

Simon & Seth

~ A Parable ~

There once was a publisher named Simon and an author named Seth. And Simon was a very great and powerful publisher whose wares spread across the Earth. And Seth was a wise and seasoned author of half-score tomes.

Each time that Seth cast his ideas forth between covers, he grew wiser and more experienced. And it so happened that he put forth a manuscript called *Permission*, and Simon did publish it, and Lo!, it did become a best-seller.

And it was the Gift of Seth the Author that each of his books was like a flower—a beautiful unfolding of ideas—and he had cultivated a most striking garden. And like a flower, each book contained the seed of the next. And it was the Gift of Seth the Author to find the most fertile seed in each of his works, to nurture it and fertilize it, to water it and keep it warm, and in a few months, a new manuscript would bloom.



One day Simon the Publisher, having a bestseller in *Permission* that had been translated into many tongues and spread throughout the land, and knowing that Seth the Author was cultivating a new flower, said unto Seth, "What do you have for us next?"

And Seth the Author smiled and said one word: "*Virus*."

And Simon recoiled. "We do not wish to spread a virus."

And Seth said unto Simon, "I shall create two flowers this time, and the first flower I shall give away freely, and it will spread throughout the Land of Net, and the second flower will be identical to the first, except carried in a beautiful casing. People will see the first flower and, upon seeing it, will desire to own the beautiful display copy, and we will be handsomely rewarded for our clever-

ness and generosity giving away the first flower and selling the second." And Lo!, the Face of Seth did glow, from his shaven chin to his shaven pate, like a lightbulb illuminated.



But Simon did not glow. He consulted his Wise Men, and they cautioned Simon that the Land of Net was thick with thieves, and once the *Virus* was unleashed there, it could never be stopped, and no one would purchase a case-bound flower if they could but pluck it from the Net for free.

And Simon looked with disfavor upon Seth, and offered unto Seth riches if would not do this thing. But Seth the Author stood firm his ground. Unable to sway him with riches or threats, Simon the Publisher did release Seth from his bonds, and washed his hands of this *Virus*.



And so Seth the Author— cast out of the Temple of Word—set about on his own to unleash this *Virus*. He created the first flower, and gave it unto the Land of Net, where it did, indeed, spread throughout the world, carrying the Ideas of Seth to the far reaches of the Globe. And with his own meager resources, Seth created the beautiful case-bound flower, which he placed into the Mighty River of Commerce. And Lo!, it did sell.

The Wise Men, it turns out, were not so wise after all. Seth hath created a buzz in the Land of Net. People drew close to his ideas like moths to flame. They lusted in their hearts to possess this beautiful flower and to display it in their homes and places of business. And so it was that the lovely case-bound flower—produced by Seth from his own modest stores—did become a bestseller.



Upon seeing the success of the beautiful *Virus*, many publishers beseeched Seth the Author, asking "May we produce yet a third flower, for the masses do clamor for it, but have not the means to acquire your beautiful case-bound version? We shall create a more modest frame for the lovely *Virus*, and we shall distribute it far and wide."

And Lo!, Seth did smile.

A publisher named Hyperion came forth and opened his vaults, laying many mounds of gold at the feet of Seth the Author. And Seth released his flower unto Hyperion at ten-fold the original offer of Simon the Publisher—even though Hyperion could but pluck this flower for free from the Land of Net.

And what, dear readers, did this *Virus* contain—this flower which hath made Seth rich beyond dreams and shaken the powerful Simon to the core? Why, this *Virus* was a lovely story about how you could give something away for free in the Land of Net, and be rewarded many times over from the River of Commerce. Thus endeth one story, dear readers, and beginneth the next.



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