

James – The shrinking giant of American Ingenuity.

Jim. He likes James, but most of the time, in the professional world, he's a Jim. Straight, simple, one syllable. You can't fuck it up, and you can't shrink it any further. Unless someone decides to call him J. But no one *will* call Jim J because he's an authority in this business - a billion dollar company who bought out a million dollar building to fit its thousands of employees operating hundreds of machines. Jim is expanding. He started in a basement on El Regresso Street with him and his, now deceased, two best friends. They both died in car accidents at separate times but in the same place - on a bridge from Brooklyn to Manhattan. The Williamsburg Bridge. The one that isn't there anymore.

Jim's business has grown into three satellite locations throughout the United States. Only in the United States because what Jim sells is a matter of high security. If anyone else got a hold of Jim's technology, he'd not only be out of business, but out of a country. Jim is in the business of shrinking.

He sells his product direct to consumers so that anyone in America can use it. Some have used his technology to start their own business. The most profitable of them being moving companies. *Shrink your furniture for a price and move it yourself.* Their slogans advertise a deal that's hard to pass up; but it isn't the shrinking that consumers should be concerned about - it's the expansion. Jim has tried to fix that problem for years. He and his partners never considered the other half of the equation, but since their death, Jim can't seem to let go. They may have both

drowned inside their cars under a bridge, but their reputations will not follow that same disappointing path.

Jim is in his elevator - rising to the top floor of his new complex. He's got a few cars in his bag, ready to go if he wants to flee. There's new furniture in his office, but he tends to only enjoy about 40% of what his assistants pick out for him; there are a hundred more versions of each new sofa piece waiting for him in the closet.

You shrink some furniture, move it, blow it back up and now it's missing a few atoms. No one really cares – you can't see the difference, you can't feel the difference and if you're a consumer paying out of pocket for a brand new technology, you can't fathom the difference. But if you shrink cars, you blow *them* back up and *they're* missing a few atoms – people begin to care.

Car accidents are the leading cause of death now in America. Due to a rise in alcohol sales, increased speed limits, and fully functioning cruise control; but not to a few missing atoms. Who is going to notice a few missing atoms?

The second leading cause of death in America is depression.

That hasn't changed for years.

Jim is expanding his business. Every so often he loses a few employees. People die. It happens. Who notices if a few Adams don't show up to work one day? Jim notices. Who cares if every time Jim rents a new floor, he has to renovate the old one? Every new product released gives way to the death of its predecessor. With each and every new update to an already sold out revolutionary shrinking product, Jim still can't identify the problem of his missing atoms.

The elevator stops and waits for Jim to exit. He does. He tells everyone that he likes the furniture, his desk, and he loves the glass wall where he can see the entire city below him. From this high it all looks so small and he tells himself that he is worth nothing. *He* is small. Up here, so high, he must look as small as the 87' Camaro he's currently fingering in his right pocket.

This world is shrinking.

The third leading cause of death is a heart attack.

Shrink a few employees, immigrants, horses and jockeys; blow them up and they're missing a few atoms. But Jim's company keeps growing. Jim and Jim's business keep expanding. The United States of America want to award him with a medal or some ribbon that'll pardon him from any crime he'll ever want to commit. He helped save the economy. Jim brought America back from destruction. He single-handedly revolutionized the automobile industry. He put depression into the number two slot of America's leading causes of death. That deserves immunity from sin, don't you think?

Where's Jim's assistant? The one who calls him James?

She's been found dead in the water.

*Seems her car went over the bridge. Some malfunction we're unaware of, but we can have someone new up here in a moment, Jim.*

Shrink a few cars, lose a few atoms, and no one notices.

"It's time the world paid attention to the little things," Jim says. I'm going to fix that, Jim thinks. It's all about expansion, Jim reasons.

*The board will be here in an hour, Jim.*

He fingers another V8 engine in his left pocket.

“Please, call me J.”