreements. Regardless of my own acquittal by jury, having so acquiesced, my co-defendants could not turn back the legal clock.

In Rocky's situation the plea deal was far from clear-cut and clean. It was not a case of there being an offer on the table, and him accepting it to avert the potentially disastrous outcome of a trial. The records reveal the truth: Rocky made a deal for the sole reason of enabling his release on a bond. He was, quite literally, denied bond until he made a lengthy taped statement concerning me and signed the substantial assistance agreement.

I have no idea if Rocky was already on psychotropic drugs on the day that he was arrested, or not. I do know that he was on doses high enough to tranquilize a horse when he was taken from the Orange County jail to the Statewide Prosecutors office to give his lengthy deposition, and the list of medications would freak out a pharmacist. I also know that the other co-defendant, Mandy, made sure that Rocky stayed on those high doses of psychotropic medications – at the direction of Agent Rose. Mandy was completely under control of Rose and Buggs, the agent from Brevard, through no fault of her own. She was on a serious list of psychotropic medications herself.

To be sure, Rocky did attempt to turn back the legal clock, but was denied justice at every turn by those that hold the power: the judge and the prosecutor. After all is said and done, there was much to cover-up when the jury found me not guilty, and every party involved worked hard to achieve the necessary results. I cannot help but to believe that they all wanted me buried, and had the jury not acquitted me on both counts, I would be six feet under ground today.

For me though, the question has always been why: Why did these people want rid of me so badly? Who actually ordered this vicious attack? Did Rose and the MBI ruin this man's life as a stepping stone to finishing me off? Why create a case when none existed to begin with? These agents never even had enough evidence to get a wiretap order or a search warrant – keep that in mind when considering the questions. I know that it was not Rose's fault; he was just the soldier carrying out the orders. Knowing this, I could not allow a civil suit to be filed solely against Rose personally. The couple of attorneys interested in filing the civil case for me would only do it that way, and I had no choice but to refuse the offers. Sure, I wanted to retrieve the money that I had lost, however, felt that there was more at stake than only money. So I filed the civil suit myself, as I considered the reasoning that had me representing myself in the case for several months: better me than no one.

In the meantime, on February 24, 2003, Rocky was sentenced to ten years of felony probation, to pay investigative and court costs, and 36 months in a Florida prison. He received the three year prison part of the judgment when the prosecutor claimed that he did not testify in my trial, a part of his substantial

assistance agreement. The truth had serious differences though, and Rocky told the real story on the day that I was acquitted, when I drove to his condo. Rocky and Mandy also told much of the real story in a taped interview with a Local 6 investigative news reporter, Tony Pipitone, outside of the courtroom just before his sentencing hearing. There is little doubt that this brave presentation of truth right out in the hallway played a part in his three year prison sentence. The so-called ruling gods in this state are unforgiving of bad exposure.

The interview was broadcast along with interviews of Dusty and I, and many other people that were involved in other MBI cases that had something to say about the agency. It cannot be denied by anyone that Rocky came to the courthouse to testify against me on behalf of the state. Many people saw him there, and I saw him and Mandy having lunch a block from the courthouse during the trial lunch break. Rocky had a motion filed on his behalf, after his sentencing, that revealed he was there to testify, but the state didn't call him. According to Rocky, the state did not call him because he stated clearly that he would not lie. The documented facts show that it was the state that chose to not call him, for whatever reasons, and he did not violate his agreement to testify, and in fact tried.

Mandy did comply with her substantial assistance agreement. The state called her to testify, and she did so, although her testimony was not damaging to me. On the one occasion that I had met Mandy, when Rocky brought her to my home for dinner introducing her as his girlfriend, she seemed like a very nice lady. When she testified during my trial, though it was obvious that she had aged immensely from her ordeal in the case, she was still nice. I made a note in my notebook that I wrote in during the trial, "She is actually very nice," and showed Steve at the time. Mandy was sentenced to five years of felony probation, and to pay court and investigative costs.

If only Rocky had waited until he got on the stand and told the truth instead of informing the prosecutors of his intentions prior to being called. At that point he surely knew that they were never looking for truth. But then the high doses of clozapine, lithium, clonazepam, Prozac, and several other drugs clouded Rocky's mind.

Throughout the entire criminal case, with the exception of the first few months following my arrest, I had always been denied access to the files. In Florida there is a public records statute and it's referred to as the "Sunshine Law." But then none of the people involved in my case were concerned with law. By the time the criminal case was over, there were three excessively thick volumes that made up the case file. In the six months that followed my acquittal, I visited the Orange County Clerk of court's offices no less than three times a month. For the first few months, after acquittal, each time that I requested the file I was told by a clerk that it had been signed out personally by Judge Johnson. On one such visit I responded:

"Well, it's time that we got that file back so that I can see it. I've only been requesting it since shortly after the case was filed."

The clerk was nice and responded by picking up the phone and calling the judge's assistant. I could hear the assistant speak, and when the clerk hung-up the phone and stated to me: "the judge has a special attorney looking at the file," I knew this to be exactly what had been stated. I then wrote the Clerk's office a letter stating that I had no clue what "a special attorney" was; however, I demanded to view the file pursuant to the Florida Statute.

By late December of 2003, I finally received the following response from the Clerk's office:

"Thank you for your letter regarding the location status of case 2001CF-15492. As we have explained on previous occasions, this file was checked out of our office on March 2003 and has not been in the possession of the Clerk's office since then. Please be advised that we have conducted a diligent search for this file in the Criminal Division as well as in other offices and agencies that could have been in possession of this file.

At this time, our search efforts have not produced the original court file. However, in the meantime, the file was reproduced based on the documents contained in the Statewide Prosecutor's file.

Unfortunately, the Statewide Prosecutor's file does not contain all the documents that were in the original court file. Therefore, the reproduced file is lacking copies of those particular documents.

Please be advised that the Criminal Division will continue to search for the original court file and you will be notified when it has been found. Also, for your records, enclosed is a printout of the docket screen, which lists all the documents filed in the original court file.

I apologize for the inconvenience of not being able to provide the original court file for your viewing. If this file was in the Clerk's possession, it would be readily available to you...."

The letter contained various falsities, although it's unlikely that the writer, or even the Clerk's office, had any idea of this. For the most part, the clerks that I encountered in my many visits over the years were nice, helpful, and tried to do their job. On a few occasions I did cross paths with a rude clerk that did her best to deter me from my mission. The cover-up phase had gone into full gear long before the date on the letter. I had already filed a civil rights action in federal court, and clearly the withholding of the criminal case file obstructed my ability to properly present the problem. But then that was obviously one of the goals of whoever had misappropriated the file. The civil suit has long been dismissed and the reproduced file has now disappeared, so it was not the only goal.

There was a cover-up of the entire case, and what better way to obscure the truth than to make the file disappear? I was painted as the felon that got away, care of a jury. The case was played down in its entirety and ordered buried to various news people. This was not a case that any one of these representatives of the state wanted publicized! For the sake of all appearances, if it happened at all, it was only a normal case, and one in which the jury did not comprehend how criminal organizations work. Vicky was just some nobody that owned a minor escort service and had an axe to grind. According to the accounts of the MBI, my service was not even closed until they closed it, after my trial. [\(note 27\)](#) The post on the MBI's website states:

"In reference to the one escort service owner who got away; her partner and employees pled guilty or no contest, and she closed her escort service after the trial. A win for her, but also a win for the community, as she joined 285 advertised escort services that no longer operate here."

There was much more in Lutz's email posted on the website, although it is about other cases and is also the usual MBI twisted self-promoting rhetoric. It seems as if Lutz spends much of his time searching for anything written about him or his agency in the news, and then more time responding to anyone involved. In this email, Lutz closes by asserting who deserves Maxwell's support, and it's not "the escort service owner who feigns that she has no idea what her 14 call girls are doing."

For the record, I never denied that anyone committed prostitution on one of my escort calls: I deny that we ever discussed it or I ever directed it. I did not keep the escorts' tips for any sexual service that they collected more money for, and I never told a client that the services were sexual. Furthermore, the "14 call girls" sure did not work for my agency! As usual, Lutz twists the story into something that it was not, and does it on a state government website. [\(note 28\)](#)

I never had a chance with the civil suit. There was so much that I could not include in my complaint without the necessary proof. Most important, at least to me, was that agents from somewhere actually broke into my home, and more than once. There was never any court order to search or for a wiretap, yet several of my private phone conversations were repeated by Rose to a witness that he was trying to convince that I – yes me the defendant – was his informant. The entire story is nuts, yet it is true.

Clearly there was much more to the case than I was ever allowed to see, and regardless of the process I used in my attempts to gain access to this information, it was denied. I tried federal Freedom of Information Act requests to various government agencies and also made it nowhere. The federal judge dismissed my complaint on the grounds that there was at least "arguable probable cause," and I could only believe that my complaint was not even read. The entire matter came down to Terri's and

Rhonda's allegations that we had conversations about them having sex on their calls, and Maria had deposited an agency fee into my business account, and it was in fact my account. The dismissal order referred to Rose as having reasonably trustworthy information and the procedures that he employed to obtain the warrant, not unusual. The order also stated that Rose was entitled to qualified immunity.

What a bunch of crap! Since when are the actions of the MBI, as described herein, either legal or not unusual? Okay, I concede that they might not be unusual for the MBI, but they sure weren't legal!

My co-defendant, Rocky, had told me in a letter written from prison in early 2004, that he wanted to give me a statement describing everything that was done to him, from beginning to end, by the MBI and the prosecutor. Rocky stated that the notary was only available at the prison on Wednesdays, but as soon as he could get the statement notarized it would be in the mail. After that there was one excuse after another and I never received anything. He later told me that he feared them so much, and that he had again been threatened with never being released. I have always wondered if this was the truth, or not.

From late 2005 until early January of 2008, I abandoned my attempts to view the case file, but by January 10, 2008, I was back on the case. My actual reason for walking into the criminal division and requesting this file was to finally just look at what was all contained therein, regardless of what was missing. I had intended to go through the proper procedure and have the case, as it pertained to me, sealed. By Florida law I am entitled to do this. Instead, the Clerk's office claimed that the file was not to be found; the reproduced file that is.

"What? Now the reproduced file is lost too?" I asked.

I worked with a nice woman in the Clerk's office that contacted me weekly and advised me of the lack of progress in locating this file.

"Well, whoever stole it the first time has now stolen it again!" I said the last time that we spoke.

On February 12, 2008, I sent the Clerk's office a letter by certified mail demanding answers about the original file, and now the reproduced file. Within two weeks, after another visit to their offices, they did locate volume three of the reproduced file, but it had selected documents from the beginning to the end of the case, and was only about two inches thick. Each of the volumes was way more than triple that size before. I did find one document on my last visit that I had never seen: a Nebbia hold order for my co-defendant, Rocky, signed by Judge Johnson and filed on November 7, 2001.

The order has "11-07-01" handwritten on the side, and this is also the date written in the last sentence: "DONE AND ORDERED in Orlando, Orange County, Florida on this 7 day of November, 2001. The seven is written on the line. The case number is the same case wherein we are all three co-defendants, but one problem with this is that Rocky and Mandy had separate case numbers until their cases were consolidated with mine within a few days after arrest. The main problem though, is the date of November 7th. Both Rocky and I were arrested on November 20th, and I already have a copy of the Nebbia hold order signed by the judge in December: this was done at Rocky's bond reduction hearing. Indeed, it gives credibility to my original view that something else happened with Rocky, before my arrest, and that there is a part of this entire story missing.

I have no way of knowing if Rocky's involvement in some other venture prompted his arrest. There are several clues that point in this direction; however, no representative of the state ever admitted anything and the evidence is inconclusive. An additional point to be made is that I never had a Nebbia hearing or a Nebbia hold order placed on me. I'm happy that I did not, although I do not understand why I did not, and Rocky did. [\(note 29\)](#) According to Craft, I was the organized crime kingpin, and not Rocky.

Other evidence that I found to back-up this theory prior to my trial was an order signed by a Brevard County judge revoking Rocky's probation and finding him guilty of violation of probation, in late August of 2001. I knew that he was on felony probation, but I never knew about this violation and revocation until I was investigating my case. Did he get arrested for something and make a statement about me long before the statement that I have? The order that I most recently found is a potential clue,

and was mistakenly put in the reproduced file by someone in the prosecutor's office. It sure did not exist in the file that I viewed a few months after my arrest. Every other document in my possession points to this hearing and order being done in December of 2001.

To this day I feel that I have been denied access to these files for reasons that would have been important in my criminal case, and then later, in the civil case. I can only thank the jury, Steve, and God, that I was found not guilty. It has been six weeks and several more trips to the Clerk's office, yet there is no response to my letter of February 12, 2008. I do of course realize that I can file a notice of intent to file suit, however, am far from interested in fighting with these people anymore. Technically, I have been fighting with the MBI since 1994, and that is sixteen long years at this point.

Once I realized that the reproduced file was also stolen, I abandoned all intentions of having this case sealed. Someone has succeeded in hiding the truth for far too long! I am not the party with so much to hide here. I do invite, and welcome, any inquiries or potential investigations into what really happened in this case, and how it became a case to begin with. To this day, the original news release from the Florida Attorney General's Office is posted on their internet website. It is entitled, "Leaders of Prostitution Ring Arrested," and lists the charges that both Rocky and I were arrested on, including the four that were never filed by the prosecutor, and includes the bond information, residential addresses and our dates of birth. There is no mention that I was acquitted by a jury. Just the fact that this news release is still posted on the Florida Attorney General's website is unusual. [\(note 30\)](#)

Whenever my case is approached by anyone in the news, MBI Director Lutz responds with deceit. There are lies about me posted on the MBI website, and while I am not named, people know who the MBI is referring to, especially when I am the topic in the original conversation that Lutz is responding to. I am the only former escort service owner to be found "not guilty" by a jury on organized crime charges in Orlando, in Florida, and potentially in the US – to date I have not been able to locate any case that's similar in state or federal courts. Indeed, I have never heard of an escort service owner prosecuted on organized crime charges when there was not even sufficient evidence for a court order to wiretap or a warrant to search. I feel that the system does not work because I should never have been arrested to begin with, but what is Lutz's excuse? He was not present at my trial.

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When I recently filled out a visit request form, for a specific Federal Bureau of Prisons institution, I was denied. The request was to visit an inmate that I have known since long before his incarceration. I have never been convicted of a crime, and have only a few traffic violation convictions on my record. Why is my arrest held against me? Why do I still have to pay for what the MBI did to me long ago? Does the Federal Bureau of Prisons not believe in the criminal justice system that the agency is itself a part of? Or has someone from the MBI added false information to the database searched to confirm or deny a visiting request? Regardless of who has done what, the letter that I received after inquiring with my friend's counselor stated:

"You have been denied access to the visiting room due to the fact that you did not successfully pass the background investigation. You submitted a Notification to Visitor Form stating that you were never convicted of a crime. Our background investigation revealed that on November 21, 2001 you were arrested for Racketeering, Prostitution, and Fraud. We have no further information indicating anything different...."

I tried to get the entire matter straightened out, but I was informed that the information comes from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). I spoke with someone in the Quality Control Division of the FDLE and was told:

"We have no control over the information in our system. The information is submitted by the

arresting agency, in this case the MBI. You must clear it up through the MBI, and the correct information must be submitted to the FDLE by the agency.”

No one can possibly imagine the irony in that: Clear it up through the MBI? My response to all that they have done to me since my trial, including the dissemination of false information and the continued harassment, is what I refer to as the experiment.

It is a war that has never stopped and instead took different avenues.

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Chapter Ten

The Experiment

From its original conception my intentions with this experiment evolved immeasurably. It began with my desire to antagonize the MBI by opening another escort service, whether I chose to actually operate it or not. It was only my intent from the beginning to book social escort calls, defined as the escort going out to dinner, clubs, or anywhere, but definitely out, and never to any caller's hotel room or residence. The escort was to meet the client in a public place, for example a Starbucks or a downtown Orlando club. I made it clear on the website that the service only operated in Orange and Osceola counties, which make-up the Ninth Judicial Circuit. I did this so that the Statewide Prosecutor could not get involved, regardless of how much MBI would want them to be. I intended to make this strictly between myself and Lawson Lamar's state attorney's office.

In time I realized that the blocks were still in force, though in a different way, and the experiment developed into a concentrated effort to define where a caller was located and the specifics of his internet access when he first viewed the website. My original plan was not only to irritate the MBI, but also to possibly provoke my arrest on an ordinance violation. Why would I want to do that? Because the Orange County and the City of Orlando ordinances, as each relate to escort services, are beyond ridiculous. I felt that it was time for someone to challenge several provisions of these far-fetched ordinances that were pushed on the city and county by the MBI. In order to accomplish this though, it would need to be me that went on the social escort call. I sure couldn't send someone else to meet the MBI!

One other factor that played a great part in my decision to put up the website was that several of the MBI's informants had come to my door in the year and a half that led up to it. I had moved for the third time in eighteen months, and in each case it was my desire to lose the MBI that facilitated the move. The last move was a return to Orlando from Brevard County, and this time nothing was in my name and there could be no plausible explanation for the MBI locating me and sending an informant to knock on my door.

I have little doubt that the MBI knows where I am; however, this round it was my intent to slam them for harassment if anyone showed up at my door. This required making sure that they could not claim an informant had any other possible avenue to locate me. Though clearly Bright House and the power company do not give out an address to anyone that asked, and these three informants found me through the direction of the MBI, I had to be sure the agency couldn't justify it by other means.

It is worthy to note that until May of 2007, when I started the website project, I had been going to school full-time. I took sixteen credits a term from the Fall of 2004 through May 2007, earning a B.A. with a concentration in modern economic and social history. There was no reason whatsoever for the MBI to send informants to my door, or continue to investigate me. I delivered pizza part-time while I went to school full-time, and that was about all that I did in my life. I still didn't even date and hadn't since the earliest part of the horrifying case.

The three MBI informants that showed up at two different addresses were: Cheryl, Rocky, and Terri. Cheryl showed up at a house that I rented on Merritt Island six months after I moved in. Considering that she lives in the Orlando area, we had spoke only when she called on a couple of occasions (on behalf of the MBI), and I certainly never gave her the address, her banging on my door for more than an hour on a Friday afternoon was highly suspect. My son's girlfriend wanted to open the door and tell her to go away, but I wouldn't let her, and so we hid in the house in silence.

A week earlier there was a strange occurrence at the house: A guy that looked like an undercover

agent pulled in the driveway on Friday afternoon as a roommate and I were about to pull out, each in our own vehicles. We worked for different national pizza chains and were dressed in our work outfits. The agent started by asking directions to a shooting range that did not exist, and no matter how many times the roommate and I informed him of this fact, he kept on talking and questioning. Finally I told him to get the hell out of my driveway, and he got in his oversized pick-up and sped off in the direction opposite to where had requested directions. The roommate and I looked at each other, and we both knew the guy was not looking for any shooting range. It smelled of the MBI.

It was almost two months later when Terri showed up at that same house on Merritt Island. If it had only involved me I would not have been so alarmed, but then they knew that. I had only been at work for about an hour, delivering pizza, when my son called me. Alex sounded like he was freaking out. He knew exactly who Terri was and had seen her in person and in photos. He was playing his drums in the garage with the door about three quarters closed when she crawled under the door, startling him. Now Terri lived a good twenty miles from this house so she sure wasn't a neighbor. She was acting intoxicated and told him how wonderful he sounded. She tried to get him to agree to smoke a joint with her, though my son does not drink or smoke. Not being a pushy person, it took my son about ten minutes to get rid of her – as Terri's eyes searched the garage. He finally told her to get out because he had to get ready for work, and when she left he called me immediately. I was so alarmed that I left work that day and later gave the owner of the house thirty days notice.

We moved to St. Augustine for a few months, renting a home in the World Golf Village area. My classes were entirely online and I just transferred to a pizza store in the area. My son and his girlfriend started doing construction cleaning, but in the end it didn't work out and we returned to Brevard County. This time I rented a house on a quiet street in the Cocoa village area. We were in the house for about nine months when one day I opened the door to walk out, and there was Rocky, in his taxi, stopped on the street in front of the mailbox – he took off like a bat out of hell. This same scenario happened many times in the next two months but not only to me; it also happened to my son's girlfriend on several occasions and my son twice. Rocky had, or has, his own taxi, and it was clearly him driving it. This time I had a one year lease, and the timing was perfect: I gave the thirty days notice at the end of the eleven months.

We all moved back to Orlando, and I put nothing in my name and received no mail in Orlando. To this day, I drive to a post office in Cape Canaveral to pick up my mail. My permanent address is on Merritt Island, but really I just move around a lot. I have been stalked by the MBI for years – too many years – and never intend to buy a house again. The situation is ironic in that during my court case and trial the MBI referred to me as elusive, although I owned a home, had personal and business accounts, everything had my name on it, and I was exactly the opposite of elusive. Today I am elusive, but because I am stalked by the MBI! The visits from the agency's informants had profound effects and made me realize that this is one war that is far from over.

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My age, being forty-seven at the time, did obstruct my plan to send myself to social escort appointments. I did go to several, but the callers were clearly not the MBI, and when the MBI did call, they demanded someone in their twenties. I use the term "demanded" as these callers were on the rude and pushy side, and reminded me of MBI callers from the many years that I spent in business. To be general, the man that calls an escort service is not rude or pushy, and is usually more on the quiet and cautious side. In the years that I was in business I never booked clients that were rude to me. I figured that if they're rude to me, they will only be worse with the escort. I ordinarily just told them that I couldn't help them and hung-up the phone. Sometimes, when circumstances called for it, I carried it further.

It was in the middle of May in 2007, when I purchased the domain names. [\(note 31\)](#) By late June I

had designed both websites, they were up and running, and I had submitted them to a lengthy list of search engines. I submitted both frequently to Yahoo, Google, and MSN, with the hope that at least one would be included in the near future. It was early July when I first saw one website in Yahoo, and it appeared shortly thereafter in MSN. By early August it did appear in Google, although it was on page six or seven, depending on the particular keywords. In the meantime, the second website achieved a listing of number one in Yahoo.

Other than booking a few social escort calls I did not actually operate the business at all, but only spoke to callers and stated that there were no escorts available for private services. I did receive frequent calls from most of the better resorts in Lake Buena Vista and Orlando. The website that I designed stated: "We always have escorts available for social escort engagements; however, availability for private escort calls is limited." I was just playing with the MBI, and at the same time finding out the location of potential clients. There never were any escorts available for private calls to a hotel room or a residence.

I placed an ad in the Orlando Weekly under the "adult help wanted" heading on two occasions. I received only one call from a person that sounded capable of doing the social escort calls, and she went to a total of two calls. Everyone else that called either sounded like an undercover MBI agent or simply was not well-spoken enough to handle four hour out-on-the-town type calls. I later placed an ad on Orlando Craigslist for social escorts and did meet with several nice ladies. It was about that time, when I decided to actively pursue the social escort service as a business, when I figured out I was not receiving calls from ninety percent of the resorts in the area anymore. A main point is that it was the ninety percent that mattered most. I had received calls from these resorts in the earlier part of this website's existence though; so something had changed, and I needed to figure out specifically what it was.

My placement in search engines had vastly improved from the beginning up to this point. The website started out numbered in the high sixties in Google, but was in the teens and twenties under the keywords that mattered at this point. Yahoo had included both of my websites, and both were on the first page under all relevant keywords. MSN had several pages of my website included on the first page and second page. I should have been receiving many more calls from these resorts; not none at all. The game had suddenly changed and this was obvious to me.

My déjà vu moment occurred unexpectedly one evening when I was delivering pizza in Lake Buena Vista. At this point it is important to note that in the big three search engines there were actually only two real escort services listed and operating in central Florida. Orlando is not like the rest of the country in this respect: We have the MBI. There are many independents that operate in the area, but most do not advertise through their own websites: They place ads on other websites. There are no escort services in this area that offer social escort services. Some independents state that they will go out to dinner or the clubs, but the price is the same as if they came to a hotel room.

The advertised price at my little experimental agency was \$320 for the first four hours with a four hour minimum and \$70 per hour thereafter. The rates were truly social escort rates. With five-hundred plus resorts in the area that are most often filled with guests, there is no reason that this service should not have worked. The Orlando area is a Mecca for international travelers – both tourists and businessmen. I speak French fluently, and met several social escorts fluent in other languages: Mandarin Chinese; Spanish; and Russian.

In the meantime, I was delivering pizza for a national chain at a store in Lake Buena Vista. I had started work at ten o'clock in the morning, and as I attempted to deliver what I hoped was my last order for the day it was seven in the evening. The customer was in an area resort and had placed the order using the hotel's telephone number, however, had also given a cellular number. First I tried the cellular number but it seemed to be an incorrect one; this could be attributed to the order taker or the customer. I never dialed a pizza customer from my telephone number that was advertised on the website, but the battery on my other cellular had run-down in the nine hours that I'd been delivering. When I dialed the

hotel the usual recording came on. It stated that I was being transferred to an operator, but it was then transferred to a fast busy signal. I called back many times, rotating between putting in the room number and waiting to be transferred to an operator, and both ultimately resulted in the fast busy signal.

I eventually had no choice except to call the store and tell the manager of the situation. Pizza delivery drivers cannot deliver to the room in most resorts and must contact the customer to meet them at the specified location, usually the front desk – this was up to the specific resort, and not the pizza store. Frustrated, I told the manager about the problem and he responded that “there are some telephones that never go through out there, either in or out.” As I was on the line with him the customer called another line in the store looking for her pizza, and this time I was given her correct cellular number, called, and arranged to meet her.

Driving back to the store, I considered what the manager might mean when he stated that some numbers never get through out there. He would know – another driver had told me this manager worked for Disney for many years in a top-level guest services position. At this point it was early December of 2007, and the resorts were filled with people. It was my intention to ask the manager about his statement that evening, but the store was extremely busy by the time I returned. I never did get to ask him because several days later I quit.

In this day and age a blocked telephone number would not prevent me from doing business: Everyone had a cellular, unlike in the 90s. I contemplated the meaning of my inability to get through to the hotel and realized that internet access to websites could also be a controlled situation. The great majority of callers would not arrange a social escort in advance of their trip and would simply decide that they were bored and look on the internet, once they were already in a hotel in the area. If a potential client cannot view the website then it goes without saying that they will never call.

Suddenly I realized what the poster on the Orlando Sentinel meant with the history lesson post on a blog. It was in late October of 2007, when the three advertising representatives at the Orlando Weekly were arrested on a list of charges by the MBI and the newspaper was charged with racketeering. About ninety-five percent of the posters on the blogs that followed the Sentinel’s articles were knocking the MBI for the arrests, and I was one of them. In my posts I recounted my own experiences with the MBI. On October 22, 2007, a poster using the handle of Been Around, and posting from Las Vegas, Nevada, stated in a response to me:

“After we dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese thought back to Pearl Harbor and realized they should never have picked a fight with a sleeping giant. If you’re going to take cheap shots at MBI, then don’t cry if they fight back. All is fair in love and war.”

At the time I believed Been Around to be referring to another legal case with this history lesson. Indeed, I took it as a legal threat, and nothing else ever crossed my mind. It was easy to see that any of the five percent of the posters on this message board that defended the MBI were either a part of the agency, connected by family to the agency, or its former agents. The MBI is powerful in their own minds and in the agency’s own small world, but to compare them to the U.S. dropping atomic bombs was so ludicrous that it had to come from someone connected to the agency. I checked on the posts made by Been Around in the month that followed and noted that his/her location changed from Las Vegas to Orlando several days after this post.

My epiphany came with all sorts of realizations about my little project. From late October 2007 forward, the potential clients that dialed the number on my website were all in residences or hotels and motels off the beaten path, and most were coming from Kissimmee or nearby counties, like Polk and Lake. Most people that called were not verifiable, not as they would be if they had flown in from another state on business. And then there was the MBI factor: Too many sounded like agents of the MBI. They were rough and abrasive or outright rude. And other callers tried desperately to get me to send an escort to Seminole County which was out of the clearly defined service area, and out of this

jurisdiction. To have so many callers, except that they were all outside of Orange County and the metropolitan Orlando area was unusual.

Coming from them, “all is fair in love and war,” is a scary statement. In that the previous court case was entirely created, I could only imagine that any possible new case would consist of planted drugs, maybe a felony takedown shooting with a weapon drop – actually there is no telling what they could come up with. But by January 2008, the meaning of the statement sunk in and the statement represented fourteen years of criminal harassment: The phone line blocks in PBX systems of area resorts, created legal cases, no bond scenarios, harassing phone calls all the time, and now IP and website blocking.

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There are different areas of consideration in relation to net neutrality and website blocking. An Internet Service Provider (ISP) can block access to illegal websites, for example to a child porn site; however, when an ISP selectively blocks IP addresses not relating to any legalities it becomes a First Amendment argument. I have little doubt that the MBI has influence with the ISP’s that control access in area resorts, specifically the one that provides access to the great majority of resorts and the Orange County Convention Center.

IP blocking, or internet filtering as some refer to it, is usually done through personal access, like with parental control programs. I was astonished to find out that it is also done through ISPs in the U.S., which is actually no different than the process in China, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Singapore etc....Interesting indeed to realize that censorship is alive and well in the U.S. while our own government representatives have the audacity to knock China for the practice!

They are a cunning group of conspirators, if nothing else. Most important, this was not happening prior to the posts on the Sentinel’s message boards, so I had clearly angered someone in power, though it was such a conservative website! I face the fact that no matter what I do in life I am pursued and stalked. They have a twisted sense of logic that will always paint me as the defendant that got away and justify all actions, at least in their own minds, but of course the actions will never be admitted as the perpetrators are well aware of the truth.

The practice of IP blocking is currently researched by the OpenNet Initiative (ONI). The ONI is a collaborative partnership of four leading academic institutions. [\(note 32\)](#) The ONI describes internet filtering as numerous strategies, including “technical blocking and search result removal.” Technical blocking is commonly defined as IP blocking, DNS tampering, and URL blocking using a proxy. Search result removal is precisely that – illegal or undesirable websites are omitted from search results – and often this is done with the cooperation of government agencies. It is always possible that the specific ISP has no clue that they are being used to quash free speech and are violating my First Amendment rights. It could easily be a matter of a top-level person at the MBI or a powerful local hotelier contacting someone within the company that holds enough power to secretly implement such a strategy; nevertheless, that would not relieve the company of culpability. It also wouldn’t replace the money that I lost.

With IP blocking there can be a block of a specific IP address or a block of IP addresses in a range. A possible solution would be for me to move my website to a different host, but I feel that the process would quickly be repeated. Frequently changing hosts would become an expensive undertaking, and one which I could not afford, therefore I chose to end the experiment in respect to the potentially lucrative social escort business. I see no point in starting a brand new cat and mouse game with the resorts and the MBI, and find it much easier to denounce the practice and offer awareness at the same time.

The legal aspects of IP blocking and net neutrality in general are complicated and dependent on numerous factors. For this reason, and also because I am not an attorney, I will not explore the legal

consequences or the potential solutions. One area that is clear though is the suppression of free speech, and it depends if a person believes that I have a right to have a website and to expect it to be viewable by anyone that searches specific keywords, or not. The great majority of Americans do not find this to be an acceptable practice in China, and so I must imagine that it would not be afforded any level of acceptance here in the US. Should an ISP block a website with no illegal or pornographic content whatsoever to appease a powerful law enforcement agency or private business?

There is an organization entitled Save the Internet that has argued for net neutrality and the right to uncensored information. [\(note 33\)](#) The right to a free and open internet is similar to the right to read any book that we choose and not have our access to reading material controlled by any gatekeeper for any reason. This right only becomes a gray area when the material sought is illegal, and even then there is a plethora of illegal content available on the internet to users in the US. Censorship is supposed to be something that is done in a list of other countries, but is denounced by Americans. None of us expect that it is done at the hands of an angry law enforcement agency and private enterprise for suspect reasoning.

In a sense, searching for a business using keywords in a search engine is similar to opening up the yellow pages of the telephone book. The only differences are that there are far more choices and the cost to the business are much cheaper, and of course there is room for innovative design and more information. The MBI has successfully obstructed escort services from placing advertisements in area yellow pages and in newspapers, and the agency currently has made it a project to threaten Craigslist with prosecution. In the past the agency had to at least know about the telephone line blocks in resort PBX systems. I felt that IP blocking was an obvious next step intended to result in discouragement, and ultimately, the removal of the website. I decided not to take the site down, and instead I later redesigned it as a response to Lutz's frequent dissemination of false information in relation to my case.

The practice of using threats against publishers to censor published material is nothing new to the powers that be over at the MBI. When they cannot find legal reasoning to get rid of an escort service, they go after the publishers and the advertising representatives. Censorship of the internet is a natural evolution.

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It is now mid-2010 and my little experiment has evolved in its goal since late 2008. For all of 2009 and the first couple of months in 2010, I used the website for research for my Blueprint books. Writing a book about opening and operating an escort business is not possible if one is out of touch with the trends of the business or has no current and up-to-date connection to the industry. The website has served various purposes during the course of its existence and at this point, research for the Blueprint books is finished. There will not be another follow-up book on the topic. In fact, I'm tired of writing about how to open and operate escort services. It's a closed door for me, and hopefully the books will sell better as time passes.

The other focus of my research has been the evolution of the line block. What began as simple PBX blocks, denied by all but easily understood today, has since escalated to various other forms of blocking any adult business. Make no mistake – telephone line blocks, IP address blocks, and network blocks are still in full force in Orlando and Las Vegas during large conventions when hotels are booked solid with conventioners. Of course I have little doubt that this is transpiring in other U.S. cities as well, but can't prove it as I'm not there checking it.

If there are 140,000 attendees at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in January in Las Vegas and you own escort services, but the phones aren't ringing except for a random call here and there – mainly residences – you know there's a problem. If all the better hotels and resorts in Lake Buena Vista/Disney are booked solid with convention attendees and you own escort services, but the phones aren't ringing except for a random call here and there – residences and off the beaten path calls – you've got to know

that there's a problem. When the phones ring, but the callers are all in Oviedo, out by UCF, in downtown hotels, in apartments in Kissimmee, or in Lake and Polk counties – and your service is called Orlando Escorts – you know you've got a problem.

Denial doesn't help solve the problem or make it go away. When the convention is over and you start receiving calls from all the great resorts out in family land or the convention resorts on International Drive (like the beautiful brand new Hilton) again, it serves as a vehicle to make you happy when there are no large conventions booked. They block in the PBX systems, they block IP addresses, and they block via the free WiFi at your hotel and the convention center. My new name for them is the network blockers.

This is about URL filtering and other tools and it is happening at all sizeable resorts in the Orlando area and all resorts in Disney World. As a guest at one of these hotels this should really bother you. Your hotel censors the internet for you, but sure doesn't admit to it. I know that my research website contains no porn or nudity type of content; it is a conservative website from any standpoint. Unless you appreciate book burnings this should be appalling to you, but wait till you read what they do with it.

There are numerous methods that hotel management utilizes in the quest to censor your internet, and several are too simple for comfort. McAfee makes URL filtering software called Webwasher URL Filter and brags of 64 categories that can be enabled, depending on your censorship needs. They state: "Undesired content of any kind can be managed within the categories of the filter database."

Another big hit with the hotels these days is Antamedia HotSpot. As most people are aware, most smart phones on the market have WiFi connectivity. Since most potential clients are searching for information online with a smart phone, a netbook, or a laptop, all of this is great news to the censors at Orlando area resorts. Most likely this is occurring elsewhere also, though I only know for sure about issues in Las Vegas at this point.

Antamedia HotSpot enables the hotel to become the Internet Service Provider (ISP) for guests and others desiring access within a specified range. The software includes a feature that allows for forced customer data collection that can be used for collecting records or for marketing purposes. The software also has features such as website blocking that can redirect all blocked websites to the host's home page. URL tracking is another added feature – the hotel can log URL addresses that customers visit, along with their username, IP, MAC, and date and time when page was visited.

The most useful Antamedia HotSpot censorship tool is the ability to block access to websites that contain specified keywords in URL address, say for example, the term "escort". Of course this can be used with any specified keywords though. They also have a tool that can specify keywords which redirect the customer browser to another URL. They state: "For example, when customer enters competition brand name, browser will be redirected to your website."

Obviously search engines like Google index content with keywords, so all of this is bad news for restaurants, pizza places, transportation companies, taxi drivers, and who knows what else that is competing with hotels for guests' money. One thing about Disney is that they want guests to spend all money on the property, so imagine how this is probably being used to interrupt other local business.

The funny thing about censorship is that it sure doesn't stop at "escort services," and more likely that the "escorts" keyword was only the first of many URL filters. I used to speak with taxi and limousine drivers that were in business for themselves and had similar experiences to my own. Disney resorts only utilize one transportation company: Mears. As long as I can remember they've done their best to keep any other operating companies off property unless dropping off guests. Smaller pizza places have periodically reported similar troubles. When big business is allowed to censor and block small business an open economy is severely diminished. It has gone far beyond playing Net Nanny.

I've been working on my other book concerning the wireless network blocking that began as PBX blocking so many years ago. I'm almost ready to publish the book, and it is entirely about the blocking. My research has never stopped in the course of the last three years; however, it is now concluded and my last connection to the escort industry will soon be history, unless I change my mind and find

another use for it.

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Chapter Eleven

Publishers and Escort Advertisements

In so far as I am aware, the strategy of going after publishers that sell advertisement space to escort services and escorts began in 1996, with the MBI set-up of a Sprint Publishing representative. The latest legal pursuit was of Craigslist, a California based company that offers free classified style advertisements on an internet website. In my opinion the MBI is working to get the feds to go after Craigslist; however, I do not believe that they will succeed. If the feds went after this company, solely on the internet, the can of worms unleashed would be too broad. It would be selective unless they also went after a lengthy list of companies that offer ad space to escorts and escort services wherein the posted ads are equally as noxious. I contend that it is a free speech argument that the feds do not want to be involved in at this point.

Posters on the adult business message boards have many misconceptions. The adult board, Bigdoggie.net, was alive with conjecture following the guilty verdicts in the case of Deborah Jeane Palfrey, the accused Washington madam. Only one poster on the “National Board” that posted on the topic defended Ms. Palfrey, and I have not posted on this forum since 2002, when I was playing with the MBI during my case, or I most certainly would have had plenty to say in her defense. I did respond to one obnoxious post by a “provider” though as she crossed my line of resistance. Palfrey’s main defender held up as long as she was able, given that her potential or current client base all disagreed and she wasn’t willing to lose her income.

On this board the escorts refer to themselves as “providers” and the clients call themselves “hobbyists,” ironic in that few posting today have any idea when and why these terms became a reality. All asserted that as providers, and not escort agencies, they would never be prosecuted on racketeering/RICO conspiracy charges: To them this was reserved for those awful escort service owners that get what they deserve. I considered suggesting that they try to confirm that with the many posters (escorts) arrested on racketeering charges in the Bigdoggie case back in 2002, including Tampa Courtesan. And if they are in

Florida, I might have suggested that they read these Florida laws. As independents, they are their own business. But I didn’t bother to tell them – they already seemed to know it all. The case was not dropped because of the reasons asserted by these posters. Palfrey’s one defender was the only correct one on the board.

If the feds, or any state authorities, started prosecuting internet boards that have posters with escort ads on their website, one might imagine that Bigdoggie would be the first. The only reason that the MBI leaves it alone is that law enforcement is already entrenched in the board. The same could be stated concerning The Erotic Review, another similar and dominant board relating to escort advertising. One would have to be lacking in reasoning ability and blind not to see it, but then I have watched that board since its conception so I am probably more aware than most.

Instead, Craigslist is the MBI’s project of the year for 2007-08. The website for each metropolitan area has an “erotic services” category that aggravates the MBI to no end, and apparently the agency has arrested many of the posters with ads (they allege it to be over a hundred), but still, if all of the posters in this category are prostitutes then there would no longer be any posters there, right? Or will the MBI claim that the ones that remain have such a high level of intelligence that it obstructs their evidence gathering capabilities? This was indeed the claim in my own case.

In a letter dated September 28, 2007, to Mr. Jim Buckmaster, the CEO of Craigslist, the MBI made its threat, disguised with a plethora of disingenuous assertions and self-promoting comments. ([note 34](#))

Trust me Jim, they are not the friendly good citizens that they sound like in this letter, but then I imagine that the cat was out of the bag on that one as you received the next few letters. I did a Google search on Mr. Buckmaster that produced a photo, and I will assert that he doesn't look like he could be easily intimidated, and in fact will I venture to say that I bet he will tell the bullies down at the MBI to take a long walk off of a short bridge before it's all over. [\(note 35\)](#)

In this first letter, the MBI Commander, Paul Zambouros, stated that the MBI had "recently filed racketeering charges against a local publication that was engaged in profiting from similar escort related advertisements that were proven to be fronts for prostitution...." This is an interesting statement for a couple of reasons: There were no charges filed against the Orlando Weekly publication until close to three weeks later; and Craigslist does not charge any money to place an ad. So where is the profit?

The second letter to Mr. Buckmaster had a slightly higher threat level, and resulted in a response from an attorney that represented Craigslist to the MBI. This letter states that the MBI received an Orange County Grand Jury indictment for criminal racketeering charges and aiding and abetting prostitution against an "incorporated weekly publication." The MBI commander follows this statement by asking Buckmaster to eliminate the erotic services category in its entirety, but then states that it's acceptable if the category is at least eliminated on the Craigslist website affecting Central Florida. The letter from the website attorney to the MBI attempts to put the matter in context and define the differences between a local publication that sells ads and Craigslist, which is free. It also offers several legal decisions that protect the website from the likes of such overzealous agencies as the MBI, and does so quite kindly, considering. [\(note 36\)](#)

The third MBI letter was more descriptive of what truly bothers the MBI. In fact, Zambouros describes in-depth how his agents flag posts on Craigslist to be removed, but many of these ads are then simply reposted by the hooker. Zambouros then goes into how the website is used to "exploit the rights of sex trafficking victims," and asserts that law enforcement agents from around the country "share his sentiments and concerns regarding the lifeblood that the Craigslist "erotic services" section provides to the prostitution industry...." Someone might remind Zambouros that the issue is quite apparently not that important to any other law enforcement agencies in the nation as it is only the MBI that has resorted to blatant threats of prosecution at this point. The letter continues with some legal terminology and asserts that Buckmaster has legal and moral obligations to cease promoting criminal activity. The description of agents continuously flagging posts only to have the posters repost the same ad, and make complaints only to have them ignored, sounded like an interesting waste of time for the agency. There is no telling how much manpower has been employed at this task thus far. The Enron style accounting utilized at the agency will ensure that the public will never know. [\(note 37\)](#)

The final letter posted on the MBI website is dated March 13, 2008 and is addressed to Kirk Kirkconnel, Craigslist's local attorney. It stated:

Dear Mr. Kirkconnel:

No response from Craigslist, Inc. has been received regarding the letter dated January 10, 2008, sent via certified mail from the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation to you, Craigslist Counsel Edward Wes, Craigslist CEO Jim Buckmaster, and eBay CEO Meg Whitman. Accordingly, it appears that Craigslist, Inc. is not interested in working with law enforcement to amicably resolve this nationwide problem of the Craigslist Erotic Services section promoting prostitution.

The Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation has attempted to work with Craigslist, Inc. to resolve the problem outside of the Criminal Justice System but, so far, these efforts appear to be a futile attempt to gain cooperation and corporate responsibility from Craigslist, Inc. You may already be aware that the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation has recently resolved a similar issue in the Criminal Justice System involving a local weekly print publication charged with Racketeering, which has now agreed to stop publishing an advertising category that was aiding and abetting prostitution.

If the appearance that Craigslist, Inc. is avoiding further efforts on this issue is inaccurate, please forward your response, via certified mail, to the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation by March 28, 2008.

Hopefully, Craigslist, Inc. will demonstrate good corporate citizenship by putting an end to the practice of illegal interstate commerce by Aiding and Abetting the prostitution industry. (note 38)

This last letter is a thinly veiled threat of federal charges. This is representative of the MBI that I know, although it is still polite as the agency had some level of hope that they would hear from the Craigslist counsel prior to the deadline stated. I do not believe that they did though, and knowing the MBI, they were viciously rabid a month later. One point in Buckmaster's favor is that many people, and even federal agencies, seem to have had enough of the MBI. In my own case the MBI did its dirty best to try and get the feds, even the SEC, to prosecute me, but obviously they failed.

There were few people more surprised than I was at the outcome of the Orlando Weekly case. To clarify: I smelled a deal in the works several weeks earlier, but it was a surprise in the sense that I could not believe the paper caved to the demands of the MBI. In my opinion a jury would never have convicted the paper or the three ad representatives that were arrested on October 19, 2007. The newspaper was guilty of being the MBI's fiercest critic in the publishing world, and had published several lengthy investigative stories written by Weekly reporters William Dean Hinton, and Jeffrey C. Billman. Both reporters included information about my case in their biggest stories; however, said little in comparison to much smaller cases involving defendants that pled to charges. I attributed this to the fact that the files had "disappeared" in my case, and reporters like to find documents in files. Of course the MBI planned it all that way though, after my acquittal. I am the defendant that they try so hard to sweep under the rug.

I was never sure about the Weekly's choice of an attorney though: Why would they not hire my former attorney, Stephen Wolverton, to represent the newspaper? The attorney that represented the ad reps was an understandable choice in that he has spent much of his career going up against the MBI, but the newspaper's choice was not one that I understood, unless they wanted to deal to begin with. When a defendant wants to make a deal they hire a local big name attorney that knows all of the parties involved. When they have no intention of dealing, they look for an attorney out of the local circuit, and one that has no political aspirations. Nevertheless, the ending was entirely anticlimactic, especially when examined next to the early statements released by the Weekly to the public.

The deal, as it pertained to the newspaper, was to eliminate the "adult services" and the "adult help wanted" sections, and to pay just under \$10,000 in investigative costs. Though the newspaper announced a victory on their part, it was clearly a victory on the MBI's part. The MBI got what the agency wanted and the newspaper paid for the agency's wasteful and worthless investigation. I did offer to help in any manner that was needed, and for free; however, those that heard the offer abruptly ceased communication. Regardless of the public announcements, I never believed that a fight to the end was on the agenda.

My offer of help should not have been tossed in the wind so quickly – I have helped a list of adult business defendants in criminal prosecutions, and the one that actually listened to me did succeed in choosing the right attorney and getting the charges dismissed. This involved a Michigan case. Of course I am bound by privacy agreements and cannot disclose any names in the Michigan case or any others. Phase one of my consulting involves helping a defendant to choose the right attorney. I have no interest in helping a defendant that is guilty or plans to make a deal – my assistance is helpful if the case involves police misconduct, is a wrongful prosecution that's politically motivated, is an escort service case that's going to trial, or is an MBI case.

To be clear, Orlando area yellow page publishers, Bellsouth and Sprint, had no "escorts" or "escort Service" category in the 96-97 phonebooks, and have not since. However, both now have "entertainers" and an "entertainment-other" categories that serve the same purpose. Not all escort services, and not all

escorts, are prostitution fronts and prostitutes. The same can be stated about the advertisers in the new categories: some are and some are not. So I am not quite sure what the MBI has accomplished, except to show their ability to control people at all levels when they so desire; this is certainly a notch on the agency's proverbial belt. The show of power, control, and accomplishment in the area of proclaimed expertise is the more obvious agenda from my viewpoint.

They sure have not stopped prostitution in Central Florida, but they have in fact changed it. Shortly after opening the social escort service website I placed an ad in the Orlando Weekly's "adult help wanted" category. The ad read:

HIRING SOCIAL COMPANIONS Earn great \$\$s going out! Over 21! All nationalities, types, and bilingual needed! Car, DL & phone. Call *** or email *******

I met several nice ladies as a result of placing this ad. One in particular was from Hong Kong and her name was Anna. She was working for an agency with an ad in the Sprint yellow pages, under the "entertainment-other" heading, and told me that they were slow at this particular time of year and she needed a second service. This was fine with me so I continued with the interview. Anna stated that she called my ad because it did not look like I expected prostitution. She met with an agency owner earlier in the week that had an ad in the yellow pages and told her, point blank, that she had to be willing to have sex with the clients. I assured Anna that I was truly seeking social escorts, but used the word companion because of the stigma otherwise attached to the term.

We discussed exactly what a social escort did, and did not do, and Anna seemed to be exactly what I was looking for in a social escort: tall; model figure; well-dressed and groomed; a great conversationalist; and educated. I told her the social escort rates: a four hour minimum at \$320, defined as \$200 to her and \$120 to the agency, but she balked at the idea. Anna did express an interest in going to private calls, but had no intention of going out with anyone, to clubs or anywhere else, for \$50 per hour. She told me that she had an "entertainer" occupational license in Orange County, and had no issue with going to a hotel room. I explained that I could book private calls, though I felt that most men want sex, and I really did not want to get involved in offering prostitution. Anna laughed and said:

"What they want and what they get are not always the same thing!"

She informed me that she was "trespassed off of Marriott World Center (MWC) property," but that was the only hotel that was a problem. Anna said that if a client got too pushy and demanded sex, she just threatened to call hotel security, and followed through if she had to, which she did one night at the MWC. The client was not married and told her to go right ahead and dial security, but if he was not getting sex, then he wanted his money back. Anna stated that they were usually married, so it rarely went that far. She called security and the officer informed the hotel guest that she did not have to return the money; however, the officer then took her to the security offices, snapped a photo of her, and handed her a paper stating that she would be arrested if she stepped on MWC property again.

The way my agency worked in the past was that if no agreement was possible between client and escort concerning the services, and the client wanted their money returned within the first ten to fifteen minutes, the escort returned it, keeping twenty dollars for her drive. Sometimes the client would tell the escort to go ahead and keep fifty, but it was his option. I told Anna that I never called security or police unless it was a safety problem, but never ever over money, and would expect the same from her. When I stated this to her, she let me know that it would not work for her. The other agency was busy most of the year, and she had no such guidelines with them. I thanked her for meeting with me and we said our goodbyes.

Anna thought that she was going to make the regular rate to go on social escort calls. We never spoke specifically about my rates on the telephone. With a few minor variations I encountered several ladies that worked the way that Anna did, and they all were looking for a second agency and already worked for someone in the yellow pages. Apparently the "entertainers" license is also a license to steal. Are the

hotels sick of this method of operation yet? Regardless, it's all good with the MBI. Orlando must be known as scam city by now.

There is evidence in the type and amount of conventions that we have booked in area resorts and in the Orange County Convention Center today, versus eight to fifteen years ago. Now all the big computer, telecom, and network related conventions go to Las Vegas, as do most other sizable groups. Telecommunications, network and computer conventioners were the mainstay of my business from 1996 until I closed in 2001: Each client found the website on the internet. When a company plans a convention, and they want the attendees to have a great time, they book it in Las Vegas. When a company plans a convention and also considers the families or when the undivided attention of the attendees is most important, Orlando is a consideration.

I find the power of this one law enforcement agency to be phenomenal. They threaten decades in prison, and then make good on the threats by actually arresting on organized crime charges when the victim doesn't fall to their knees. It is a strategy that has worked here in Central Florida: There are no more print publications that accept adult business or escort service advertisements. Not that this really matters – long ago I discovered that the better clients found the number on the internet, and anyone can publish a website much cheaper than they can place an ad in the yellow pages or a newspaper, unless of course the IP address or the website is blocked.

But what makes Orlando different than other metropolitan areas in the US? Specifically what people are behind the MBI? Whose agenda does the MBI promote? It is beyond my imagination to believe that the MBI is only a law enforcement agency funded by taxpayers and the state and federal government. I hereby posit that the agency is in fact carrying out the agenda of a private party, and not that of the people of the State of Florida.

One main reason for this determination is that I have encountered few people in Central Florida that are in agreement with the agency's methods, regardless of how they feel about the publicly stated goals. A substantial number of law enforcement officers with other agencies even disagree with MBI methods, and clearly my jury had serious issues with the agency's method of operation, so these feelings are far from isolated to those involved in the adult industry.

The MBI attack on publishers that accept escort service and adult advertising has never been a cause for me to exit the business. Back in 1996, it was an answer to my extremely high ad bills, and today, if I truly wanted to thrive in business, I could do something about the IP or website blocking. It would cost me, though not as much as a display ad in Sprint. The only ad that I ever placed in the Weekly was in the "adult help wanted" category and that was relatively worthless, and certainly costly in comparison to Craigslist. If there was no Craigslist I could have placed an ad in any newspaper outside of the metro Orlando area, like Florida Today in nearby Brevard County: Unlike all Orlando publications, the newspaper still accepts ads from escort services.

Today print publications' policies for the advertisement of adult businesses in Orlando area are dictated by law enforcement. What ever happened to free market capitalism and companies that stand-up to bullies that attempt to censor any form of a publication?

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Chapter Twelve

Plea Deals and Other Cases

Every source that I could locate is in agreement that approximately 95% or more of felony cases are resolved with a plea deal and the defendant does not exercise the right to a trial. The guilty plead to lesser charges in order to receive a more lenient sentence. The innocent plead to lesser charges rather than face a potentially lengthy sentence if a trial does not go their way. My own case is a partial example of how this works.

Rocky and Mandy each faced up to sixty years in a Florida prison on both first degree felony counts combined. In Rocky's case, twenty years was realistic because he has a criminal record. In Mandy's case it would have, more likely than not, been one to three years. In my case anywhere from twelve to twenty years was probable as I was the target and they were angry that I didn't take a deal, even though I have no criminal record. When these odds are combined with the grayness of racketeering and conspiracy statutes, a plea deal is not necessarily a bad idea, regardless of innocence or guilt.

The difference in this case was that Rocky took the deal just to get a bond, and not for any other reason. Although this is a constitutional rights violation, he did not dare complain at any point. He did attempt to; however, was threatened with incarceration for decades. In that he has ten years of felony probation and was in prison at the time, the threat was too real. When a person is bound to the perpetrators in such a manner, options are nonexistent. In other words, he had no choice but to shut-up and take it or the threat of being lost in the system forever could easily become a reality. Forever is a long time.

Not all cases are like this one. It takes a mix of police and prosecutorial misconduct, a judge willing to go along with the show, and a defendant with something to fear. The fear that motivates could be possible other charges, overwhelming circumstantial evidence, a voluminous case, coerced state witnesses that have made their own plea bargains, or even a mind that's clouded with pharmaceutical drugs. Psychotropic drugs can often eliminate the ability to reason and appropriately judge a situation, but then they knew that. It was Rocky's bad luck that at least three out of the five stated conditions were met, and a plea deal was required in order for him to be considered bondable. Of course there are also additional measurements that a defendant must consider that do not apply to this discussion.

The MBI is well-known for their ability to procure guilty pleas in all cases; the methods are varied, but ultimately the results are the same. In the agency's thousands of cases in its near thirty year existence there are a mere handful of defendants that have not succumbed to plea bargains of one type or another. The MBI surely surpasses the federal average of 95% case resolution.

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One of the best known MBI cases is the Rachel's Men's Club case. According to the MBI, thirty-two managers, employees, and sub-contractors pled to charges, and I am aware of one that committed suicide. All thirty-three people were named as witnesses for the state and against the club owner, Jim Veigle. Now Veigle was charged with a lengthy list of felony counts, including the MBI's favorite, racketeering. He was arrested before I was, but hired a powerful law firm that fought every issue; therefore my trial came first. Shortly after my trial, Veigle was offered a plea deal that included dropping all criminal charges against him personally and the club pleading to a civil Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organization (RICO) violation. The club was fined just under \$600,000.00 which

was the exact amount that MBI had in its frozen accounts. I always thought that the MBI must have already spent the money, or at least had immediate plans for it.

Mr. Veigle could not be blamed for accepting that bargain – after all, it was highly unlikely that his money would be returned anyway, so he lost nothing by accepting. When the arrests were made at the club, the MBI called various news organizations and made a big splash as the workers were taken away in a school bus. Obtaining guilty pleas from all of the workers wasn't that complicated: The strategy of charging "racketeering" and stacking charges has always worked for the agency. The first degree felony would be dropped in exchange for testimony against Veigle. There were a few hold-outs, but in the end, they all took the deal. Most received probation in exchange for their testimony. Ultimately, the MBI got the money, and this was what they were after to begin with. The agency did spend close to \$200,000.00 on the investigation alone, regardless of any claim that states otherwise.

Don't think that the MBI is worried about saving Orlando from immoral dancers, managers, and club owners. Also don't believe that it's the agency motto to uphold the law – an agent and a prosecutor actually had a tape running in a private room wherein a club customer/coerced witness met with his attorney. It was hard to tell who was at fault on that scene: the agent blamed the prosecutor and the prosecutor blamed the agent. The prosecutor subsequently retired, but the agent was still around much later and became involved in unrelated misconduct. That agent is Paul Winsett from my own case.

**

In the Orlando Weekly case, referred to by the MBI as "Operation Weekly Shame," money was a main goal as well; however, immediately following the arrests, public opinion turned on the agency. They did have a grand jury indictment, but then the old saying that "a grand jury will indict a ham sandwich" is an old saying for good reason. From the MBI viewpoint, the costs of investigation were covered so they didn't lose anything, and as a bonus, the newspaper would no longer sell ad space to escorts and escort services. The advertisers from the Weekly just moved over to Craigslist. Regardless, the agency proved its power over publishers in this town; the MBI website, in the 2007 Annual Report, still shows the booking photos of the three advertising representatives and each must complete 125 hours of community service as a part of their deal.

**

The Cleo's Gentlemen's Club case, also referred to as "Operation Overexposed," was another messy case. Fifty-four people were charged with more than 350 vice related charges and thirty narcotics transactions, and forty-eight of those people were club employees. There was at least one hold-out that I am aware of, and she went to court on a misdemeanor charge. In the end, the club was fined somewhere between \$30,000 and \$40,000, but of course spent far more on legal expenses. The club is still open for business so I'm not clear on what the MBI accomplished with the entire operation, and the case sure backfired on the agency, most likely due to their choice of witnesses.

**

Jerry's General Store was a case that involved an old MBI vendetta against the deceased owner. Three women that were related took over the mom and pop store after his death and inherited the MBI hatred. One of the ladies was in her seventies, and they were all locked up on "racketeering" charges just before Thanksgiving in 2002 – this strategy sounds familiar to me. The arrests were based on the sale of what the MBI determined to be obscene material.

Now I know where the agency got its idea for Terri's dominatrix/whip/penis testimony! – These agents were all busy viewing the videos during the time period that Rose made the new tape of Terri's

allegations in my case. I'd surely be interested in hearing about any specific video with this type of a dominatrix scene.

When the attack against the ladies did not work as planned, the MBI shoved the Florida Department of Revenue into the game, although this state agency has rarely, if ever, pursued criminal prosecutions. They were charged with several state tax related felonies and each made a plea deal to some charge. With the availability of total smut on the internet I've often wondered what type of measurement the MBI used in the determination of obscenity. It was a video rental and book store, so let's imagine that if a person was not interested then they should not enter the store. The sign out front did announce the type of videos available.

**

The year 2002 was busy for the MBI. Not only were they in the middle of my case, they also raided the Boardroom Men's Club in Cocoa, directly across the street from the Cocoa Police Department. This massage parlor had been there for around twenty years when the MBI came along, using Terri as a witness, and fired the "racketeering" bullet on everyone from the workers to the owner, Marjorie. Brevard is not MBI territory, but then Terri the tipster had no boundaries, and thanks to Terri's lengthy list of tips the MBI had many businesses to attack in Brevard.

The Brevard County Sheriff's Office had little interest in busting the Boardroom, but they couldn't exactly say no. In the beginning Marjorie was adamant concerning her lack of guilt, but in the end she caved along with all of her workers. She really didn't get a very good deal though, because it is a racketeering conviction: she pled guilty to racketeering, and was sentenced to fifteen years of felony probation. A recent request for early termination of the probation was granted.

**

The MBI was also busy on the bigdoggie.net board in the middle of 2002. The agency claims ten arrests and twelve escort services closed, though it was a rare service that advertised on this board, so I have no clue what businesses they refer to, unless we call each independent escort a service. To put it in proper perspective, the MBI arrested ten prostitutes. I have always believed that Terri was a part of this bust too – she sounded like a poster named "Tia," and I referred to her as "Total Information Awareness" – a reference to Poindexter's spy program, in posts on the board while I was awaiting trial. She was rabid! The next thing that I knew, the MBI printed out all of my posts and the prosecutor submitted them in discovery.

As mentioned in the Prologue, I later met Darcy, from the bigdoggie.net case. Agent and prosecutorial tactics backfired in this case as well – they planned to set a precedent by arresting posters and the owners of this internet message board, but instead had to toss the entire mess in the garbage. Well they did have those prostitutes that pled guilty, and actually everyone except Darcy and the owners, and they did get to confiscate Darcy's Mercedes. I can still hear her now: "I want my damn Mercedes back!" She was one of very few people that I encountered in this business that had guts. She was also educated, intelligent, and pretty. I never did find out if she managed to get her Mercedes back.

When the case was dismissed against the owners the board changed hands, so I have no idea who owns it today; regardless, the Orlando board on the website is near lifeless except for a handful of "providers" because of the entrenched cops.

**

In 2006-07, the MBI was on the trail of Ethan and Tiffany Green. The Greens owned an escort service called "Girl Next Door." They had ads in the Orlando Weekly and on various internet websites.

According to the MBI, it was “Central Florida’s largest escort service” and they confiscated “more than a half a million dollars in cash and properties.” This translates to a house and whatever the Greens had in a bank account and their closet.

It was actually a federal indictment for “money laundering” that finished the Greens. They took credit cards and the MBI involved the IRS. The feds prosecuted the case. Ethan Green should have learned his history before embarking on this business venture. The 1995 MBI/IRS case closed down every agency that took credit cards in the central Florida yellow pages. The Greens made separate deals with the feds and both served time in federal prison.

I have since heard from Ethan Green. I do feel for both him and his wife and hope that he writes the book and tells his own story of all that was done to them by the MBI.

**

By early 2008, the major MBI mission was to attack Asian massage parlors. So far they’ve closed more than twenty parlors owned by a few people. Charges include “racketeering” and multiple counts of “engaging in prostitution,” “deriving support from the proceeds of prostitution,” and “maintaining a place of prostitution.” In each case the takedown is done live on television – the MBI alerts their favorite news reporter from WFTV who then tags along.

In these parlor cases, the MBI admits to tracking down the clients via credit cards used at the business. Now there’s a reason to never accept credit cards, or try to use one, for any adult business service. Another tactic is to refer to each bust as “possible human trafficking.” This translates to the MBI doing their best to obtain federal funding. It’s a rare occasion around here when any “human trafficking” is involved, if ever. These women look like they’re in their forties and fifties in the booking photos, and they are from Korea and China – they can hop on a jet and come here if they want to.

One of the big cases was scheduled for trial in March 2009. The bust, live on television, was in March of 2007. The main defendant, Li Ping Ding, has made it for a while without pleading and making a deal. I, for one, wanted to see her take them to trial – she looked innocent enough on the news. She had that “this is a mistake and it will be straightened out” look that is too familiar to me. To her detriment, it is the Office of the Statewide Prosecutor that is prosecuting the case, and specifically Roman – he was a prosecutor in my own trial and was there to help Craft. He seemed like a no nonsense kind of guy, and in my case he had no part in any prosecutorial misconduct. Ms. Ding eventually pled guilty to charges.

**

There are a large variety of other types of cases, and more adult business cases, that the MBI has pursued over the years. A few of the most memorable other cases are: the Signature Pharmacy case; the “Lots of Slots case; the Bingo case; and Operation Smokescreen. In these cases the MBI used the usual tool of charging defendants with “racketeering,” except in Operation Smokescreen.

Operation Smokescreen was an attack in 2005 on the pipe and novelty shops in the area. The MBI is unforgiving of the pipe sellers, but in reality became sellers themselves. One owner that I met told me that the MBI raided his shop, seized all of his merchandise, and told him in no uncertain words: “Get out of Orlando. If we find out that you’re still here and in another shop you will be charged with racketeering and sent to prison for ten years!” He never tried to get his merchandise returned and never returned to that type of business. He was later alerted that his merchandise was up for sale on eBay by none other than the MBI! They actually confiscated the merchandise from five shops and sold it all on eBay. In the Lots of Slots case they confiscated fifty-six Pachislo slot machines. I have always wondered if they also sold them on eBay.

The Signature Pharmacy case is another miss on the lengthy list of MBI problem cases. The MBI was

the agency that initiated the case by involving the DEA. Racketeering was the main tool in the agency's toolbox once again. An Albany, New York Court of Appeals had no choice but to toss out the bungled case wherein the MBI called Orlando "steroid central." The last I saw of Loomis, a main defendant, he was on the news and threatening to file suit after all that was done to him and other family members.

There is now a civil suit in state court that names a list of defendants, including the City of Orlando. The suit is a 42 U.S.C. 1983, a civil rights violation case. In Orlando the case, referred to as Operation Which Doctor, was handled by the MBI and the Office of the Statewide Prosecutor, and of course the media was alerted to show for the arrests. [\(note 39\)](#) That is the same type of civil case that I filed after my trial, a Fourth Amendment violation of civil rights under color of law. The court filing lists many civil rights violations. I wish the plaintiffs the best, but would be surprised if they got anything out of the suit. The Bingo case, mentioned in the Prologue, has been a decade-long ordeal as defendants have tried to retrieve some of what was lost, and they were wrongfully prosecuted and incarcerated.

As of June 2010 the status of the case changed once again. The case has been refilled in New York and all defendants have pled not guilty and are currently awaiting trial.

**

In all, the MBI claims credit for closing: thirty-six strip clubs; sixty-one massage and body scrub parlors; thirty-three adult bookstores; nine peep show arcades; three adult theaters; three live nude shows; eight lingerie dance rooms; nine commercial gambling bingo halls; and two hundred ninety-four advertised escort services. That is a long list of MBI victims!

The MBI's claim must be taken with a grain of salt – they list several of my services in the lengthy list, but never closed any service that I owned, unless we count criminally harassing me until I closed them as a credit.

The information in this chapter came from personal knowledge, the MBI website, and the Orange County Clerk's Office. I am well aware of how the MBI procured guilty pleas from my co-defendants and the unnamed co-defendants (the coerced and threatened witnesses) that I knew. Should we assume that the agency operated similarly in these other named cases? What about the agency's drug cases? Agents that pursue vice and organized crime are not the same agents that go after drug cases, although the Governing Board and the director, Lutz, advocate the same method of operation in all areas. In fact, Lutz was a drug agent long before he took over as the director, and his method of operating was a far cry from legal according to one victim from the 1980s in Brevard County.

The mainstay of the agency's method of operation is to charge everyone with racketeering and threaten so-called witnesses with the charge to gain their testimony, whether that testimony is true or not. Truth is immaterial to this agency.

The MBI makes extensive use of informants, with most of the volunteers threatened with five, ten, twenty, and thirty years in prison. Anyone can imagine what a person threatened under these circumstances is capable of doing and saying – absolutely anything. There were so many informants involved in my case and all of the MBI's cases that when I picture the scene the movie Dawn of the Dead comes to mind. More often than not the informants are far worse than the agency's set-up targets, but criminal records are hidden or buried forever as each earns their way out of a lengthy prison term.

**

Recently the MBI was in the news again. A two-year investigation resulted in the arrest of two Asian men on racketeering and bookmaking charges. According to the MBI Commander, Zambouros, they had a betting operation going in the Vietnamese section of Orlando that used a pool hall and a restaurant for its operation. The last bet that was paid was made by the MBI on the Super Bowl – and in came the agents and their reporter from Orlando 9 WFTV, with the cameraman in tow to tape the

arrests live for the eleven o'clock news. The defendants are currently awaiting trial.

The upcoming case that involves a Superbowl bet is scheduled for trial in late 2010. The defendants are Dung Nguyen (case # 2009-CF-001668-A-O) and Hau Thai (case # 2009-CF-001668-B-O). So far it looks like both are holding out for trial, and I truly hope they maintain that stand. The MBI investigated this case for 2 flipping years. Must be a fun job, right? Each defendant is charged with:

Racketeering

Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering (RICO)

Bookmaking – 35 counts

Unlawful use of a two-way communication device

Unlawful transportation of currency (Nguyen only)

**

The next case in the news was the Plinko store raid; another one of those 2 year MBI investigations. Agents confiscated 88 computers – probably sold them on eBay by now. The defendants in that case look like they will be in trial close to the end of 2010. They are:

Jules Ross, case # 2009-CF-004445-A-O

Donald Fiechter, case # 2009-CF-004445-B-O

John Brady Jr., case # 2009-CF-004445-C-O

Jeffery Hendershot, case # 2009-CF-004445-D-O

Each of these defendants is charged with:

Racketeering (1st degree felony)

Keeping Gambling Houses, etc. (1st degree felony)

Engaging in unlawful financial transactions (2nd degree felony)

Unlawful poss./sale/operation of a coin operated device (2nd degree misdemeanor)

Conducting an Illegal Lottery (3rd degree felony)

Can you imagine what television cameras paid attention to during these arrests? I will tell you – some people complaining that they lost money in these places. I lose money when I play the Florida lottery, but I do not see anyone charging the State of Florida with RICO. In this state when the lottery began many years ago there was a promise that a percentage of profits would go to education. The Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organization of Florida stole that money.

Everyone is a racketeer when you're with the MBI. It sounds too much like mouseketeer for me.

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Epilogue:

The Pursuit of Escort Service Owners and Tragic Endings

After serious consideration I came to the conclusion that the reason I remained in business in Orlando for so long was that so many people tried so hard to get rid of me. Seriously; I could have as easily moved south to Miami whenever I felt the urge. My reasoning in writing this account is similar – the guilty parties get the exposure that they have deserved for so long. There is little doubt in my mind that there are readers that know exactly what group is responsible for the telephone line blocks in area resorts. I hope that those readers do contact me. We can keep your identity our little secret, if you want it to be. If the information is reliable enough there is also financial compensation available – if you have the answers we can make a deal to write the sequel together, but you must have been in the inner circle.

Do not misunderstand me – I know exactly what group was the responsible party, although I cannot publicly name them, so instead I'll play a game of written charades: It is an organization that is incorporated in the State of Florida and has been since the 1980s. This organization receives private and public funding, but it is indeed a private business. Often city, county, and state officials are involved in the activities of this organization, but not always. At one point I was under consideration by the organization as a potential asset, but I didn't pass the test – as I said in testimony during my trial: I do not tell the escorts what to do or what not to do, in one direction or the other; they really were independent. This organization works closely with local hoteliers that are involved in the puzzle described herein.

**

The only question that remains in my mind is: Was the MBI a part of the conspiracy or was the agency unknowingly used as a tool?

I must make my apologies to anyone that I have spoken to over the years that has gotten caught in the crossfire. However, for those that tried to help the MBI criminally harass me, set me up, or otherwise harm me, especially after the bizarre case that could easily have resulted in my death in a lousy Florida prison: there is no apology necessary, or offered. The guilty parties know who they are, and I have no inclination or need to expose them. If any one of those parties had the misconception that I was ignorant, indeed they learned otherwise. The MBI taught me that all is fair in love and war, and at this point in time, it has been a lengthy war with no end in sight.

**

Under the heading of “Horror Stories – MBI Stymied” the MBI website offers recent stories about their problems collecting money from the IRS. The MBI claims that the money is due the agency and the Florida Department of Legal Affairs from a 1995 case. The MBI posted a copy of a three-page letter mailed to the IRS, with a lengthy list of attachments, in August 2007. They have pursued their money for years, but it looks like the IRS has managed to ignore them like most people would like to; I’m with the IRS on this one!

The MBI has also pursued the Las Vegas Gaming Board in its attempt to force an investigation of the Casino Industry. A drug dealer that the MBI had under investigation, Jorge Farah, was gambling away the money the agency intended to forfeit (and keep). Apparently Farah had a party in Vegas, spending

near a million dollars before the MBI could arrest him. Since that money was derived from drug trafficking, the MBI went after the casinos trying to get it, but as most of us know, money lost in a casino is lost forever. The story on the MBI website is entitled: “It’s True: “What Happens in Vegas – Stays in Vegas.”

I am going to venture a guess that the casino people figure the MBI is not entitled to drug money that’s already been gambled away. They should have made the arrest early on, if they had the evidence as stated. Chances are good that the MBI is grabbing all that they can because, after all, it is time to make amends to the defendants wrongfully prosecuted for racketeering in the bingo case wherein the MBI forfeited all of the property and money that they could get their greedy hands on.

By now one might be curious as to any possible solutions to the problem of the MBI. One solution that I heavily advocate is the dissolution of the agency in its entirety. The Orlando metro area has no actual need or use for this agency whatsoever, and their recent agenda proves that they are little more than ignored outside of Florida. The MBI is a blatant waste of money and nothing but a thorn in the foot of everyone that they pursue, including the State of Nevada and the IRS. They do achieve the intended result of guilty pleas from many defendants in a plethora of cases, but at what cost? Frankly I do not give a damn if the MBI managed to get a few advertising reps to admit that they could not care less if a hooker placed an ad! Does anyone care?

With rampant violent crime and overcrowded prisons in Florida, and all over the U.S., is there any justification for an agency like the MBI, even if everything that they did was legally correct? Does anyone actually care if an escort goes to a hotel and makes a bargain that includes some sort of sexual activity, provided that she is an adult and is doing so entirely of her own accord? I must assert that even the MBI cannot care that much as they never prosecute the client that initiates the so-called crime. Does the general public care enough to donate their tax dollars to supporting an agency and prosecutors to go after that escort or the escort service owner?

The Orlando Police Department and the Orange County Sheriff’s Office have sufficient manpower and other divisions that handle vice and drugs, and let’s face it: It is a rare occasion when any of the MBI prosecutions have involved organized crime, if ever at all. It is merely a method used to stack charges against defendants, and is often employed to plea bargain for guilty pleas. The organized crime charges are dropped in exchange for guilty pleas to the other charges. The MBI is nothing more than someone’s private tool – that is the reality of the situation.

Do not be fooled by the self-promoting rhetoric emanating from this agency. If in fact their agenda in my own legal prosecution was a correct one, they would have had no need to create a case where there was none to begin with. I have touched on many major points relating to my arrest and trial, but did not in any way dissect the entire case in this account, although I have done so for myself over the course of the last five years, and on paper.

I have never claimed that there was not prostitution on calls that I booked during the course of owning many escort services for nine years. I do claim, and stated so to the jury, that I never promoted or discussed prostitution with any escort, client, or agent. Every escort that ever worked for my agency was at least twenty-eight years of age, able to make decisions in her own life, and kept all tips received from any act of prostitution that she agreed to with a client. Providing prostitution was not a condition of working at my business – this fact was stated in court testimony by actual escorts that were independent contractors, including one that I sent to calls for four years.

**

A state criminal background check and a NCIC (National Crime Information Center – a nationwide check) show not only the list of charges that I was arrested on, but also reflect the additional charges of “fraud” and “prostitution.” Neither database includes any entry that I was acquitted on the only two charges that were actually filed by a prosecutor. The NCIC database receives its information from state

databases, so this was where I tackled the problem. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) has a quality control division that is supposed to handle incorrect entries. I spoke with someone in FDLE's Quality Control Division on several occasions, but the answer that I received is that they are not responsible for incorrect information. The FDLE receives their information from the arresting agency, and for all purposes considered, a criminal background check reflects that I was convicted of all charges and makes me look like a first class dirt-bag.

The situation is, admittedly, a frequent source of aggravation for me, as the MBI intended it to be. Between this and the problem of the "disappeared" files, my own document, tape, and CD collection is the only proof that I have of the truth and the facts. In Florida, many areas or types of employment are required by state law to conduct a background investigation, and the great majority of decent employers do so anyway – obviously this obstructs my ability to find a decent job. The only area of employment, that I am aware of, that does not conduct a background investigation is the fast-food industry. Although I did deliver pizza for several years, I have run out of vehicles to ruin, and I have never worked a cash register in my life.

I believe that the MBI intended to drive me out of Florida: Newsflash – my mother is now eighty years old, lives in Florida, and I will not be deserting her. If this factor did not exist, I can absolutely assure the MBI that I would have returned to the city in which I was born and raised, Paris, long ago. I fight back the only way that I know how: every time that I am caused a problem by the actions of the MBI, I react accordingly. They have made it impossible for me to move-on and go forward in my life; I hereby return the problem to each and every agent, officer, and member of the Governing Board involved, including all former agents now retired care of the Florida taxpayers. Do I wish to cause them problems similar to the problems that they have caused me? But of course.

One serious problem with the agency that I barely touched on is the spectacle that a list of agents made of themselves over the many years described herein. The investigative stories by Orlando Weekly reporters and Local 6's Tony Pipitone covered this area of agent transgressions exceedingly well, and anything that I could state here would merely be a repeat of their own investigations. These reporters fought tooth and nail for public documents and experienced serious career problems at the hands of MBI officials, especially in their investigations of agents' sexual escapades while on the job. I did allude to certain situations, and do have sworn documents that would allow for inclusion of the stories; however, did not want this book to be all about hypocrisy, which is another story entirely.

**

After two decades with the MBI and forty-one years in law enforcement, William Lutz, agent turned director, announced his retirement. At the end of December of 2008 an era was over.

Change is a good thing.

**

Recently the feds have taken-up a cause similar to that of the MBI. Indeed this was a surprise to many, especially Deborah Jeane Palfrey, in that she was their first escort service owner victim under the racketeering statute. On May 1, 2008, Jeane, as she preferred to be called, was found dead in a shed on her mother's property, in Tarpon Springs, Florida. On April 15, 2008, Jeane was convicted on all charges: racketeering; money laundering; and using the mail for illegal purposes, by a federal jury in the District of Columbia. She faced somewhere between four and seven years in a federal prison at a sentencing scheduled in July. Jeane was a vibrant, intelligent, and well-spoken individual, and she will be missed by anyone that took the time to understand her philosophy in relation to the escort business and life, and most that ever met her.

I first spoke with Jeane shortly after her indictment on the federal charges. We exchanged many emails, several phone calls, and met a few times at a Barnes and Noble café in Orlando. According to newspaper articles, Jeane owned property in Orlando, although I was under the impression that it was her mother's, or at least in her mother's name. She stayed in Orlando periodically as her case progressed towards trial. We discussed her strategies, my case and trial, and often politely disagreed on these strategies. Jeane was ecstatic that she did not have to contend with "local yokel cops," as she rolled her eyes and referred to the MBI.

She felt that her case with the feds would be resolved. The last time I saw her was in late December of 2007, and she stated to me that there was a resolution in progress in her case. She thought that no prison time would be involved, and she would have most, if not all, of her money and property returned. Jeane intended to move to Germany. We discussed Germany at length; I did live there from age fifteen to age twenty-two. I let her know that I would be entering a graduate history program at a Florida university in early January, and she considered this to be the best plan in my situation; she was an advocate of continuing education. We agreed to speak again in the near future and said our goodbyes in the café. At this time Jeane was confident in her strategy regarding the case.

It was in early April, just prior to the start of Jeane's trial, when I contacted her in email to offer my support and help – clearly there had not been any resolution after all. She responded with kind words, and still sounded self-assured, although I was aware that she had turned the case over to the court-appointed attorney, Preston Burton (of Monica Lewinsky fame). On the second day of trial, just after the jury was chosen, I emailed Jeane to make the important point that testifying in her own defense was a necessity. This was advice from a former defendant, and not legal advice. Lawyers almost always advise their clients not to testify – too many potential disasters. A jury is not, by law, supposed to hold it against the defendant that chooses not to testify; however, jurors are not law books – they are people. I stated to Jeane that if there are questions left in the jurors' minds they will either let the prosecutor fill in the blanks, or create the answers themselves. I argued:

"You have to realize that the average American (your juror) does not understand how your escort service worked, how these escorts had complete control over their own decisions and actions, and how brief and short your telephone encounters with the clients were."

I also wrote about the importance of clearing up the difference between an employee and an independent contractor. I included this because I had read online news that quoted the prosecutor in the opening statement consistently refer to these escorts as employees. I advised Jeane that she could clear up the difference in her own testimony, or have her attorney call an IRS agent to the stand. I did not receive a return email from Jeane, and only hoped that she seriously considered all that I stated. When I saw how the trial progressed in the news, I emailed her some thoughts on Thursday the 10th of April. I received a "mailer-daemon" notification, stating that my email address was blocked. Shortly thereafter I noted that the case had gone to the jury without Jeane's testimony. Her attorney had used the strategy of announcing that federal prosecutors did not provide evidence of guilt on the charges, and therefore the jury could not find Jeane guilty. This is never the correct strategy in an organized crime case.

The jury did find Jeane guilty, which came as no surprise to me, but then I tried as best I could to help her. Her defense attorney was of course correct, but he obviously knew very little about escort services and public perception, regardless of law. Although I was not sure if Jeane had blocked my email address or her email account had been played with, as my own email account was in my case, I did not email her from another account because if it was in fact the former, I had no intention of bothering her.

When I saw the breaking news reports online of Jeane's suicide I was shaken. She never struck me as suicidal, but then I only knew her in relation to her case. I emailed her long-time friend and attorney Montgomery Sibley, expressing my horror and questioning if he thought the feds had used email blocking tools or Jeane just tired of my advice and blocked me. Mr. Sibley responded:

“... It is a comfort to hear from those who knew Jeane for who she was and not who she was accused of being. And yes, someone was playing with her email account blocking emails.”

When a person believes that everyone has deserted them during such a terrible time in their life, contrary to the resulting conspiracy theories regarding Jeane's death, suicide is indeed possible; I know. In my own case, at different points in time, all means of communication were interfered with. The death of Jeane Palfrey is a tragedy, and one that will remain in my memory always.

**

Please feel free to write me with any comments, questions, or answers to my own questions.

Vicky Gallas
8501 Astronaut Blvd
Suite 5, #165
Cape Canaveral, FL 32920

or

vlgallas@gmail.com

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Acknowledgements

This book was written for my son, Alex. Somehow he knew that the jury would find me not guilty on both counts, as if my concern was absurd. It was also written for the many victims of the MBI: those caught up in my own case; those that I met over the years that were involved in other cases; and the many that I do not know. My heart goes out to each and every victim that experienced the inconceivable under the cover of justice. It has been more than six years since the day the jury found me not guilty, yet not a single day passes that what the MBI did does not enter my mind, in one way or another.

A special thought to Rob in Brevard County, victim from the 1980s: Your story touched me like none other. So many years have passed since that horrifying time of your life – it will never get better unless you make it better. I'll help. Please contact me, no matter what your situation in life.

Without the zealous representation of Stephen Wolverton I would not be in a position to write this manuscript. I have never met any attorney like Steve – he fought for truth and demanded justice. I know that if it was not for Steve, I would not be alive today. I wish you, your understanding wife, and your beautiful child the very best in life. What a way to start a marriage (weeks before this trial)! And Harley Gutin: I would bet that the day I walked into your law offices with your deceased partner's business card you had no idea how serious I was. I owe you both my life!

I must acknowledge those in my life that lived through all of this with me: my son, Alex; and my mother, Evelyn. Alex, you were only fourteen years old when the MBI first came to take me away and no one so young should have to go through such experiences as you witnessed. Trust me son, all cops are not like them, but always exercise caution in your life: Power can be a dangerous tool in the wrong hands. Mom, at your age you should never have had to go through anything like you did, and for that I am sorry. In your entire life and career you never had to experience a bad side of the government, state or federal, and yes – I do know that they're not all like that; I promise. Without your encouragement I could not have made it through this mess, or even this manuscript. I love you both with all of my heart!

My loyal friend Suzanne died in March of 2008, and without reading this account. Suzanne was a central person in this story from 1995 until long after my acquittal. She encouraged me in this endeavor, and I regret that I tossed the project aside for so long. Without this lady's honest testimony, I'm not sure how the trial might have ended, or if the verdict would have been the same. She had more courage than any person involved in this saga, and was indeed a victim of the MBI and prosecutors when she refused to go along with a fabricated story when deposed during investigation, or in trial testimony. I, of all people, realize that it took ten years from her life. I offer my sincere regards and deepest sympathy to Suzanne's family.

My heart goes out to my co-defendants for the way that they were both caught in the crossfire. If I can help either one of you, please do not hesitate to contact me. Mandy, I'm sure that we can make that VOP warrant go away, along with everything else connected to this rotten case. Rocky, it was not your fault, but it was not mine either. They lie a lot, but then I'm sure you know that at this point. At times every aspect of this case became so twisted with lies that it was impossible to separate reality from fiction. Please know that I realize this.

There are others in my life that I would like to thank for their encouragement and support, although I know that they would not want to be named so I have acknowledged each privately.

I must conclude by thanking the jury in my case. I am not acknowledging you each individually because I am not sure that you would want to be publicly named. Thank you for really listening to my case, and to me! It has been a struggle, but it's all getting better. I thank each and every one of you for saving my life! If it was not for your decision to give me a second chance in life this story would never

have been written. There was so much more to the story than I could state in that courtroom.

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Notes

1. Visit the MBI website at <http://www.mbi-police.org> for an in-depth look at what this organization states its mission to be. The agents often mix the vice, organized crime and drug investigations by having the informants from one investigation working in another area entirely.
2. I discuss the actions of the MBI, in my case and others, in-depth throughout this book. I leave the judgment of costs up to the reader. \$36,000 and an eleven month investigation are not possible. I assert that it's Enron-like accounting in their attempt to save face.
3. The Florida Statutes, Chapter 895, can be found in its entirety at: <http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index> There is a list of forty-nine offenses that can be defined as racketeering activity in the State of Florida.
4. In my Oxford dictionary/thesaurus it is synonymous with "companion," - there are 2 meanings. #1: partner, companion, gigolo, hostess, geisha, informal date, dated beau. As a verb: partner, accompany, take out, go out with, attend on. #2: entourage, retinue, attendants, train, bodyguard, protector, convoy, defender, contingent. As a verb: accompany, guide, conduct, lead, usher, guard, protect, safeguard, defend. Clearly I use the meaning in the context of #1. I notice that the City of Orlando uses "escort" in the context of #2 for their own functions BUT applies "prostitute" as a substitution for #1. Even in their page regarding City law enforcement activities in relation to prostitution they state that they eliminate escort service areas - when referring to parts of Orange Blossom Trail. As if hookers on OBT are escorts! The entire meaning has been twisted to their own benefit - The English language was not intended for such word plays and changes.
See: <http://www.cityoforlando.net/police/investigations/ded.htm> and http://www.cityoforlando.net/police/special_units/traffic_enforcement.htm
5. For a more in depth discussion of the early modern red-light districts of the European municipal governments and religion in the prostitution trade from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries see: Otis, Leah Lydia, *Prostitution in Medieval Society: The History of an Urban Institution in Languedoc*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985. Otis conducted a regional study of medieval prostitution of the Languedoc region using the comparison of its Italian, German and English counterparts. The book is an adaptation of Dr. Otis's doctoral thesis.
6. When I opened the services I initially used four fictitious names: Abra-Cadabra Escorts; Valentine's; Beautiful Night Out; and Friday Services. By mid-1993 I had a website wherein the service was entitled Abra-Cadabra Orlando Escorts. I began with some obscure URL, not knowing any better. By 1994, the domain name was <http://www.escortorl.com>, and remained the same throughout my years in business. By 1996, I had eliminated the Abra-Cadabra name and used Valentine's Orlando Escorts. There is a website, <http://www.archive.org>, where the reader is able to view websites from as far back as late 1996.

The Internet Archive is a non-profit Internet library project. You simply type the URL in the Way Back Machine to view the archived versions of websites arranged by date.

7. The date of the hearing was April 12, 2002. The allegation was made concerning the "off-shore accounts" when I attempted to have my \$100,000 bond reduced as my home was collateral on the bond. I suddenly found myself without an attorney and needed to find and pay another attorney. The only way to accomplish this was to sell the house. In the same hearing the prosecutor stated that I did not need a bond reduction as I had plenty of money, then accused me of having trash bags full of cash buried in my backyard. An MBI agent had one of my co-defendants actually state this in a deposition. Though the co-defendant later explained why he stated it and then retracted the statement, the damage

had already been done. In the hearing I responded by stating to the prosecutor that he could have his agents dig-up the yard if he wanted, no court order necessary, provided they left it how they found it.

I do possess compact disks of every hearing and the entire trial. I also obtained copies of prosecutor notes from during the trial wherein "Where is the money?" and "WHERE DID THE MONEY GO?" were written in Craft's handwriting. Craft was correct about one thing – it should have been a million dollar a year business, and would have been if not for the hotel PBX blocks.

8. The Stouffer Resort no longer exists. The hotel was sold and changed names more than a decade ago. It is now the Renaissance Hotel.

9. The payphones in this specific resort and in all resorts on this property were, at the time, controlled entirely by Vista United Telecommunications. In 2001 the company was purchased by Smart City Telecom. The Smart City website can be found at: <http://www.smartcity.com>

10. The case number is 96-CF-0011913-0. It was in Orange County Circuit Court. Two of the defendants have, to this day, fugitive felony warrants for jumping bond. Read the article entitled "The Screw-ball Scheme" in the July 22, 1996 issue of New York Magazine (pg. 30 also called "The Love Float") if you're interested in the IRS Operation Out Call that spawned the ridiculous MBI Operation Plastic Empire. Back issues of New York Magazine are available in Google Books free.

11. Ellis Rubin died at the age of 81 on December 12, 2006. He was an outspoken defense attorney known for his unusual defense strategies and high profile clients.

12. The MBI website is at: <http://www.mbi-police.org> On March 20, 2008 I accessed the document listing the services shut down by the MBI at: <http://www.mbi-police.org/publicrecords/Advertised%20Escort%20Services%20Closed.pdf>. Abra-Cadabra Escorts is #61. At the same time I turned off the lines for Friday Services - #173; and Ladies of Colour - #210.. I also turned off Beautiful Night Out (not listed – must be they didn't like the name).

13. I offer an in-depth analysis and other stories in Chapter 12. MBI never presented the story as it was, but Orlando Local 6 investigative reporter, Tony Pipitone, confirmed that this was what really happened by making public record demands and examining the documents. The video tape that Pipitone fought to obtain does reveal the Sprint representative as more compromised than was originally stated to me; however, the fact that agents would set-up a publishing company representative was absurd by itself. The MBI enjoys pretending that publishers voluntarily decide to help their cause. They pretend the same when it comes to their witnesses in court cases.

14. I did produce a record that proved Theresa Isaacs (Terri) had made this complaint and subsequently signed the "no prosecution affidavit." In her complaint Terri alleged that she was a witness in a domestic violence case against Rocky, and that Rocky and I had threatened her and her mother's lives if she testified in this case. Terri never stated anything about what actually transpired that day or the allegations she made to me on the phone to Agent Reynolds. After my call to Reynolds he conducted an investigation and discovered that Terri was not a witness in a domestic violence case to begin with, therefore there would never be any reason for anyone to threaten her and prevent her testimony. Terri had simply concocted the entire story and demanded that both Rocky and I be arrested on charges of "tampering with a witness."

The report did not land on the agent's desk for six weeks because Terri was known to make false complaints to the Brevard County Sheriff's Office, and apparently the officers that came to Terri's house that night and took the report and decided it was false. Terri, in her push to have Rocky and I arrested, actually made a complaint a few days after her original complaint, against one officer that came to her home. I provided proof of all Terri's complaints from records obtained from the Brevard County Sheriff's Office, and submitted this proof during the early part of discovery in my court case. The documents that I submitted in discovery were totally ignored by the MBI and the prosecutor.

My attorney presented the documents to the jury during trial. I discuss this further in Chapter 8, "From the Defendant's Perspective: A Bizarre Trial." Everything I submitted in discovery was ignored because the MBI and the prosecutor believed that they could push me into a deal. They never wanted the truth; they already knew it.

15. I wrote down Dusty's statement when she initially said it to me and submitted it into discovery in the early part of the court case. Dusty later repeated this statement for the jury during her trial testimony. The MBI agents that were present during her interrogation were deposed by the defense during the discovery process, however, neither recalled anything about that day. Agent Rose testified that this interrogation, in MBI offices, was not taped "because it was of no use." So how did Rose know that it would not be useful prior to deciding not to tape it? In Florida it is illegal for agents to throw out any material, including their own notes, in the course of an investigation. MBI tapes everything in their offices and every telephone call.

They were later caught illegally taping an attorney and client having a private conversation in the Rachel's Men's Club case; coincidentally, one of the agents present at Dusty's interrogation, Agent Paul Winsett, played a part in this illegal taping. How could anyone believe that the near two hour interrogation in MBI offices was not taped?

16. I wrote down Maria's entire statement on the day that she called and said this. I submitted the statement into discovery in the early part of the case and my attorney later questioned in deposition the other agent that was with Rose on his first visit, Agent Edward Baron, but Baron recalled nothing about the visit. The state did not call Baron as a witness in the trial. Rose claimed he only went to Maria's office the one time, and that he was pleasant and Maria volunteered to help him with a statement. Maria had been fired and I had no way of locating anyone else present during Rose's second visit – I did not know where Maria worked and the defense was not given her address. During my trial she testified that she did not remember anything. Her testimony was not favorable to the state either though. She stated that we never discussed what she did, or did not do, when I sent her to a client. I contend that Rose scared her to death. He had a habit of threatening thirty years in prison, and in Maria's case he only needed to threaten concerning her children.

17. The MBI had taped this conversation and submitted the tape in discovery. The MBI attorney was listed on the state's witness list, but of course they never called him to testify. They saw this tape as evidence of my calling MBI and getting into a screaming match. It was actually evidence that I had attempted to make a complaint, but instead was threatened and provoked into an argument. I still have the tape.

18. The MBI would later claim that Kendall came to their offices voluntarily, but Kendall still has the subpoena. After all that the MBI did to her she would never call them or go there voluntarily. At this time Kendall was extremely depressed about her son's death and hardly got out of bed.

19. Staci McCormick would testify at my trial for the state. She made up so many lies that she was caught in her own web during testimony. She was on medication, and we had discovered, was on Medicaid. I discuss Staci's testimony in Chapter 8.

20. There was more involved in the situation with Mai and it is explored in-depth in Chapters 7 and 8. Mai was not arrested for anything though, and was detained and threatened by the MBI.

21. The MBI found Stan's business card in Mai's purse when they detained her, but Mai had no idea. They then contacted Stan and he agreed (a coerced agreement, no doubt) to let them use his house and phone to set-up Kelly. Stan was never charged. He was listed as a witness for the state but they never called him to testify. He did give them a lengthy statement prior to my arrest, however, there was nothing that incriminated me in it. We had only nice conversations, mainly about specific newer technologies like the mobile internet (back in 2001 this was new technology, referred to as WAP – wireless application protocol).

22. In the course of my own investigation I obtained Mandy's (Beth Sams/Mihalek) arrest records from

the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. These records reveal Mandy's story to be the truth, except that Rose is not named and the location is not stated (the hotel). In a defense deposition, Rose claimed that Mandy just voluntarily returned to Florida and volunteered to testify. The deposition was given in August of 2002, and I did not receive Mandy's Colorado record and submit it into defense discovery until October of 2002.

23. Of course none of this was provable, but we knew. I make no accusations but only ask: who would break into a house and plug in the computer, but not steal anything?

24. It would turn out that he was on heavy doses of psychotropic drugs, but I address that in Chapter 9.

25. One document online that confirms this information is in a United States Supreme Court brief: Michael Giorango, Petitioner, v. United States of America, No. 05-443. This Writ to the U.S. Supreme Court was accessed on March 14, 2008 at: <http://www.usdoj.gov/osg/briefs/2005/0responses/2005-0443.resp.html>

26. I still have the tape of course. In many of Rose's taped depositions submitted in discovery it was obvious that he frequently stopped and started the tape. During Mai's interrogation over the "obstruction of justice charge" she stated to me that Ross would stop the tape if he didn't like an answer, threaten her and tell her how to respond, and then restart the tape and ask the question again. This is all quite obvious in the tapes that I have in my possession.

27. MBI Director, William Lutz, most recently stated this in an email response to Scott Maxwell, Orlando Sentinel Columnist. The Sentinel did not publish Lutz's email, nor did Maxwell forward it to me. Lutz's email response is posted on the MBI website under the "Director's Message" link, and is entitled "Response to Scott Maxwell's October 20, 2007 Article; Reference MBI's "Lack of Convictions". I accessed the article on March 14, 2008 at:

<http://www.mbi-police.org/publicrecords/Email%20to%20Scott%20Maxwell.pdf>

The MBI has always enjoyed publicly humiliating me with lies. I simply respond, and have every right to. If in fact I had lied about the date that my business was closed, and it was really open as I testified in my trial, I would have been charged with perjury! No state witness or agent was ever charged with perjury for the many lies and misrepresentations in the investigation and trial. But then in Orange County, the MBI investigates themselves. And there he goes with the "employee" categorization again – the escorts were all independent contractors. To still refer to Rocky as my partner, after all the proof otherwise, exposes Lutz's own part in this miscarriage of justice. Documents prove why Rocky pled guilty, and it wasn't normal as Lutz suggests.

28. Regardless of the MBI allegations in the arrest warrant, or what some escorts stated under duress and in changed testimony, I know exactly what I stated to the jury. I do have the entire trial on compact disks. Lutz was not even at the trial. To deny that an escort had sex on a call would not be believable. Additionally, the "14 call girls" that Lutz refers to did not work for my agency; Dusty, Maria, and Kerry were arrested and Mai was only detained. This is in the span of almost a decade of operating. I will never count Kendall's case, and the MBI was not legally able to use it in my case.

29. A Nebbia Hold Order is the imposition on the defendant that requires him/her to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that money used for, or property used to, guarantee a bond did not originate from the gain of any criminal activity. This must be proven prior to the bond being posted.

30. I last accessed this news release by going to Google and searching for "Vicky Gallas," on March 30, 2008. This is over six years after my arrest and almost five years after my acquittal. The URL is: [http://myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/\\$\\$swp/16B23398577555EB85256B0A006DF7A8](http://myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/$$swp/16B23398577555EB85256B0A006DF7A8)

31. I purchased two domain names One was the main website and the other intended to be accessed through a mobile search engine. The Dot Mobi craze has thus far been short-lived. They were purchased through Go Daddy and registered privately and I let the Dot Mobi expire in one year, but paid for the .com for five years, not quite sure what I intended to do with it.

32. The OpenNet Initiative is located at: <http://opennet.net> The website is informative as to current

research areas and defining internet filtering. It also offers a blog.

33. Save the Internet is located at: <http://www.savetheinternet.com>

34. The letter, dated September 28, 2007, is posted on the MBI website and noted as a public record. I last accessed it on February 19, 2008 at:

http://www.mbi-police.org/pr/05V-239/Craigslist_Correspondence_092807.pdf

35. The photo and a short biography were accessed on April 28, 2008 and can be found at:

<http://www.craigslist.org/about/jim.buckmaster.html>

36. The letter, dated November 20, 2007, from the MBI to Mr. Buckmaster is on the MBI website and was last accessed on March 15, 2008. The letter from Craigslist counsel, Edward Wes, is dated November 28, 2007, and is also posted on the MBI website.

37. The letter, dated January 10, 2008, was last accessed on the MBI website on March 15, 2008.

38. This is the letter in its entirety. I feel the details contained therein are important enough for a thorough reading. I last accessed this letter on the MBI website on March 18, 2008.

39. The civil filing is located at:

<http://multimedia.nydailynews.com/pdf/2008/10/08/AmendedComplaint.pdf>

Last accessed in February 2009.

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