

# TEWYX

ALEX ADAMS

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# Preface

This book is meant to inspire you and show you what you (don't) want to see.

Alex Adams

# Part I

# Chapter 1 - The first lecture

*9 AM, Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016, university lecture hall*

Albert was in the university lecture hall along with approximately one hundred other students.

They were listening to a lecture that had begun at nine o'clock and would be 90 minutes long.

Albert and his colleagues were fourth-year students and old-stagers at the university. That's why they weren't nearly as active anymore in comparison to inexperienced first-year students, who regularly came to lectures straight from parties and other social gatherings.

Albert was 5'6 and had a big belly. He was usually unshaven with uncombed hair. He wore cheap t-shirts, ripped trousers, and sneakers.

Albert always sat in the front row because he wasn't among the brightest students and had only made it to the fourth year thanks to his determination and discipline.

He'd grown up with his parents, whom he'd stayed with until age eighteen. They'd given him all the attention they could. Thanks to them he'd travelled the world, because his father had worked as a coffee trader. When Albert was nineteen, they both died in a car accident. He didn't have any siblings and had ended up alone, only his aunt Emma was still alive from his closest family.

In front of Albert, there was a blackboard that the professor was writing on with a piece of chalk. When Albert turned around, he saw fifteen rows of desks that went all the way up, just like at the cinema. Behind the desks, students were yawning with boredom, some of them catching up on their sleep after yesterday's party and some others taking notes in their notebooks, laptops or tablets. There were

no windows and the light was provided by several old fluorescent tubes that buzzed monotonously.

Today's economy would provide a good job with a decent salary to all of the graduates. After all, it was at its peak and the rate of unemployment was very low.

Albert knew all of the classmates present. His best friends were David and Susan; a couple that were sitting in the middle of the room. David was the tall blond with an athletic figure and Susan was the likeable, slim and well-dressed girl with long brown hair. They were taking notes on a laptop in front of them. They'd gone to elementary school together, then to high school and they'd been dating since the first year of university.

Besides her university studies, Susan worked as a fashion designer, which is why she always looked great. She also knew many people from show business and often went to their classy parties.

The people in the back row were also Albert's friends.

John Jackson was sat there; a star student of both elementary school and high school, who had everything he wanted because his rich parents owned a prosperous company. He was good at everything he did and loved by everyone.

John dressed to impress. The cost of his wardrobe equaled a year's salary of an average worker. He never forgot to wear one of the ten Rolex watches he owned, always one that matched his clothes.

He was a tall charmer with an athletic figure and brown hair and he intentionally sat in the back row, not only to see everything that was going on in the room, but also so he could pick who was going to sit next to him and he only permitted it to people that he really cared about.



Today it was Marget sitting by his side.

Marget was the most beautiful girl in class. She was a tall, slim blonde and a model, who'd been shooting for world-famous brands of cosmetics and underwear. The way she dressed made her look stunning, especially her long legs. Whenever she climbed the steps to sit next to John, everybody stared at her.

Andy, Zilafa and Alex were sitting in the last row too.

Professor Robson's lectures weren't mandatory, just like all the other lectures, but they were very different from the rest of them.

Professor Robson used his own experience from companies he used to work at, therefore it was impossible to find such information in a textbook and that made every topic much more interesting.

At the end of the lecture, Albert approached the professor.

"Good morning, my name is Albert Simon and I would like to ask you something."

The sixty-year-old professor, looking similar to Einstein in his best years and dressed in a dark suit and white shirt as usual, who'd been teaching at the university for almost thirty years, was considered to be the most experienced expert here. His most common phrase was "I'm busy", which had also become his nickname among the students.

"Sorry, I'm busy," he replied, living up to his nickname.

"I know you're busy, I just need a moment," insisted Albert.

"Alright, come to see me in my office this afternoon," said Robson, finally giving up.

"Thank you for your time," replied Albert and quickly took out his diary to make a note of their planned meeting.

## **Chapter 2 - New Trends classroom**

*11AM, Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016, New Trends classroom Albert*

was really excited about his meeting with professor I'm Busy.

Before that, just like every Wednesday, he had a lecture with Professor Tim Clain about new trends and then lunch in the local cafeteria.

Fifty-year-old Professor Clain kept up his athletic figure and generally maintained his appearance. He was always in a good mood, smiled a lot and always wore a perfectly tailored shirt or suit. His clothes were modern but formal.

The New Trends course was new at their faculty department, professor Clain had tried hard to enforce it for a while, despite the obsolete education system. He knew something like that was missing in schools, not only the one he was teaching at, but all schools, and he wanted to apply his experience from the time he worked in the Silicon Valley to this course.

Today's lecture was focused on new trends in the work environment. Fifteen students were attending, including Albert, John, his girlfriend Marget, but also Andy, Albert or Zilafa, David and Susan.

The professor was demonstrating the work environment according to new trends in comparison to a room equipped according to "old principles" and required each of the students to think about what they liked and what they didn't.

Tim led the students into a beautiful, modern boardroom that looked almost as if it had arrived from the future.

There were cosy sofas and beanbags, as if they were inviting them to sleep or relax. There were also several hammocks, a massive table, modern chairs and plasma TVs hanging on the walls. The whole

room was filled with a pleasant scent. There was a kitchen corner where everyone could get some kind of refreshment, be it a juice, coke or even something to eat.

“How do you like this room?” started Tim carefully.

“A lot,” replied the students.

“And?” asked Tim.

“I like the screens on the walls. And that the Wi-Fi signal is strong everywhere,” elaborated John.

“Let’s go see the other boardroom then,” continued professor Tim.

The boardroom they stepped into this time had disused chairs, an ugly table and in general everything just seemed very uncomfortable.

The most inappropriate thing was probably the old laminated door that was decorated with a picture from Playboy magazine.

“Can I take a picture?” asked Albert. “Sure,” agreed the professor and so in a moment the picture appeared on Albert’s Facebook with a caption:

I WANNA WORK HERE 😊

“You have to realise,” said professor Tim, “that we spend approximately eight to ten hours a day at work and the environment we work in influences us. In the future, and even these days, the work environment decides where people want to work,” he continued. “Let’s go back to the first room.”

The students took their seats on the comfy beanbags and professor Tim turned on one of the TV screens, from which a smiling man of the age of about fifty in an expensive suit started talking.

“Hello, my name is Mr. New. Welcome to this boardroom. I wish you all to do well, to succeed, to cooperate as much as possible and inspire each other and to help each other in the good times and the bad times.

In our company, you can expect an interesting salary and bonuses that depend on how the company is doing at that specific moment. Find your vision and go for it.”

“Yes,” said the professor. “It is necessary for people to cooperate and inspire each other as much as possible. Much harder times in life will come for each of you.”

He then put a simple questionnaire in front of each of the students.

“I want you to write what you like about this room or how you feel about what Mr. New said.”

The students sat on the beanbags, some of them by the massive table, and wrote down their impressions.

“And now let’s move into the other room,” commanded the professor after a while.

The students stepped back into the unsightly room filled with stale air.

They took their uncomfortable seats and the professor played another video. An ugly, corpulent man appeared on the screen. His speech was complemented by a greasy t-shirt and rather vulgar language.

“Hello, my name is Mr. Old and today I’m going to show you how to make people work. If you don’t obey my instructions, you’ll be fired because I’m always right and if you think otherwise then I’ll make your life a living hell. You’ll work for the minimum wage here and you can forget about ever getting more, is that clear enough?” To emphasise his speech, Mr. Old threatened the audience with a clenched fist....

Students were making notes about what they liked or didn't like on the forms in front of them.

"Now you may choose for yourself whether you want to be in this or the other room," said the professor. Suddenly everyone realized that they didn't want to work in such an environment and so they relocated to the first room. Albert seated himself in a hammock next to the professor. "Professor, I have a great idea." "What idea?" asked Tim in his peaceful tone.

"I was thinking that all the lectures held at our university could be recorded on video, so we can listen to them anytime and anywhere we need. For example, here in a hammock."

"That actually is a great idea!" Clain appreciated Albert's excitement. "But how would you like to achieve that?"

Albert already had the answer: "I'm going to meet with professor I'm Busy today and I would like to present him with this idea. He's the only one who can decide if the university can hold lectures in such a form."

"That's really a great idea. I wish you the best of luck with that Albert!" Albert was very pleased with Clain's appreciation.

Zilafa was swinging in the hammock next to him with a car magazine in her hands. She was about 5'7, chubby, red-haired with tattooed arms. She loved the scent of cars and motorbikes and she enjoyed living without commitment.

Somebody knocked on the classroom door.

Professor Clain often invited various managers and business owners to his lessons. He wanted to spread awareness about the importance of the work environment among the staff of companies. He also strived to connect education with real work experience as much as

possible, as he knew the education system wasn't preparing its students for real life enough and that the economy couldn't prosper forever and therefore a slump should happen eventually.

A group of three managers had just entered the room.

"Hello and welcome," said Professor Clain.

"Hi, my name's Silver."

"Hello, I'm Jack."

"And I'm Bryan. Hi. We all work for a big business and we have come for a consultation regarding changes to improve the work environment."

"I know," said the professor. "You sent me an email. Today's consultation will take about an hour. First I'm going to show you two different approaches to the implementation of company boardrooms. What were your names again? I always have a hard time remembering names, you know."

The men introduced themselves again. "We work as successful managers in a business company," one of them ended the introduction.

At the words "successful managers" Tim knew immediately that something was off. All three of them were bursting with confidence but there was no sign whatsoever of any respect or humility.

Tim brought them into the "New Trends" classroom and had them take their seats on the comfy beanbags.

"You know, gentlemen, that we spend a significant amount of time of our lives at work. This exhibition should provide the opportunity to those who can influence or even make changes in the work environment of others to see the differences and possibilities.

Unfortunately, a lot of people could offer their employees a higher salary or a better environment, but they are too selfish to do it. But once a crisis strikes, the employees will leave and the managers will lose their income.”

“You’re exaggerating, professor. I mean, how could that possibly ever happen,” opposed Bryan.

“Mr. Bryan, you and your colleagues here could very easily become homeless in a year or two and then you’ll be glad for any help you receive.”

Bryan laughed heartily. “Me? Homeless? I’ve got a house, a wife, a lover and a car. Nothing can bring me down.”

Silver and Jack laughed as well. “We’ll always win!”

And while the managers moved into the other “old” room, Albert and his classmates were heading to the cafeteria for lunch.

## Chapter 3 - Lunch in the cafeteria

*12:30 PM, Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016, university cafeteria*

Albert knew that he needed to get himself something plentiful to eat and drink before the vital meeting with Professor I'm Busy.

He entered the cafeteria, which he regularly visited not only for lunch but also for breakfast and dinner. There were only about forty students eating in a spacious room that could fit up to two hundred people. It was one of the few places where students from various years met each other. The contrast between them was quite obvious, not only in the way they dressed but also in what they ate.

Albert loved food, he often warmly remembered his parents' cooking or how they'd visited all kinds of restaurants in hotels or on ocean liners when they travelled the world together, but now his thoughts were slipping to what precisely he was going to say to Professor I'm Busy.

John was already in the cafeteria with Marget by his side, as well as girls from the first year that Albert didn't know. Wearing pretty clothes and make-up, they were giggling as they told each other stories about their first loves. On the plates in front of them, there were steaks with fries, dessert and a juice.

Albert looked like trailer trash next to them, which he, unfortunately, actually was. He was chewing on his pizza and watching the carefree ladies, feeling a little envious. He'd like to travel again just as he had when he was a kid and he would love to have a girlfriend that pretty by his side.

He hadn't really had one yet. In fact, he was a virgin, the last one in the fourth year. Today he had finally decided to try his luck with one of the pretty young students. Kate, who he regularly saw in



the cafeteria about four times a week in a huddle of girls from the first year, was the one he fancied the most. He'd been planning to approach her for a while now and today he felt like finally seizing the opportunity, so he wrote a letter for her.

Albert walked towards the girls' table. "Hi, my name's Albert and here's a letter for Kate."

Kate, a slim girl in a red dress with hair tied in pigtails, thanked him. She opened the envelope and took out the paper that read: Hi, my name's Albert Simon, my phone number is 777 777 777 and my email is albert.simon@gmail.com. I would like to take you out on a date, let me know if you're interested.

Kate finished the letter, looked up at Albert and said: "Thanks for the letter, Albert, but I have a boyfriend and I'm far too busy to date trailer trash."

The rest of the girls started giggling at the sight of Albert standing there.

"But I'm going to be very, very rich and famous," insisted Albert.

The girls' laughter intensified.

"When you're rich and famous, certainly, let me know. Come on, let's take a picture together, you future superstar," said Kate and everyone burst into laughter once again.

"Okay," said Albert and took a picture with Kate.

## Chapter 4 - The project introduction

*1 PM, Wednesday, 13th April 2016, professor Robson's office*

After the unfortunate encounter with Kate, Albert finally set off to meet professor Robson.

He timidly walked towards his office and was about to knock on the door, when he burst into laughter. Somebody had replaced the name tag on the office door with a paper tag that read: Mr. I'm Busy. After this, Albert calmed down a little and shook off some of his nervousness.

Seconds after knocking on the door, he heard "come in" from within the office and stepped inside. The professor's office seemed very interesting. There was a desk, comfortable chairs and displays full of lots and lots of various awards that the professor had obtained.

Family photos rested on the desk, some of them of the professor's daughter Maria, who usually accompanied Robson to all kinds of social gatherings and events. Maria was the kind of person that everyone turned to look at when she walked down the street, both men and women. Albert had never met her in person, he only knew her from the professor's stories.

"Good afternoon," greeted Albert.

"Good afternoon indeed," responded Robson. "Please, have a seat. Would you like some water?"

"Yes, please," said Albert and the professor put a glass of water in front of him.

"How can I help you?" Robson began the conversation.

"Professor Robson," Albert tried to gather some courage, "I have come up with an idea that would make your job easier."

“I don’t understand...”

“Sir, I know that besides this university, you also give lectures at several companies and elsewhere. I was thinking that we could record your lectures on video and spread them between the students more effectively.”

“I still don’t understand, can you elaborate?” the professor was clearly confused.

“I simply think that online education is the future. That the lectures of you, other lecturers, professors or teachers will be recorded and the students will play them anytime they need. Everything that can be done online will be online, which will save time for all of us. Nowadays, your lectures can reach one hundred people at most and there is no record of it anywhere, but if we make this work, well, everyone in the world will have access to them.”

“And what do I need to do to make that work?” asked the professor. “Nothing, I’ll bring a camera to your next lecture, and we’ll record it.”

“Excellent, I’m looking forward to getting it going. Sometimes I get really tired from all the lecturing, I tell you, not to mention the students that barely pay any attention at all. And the commuting gets exhausting as well.”

“I almost forgot,” said Albert. “We need to make sure you look really smart in the video, so please wear a suit or something so it looks professional.”

Albert’s prior experience with education was far from good. He had attended an ordinary public elementary school and high school, but he had received the best education from his father when they travelled the world together, as he had got to see all kinds of monuments but also visited real business meetings.

When Albert went to third grade, he could count better than all the other kids. On one occasion he finished a math test faster than everyone else and the teacher called him out in front of the whole class. “Albert, the test was supposed to take thirty minutes and you finished it in ten. I will not have that here. If you’re so smart, then tell me how to count an integral.” Naturally, Albert couldn’t know that as a ten-year-old in the third grade.

“I don’t know,” he almost whispered.

“You see! You have an F then,” triumphed his teacher and the whole classroom burst into laughter.

Unfortunately, this particular teacher stayed with Albert until he went to the sixth grade and therefore his aversion to school and authority grew into unspeakable dimensions.

Most of all he enjoyed travelling and coming up with innovative and unconventional methods in education. He knew that teachers and their pseudo-authorities influenced the lives of thousands and thousands of children in the world, being it the constant belittling, or the lack of support for their dreams and talents, and sometimes even the threats to those who do not succumb so easily. There had to be, of course, great and amazing teachers too, but unfortunately, Albert only knew those from other people’s stories. He was constantly asking himself the following questions:

Why do children have to spend time at a school they hate?

Why do they have to meet teachers they don’t like?

Why do they have to learn things they will never use in real life?

Why do they have to memorize so much useless theory?

Albert had a dream that pupils and students would have lessons from all schools recorded on videos and be able to access them any time,

repeatedly if they needed to, and combine such a form of education with going to school for consultations.

The current situation was that if they did not understand what they were learning or didn't take notes at the time, they then had problems learning, the teachers got angry with them instead of helping them out, and their parents became angry with them for their bad grades.

## Chapter 5 - The dorms vs the house of new Trends

*1 PM, Wednesday 20th April 2016, House of new trends*

In the evening Albert was supposed to meet John at his place.

“Hi,” said John. “Welcome to our lair, I’ll give you a tour.”

The house, named after the popular course, was even furnished and equipped similarly to Clain’s lecture rooms. A spacious terrace, hammocks, beanbags, bar stools, plasma screens, the new trends in a nutshell. John’s parents had bought it for him. Two students lived in each of the eight rooms, including David with Susan. The biggest one was inhabited by John himself.

The big garden outside the house was transformed every Tuesday into a space for notorious parties with regular participation of about seventy people, therefore almost all of the students knew each other not only from Wednesday’s lectures.

As the host of these events, John had a great feeling for which people he should invite, there were students from across all of the school years, be it the fourth-year seniors or the girls from the first year that Albert knew from the cafeteria, including Kate.

Albert lived at the university campus, which had a bit of history. In the room, furnished and equipped only with the most essential things, six people lived together, sharing three bunk beds, one desk and three chairs. The bathroom was in the hallway. The students living on the university campus were nicknamed the trailer trash. While inhabitants of John’s house had dinner gatherings and banquets every day, trash-students ate cooked sausages, bread and other cheap groceries.

Besides that, the students in John's house had a maid that washed their clothes and generally took care of their wardrobes. Trash did their own washing and their clothes were cheap and worn-out. On the weekends, Albert worked a part-time job at the local McDonald's, but it was still difficult for him to be able to afford groceries and accommodation.

"Albert, would you like to live here?" asked John, showing him a luxurious bedroom, bathroom and a kitchen equipped with all kinds of modern appliances and a fridge full of a variety of groceries, including strawberry ice cream and Albert's favourite pizza - prosciutto in the freezer.

"I'd love that, John, but you know that I could never afford it."

"We're friends so don't worry about it. You'll pay me when you're able to," said John. "It's five hundred dollars per month, I'll be counting," he noted nonchalantly and sipped his drink.

Albert was excited. He ran to his trashy room, packed his things and returned to the house right away.

The first night in the luxurious room was an experience for his whole life. Alone in his new bed, he remembered how just a day ago he was falling asleep in a bunk bed in the trailer-trash room along with five other students.

## **Chapter 6 - Party in the New Trends house**

*7 PM, Tuesday 26th April 2016, House of new trends*

Albert had been in the house for almost a week now, living alone in a bedroom for two and he knew that sooner or later, there would be an opportunity and he wouldn't be alone anymore, as he was going to ask his future girlfriend to move in with him. He was still thinking about Kate, even though he knew that it was never going to happen and he would need to find someone else.

Today, just like every Tuesday, there was going to be the weekly party. Albert knew that today's party was very important for him.

He wanted to announce the deal he had made with Mr. I'm Busy and that therefore it wouldn't be necessary for students to personally attend some of the lectures anymore, so he prepared fliers that read: "You can party or sleep instead of attending the lecture, I will record it for you, you can play it anytime you need. Albert."

Albert also prepared a list of all of the students that regularly attended Professor I'm Busy's lectures. At the party, he wanted to meet every single one of them and explain the brilliant deal he had made with the professor. He believed that once he told them, there wouldn't be a soul that wouldn't appreciate it.

The list included a hundred names, starting with Andy and Alex and ending with Zilafa. He knew that not every one of them attended John's parties, but he knew that eventually, the information would reach everyone at some point.

Albert went to see Andy, who was resting in a hammock at that moment.

Andy was John's favourite and his right-hand man. He was wearing a black t-shirt with Johnny's picture printed on it and shorts.