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 **From** the edge of the illuminated 3D conference table Zach began with an uneasy composure. "Gentlemen, so not to waste anymore of your valuable time, I will get right to my demonstration. First of all, I want to thank Mr. Gomez for doing such an outstanding job on presenting the economic benefits of

The world map under the glass table surface slowly dissolved to gray as Mr. Rubin adjusted a control from his command center. "Comrades don't forget to switch your headsets back on," he said and then pushed on a switch.

solar." Zach turned and took the large solar panel off the stand.

Zack continued, "Son Source has been working four years on the negative temperature coefficient of solar panels. Basically, what that means is that the cooler environment a solar panel is located in, the more power it can put out."

The two Arabs started speaking to each other in Arabic and then Mr. Obaid Bin Naimi asked. "So, in a country like Saudi Arabia where it is hot your solar panels would not be that be good?"

"That would be true of the old style," Zach replied and then turned the small solar panel around to show the aluminum fins on the back. "But with my venting system I can get solar panels to run twenty to thirty degrees cooler with natural air flow. Additionally, by building solar sites over water the cooling effect can be as much as forty degrees."

"But in most places that are hot and have a lot of sun there is usually not much water." Mr. Naimi stated with a firm rebuttal.

"That's true. But, by drilling deep holes into the earth's crust we can cool the solar panels with forced air flow. I know

this will work because of temperature information obtained from subsurface missile silos in Nevada."

Mr. Rubin immediately interrupted, "Excuse me, gentleman! Mr. Slenski is not here to speak about weapons of mass destructions. He is speaking off the record and I don't know why this information is needed for a solar demonstration."

Carlos whispered something into Zach's ear as Mr. Rubin ranted on. "Mr. Naimi you can assure Prince Nasser that we are presenting new science technology not weapons or threats to your country. WMD's that the United States of America has and who they are pointed at is information that a common person like Mr. Slenski would never have access too."

Zach glanced down at his notes. He had several infrared satellite photos showing small circular locations in Nevada that showed thirty degrees difference on the desert surface. It was information he had obtained from the internet. Zach felt blindsided by what Carlos had just whispered to him. "Well, gentleman, I'll jump ahead and do the wattage demonstration."

There was an uneasy silence in the room as Zach stood there dumbfounded. Finally he replaced the larger panel with the smaller one. He turned the easel so the new prototype panel was facing the window. The intensity of the light bulb increased twofold. Carlos came out of the shadow to assist Zach. He was carrying a green tank that had the word **Freon** on the side. "You want me to give it a blast now?"

"In a minute and be careful when you spray this smaller panel. There is less area so it can't take a large blast of coolant," Zach spoke quietly, making sure he wasn't heard across the table.

Carlos moved to the back of the easel with the bottle of Freon and whispered. "Don't forget to point out about the bronze reflective windows on the Sears Tower. That tinting could be blocking out a lot of the sun light."

"What?" Zach said as he tweaked the easel. "You should have informed me about the tinted windows before this

meeting," Zack spoke softly and with heavy discontent, now being blindsided for the second time.

"Sorry about that," Carlos squatted down to get in position.

Bothered by all the whispering both Arab men got up out of their chairs and came around the table. "How much more power do you get with this venting and don't distort the facts?" Mr. Obaid Bin Naimi asked as he pointed at the shiny metal fins on the back of the large panel now on the table.

"Typically about twenty per cent but with additional cooling there is another big increase," Zach answered without too much deception.

"We just overheard that we might not see that much of an increase because of the tinted windows?"

"I just found that out myself," Zach answered with some anxiety.

Mr. Naimi spoke to Prince Amer Nasser in Arabic and then asked, "You mentioned mounting solar panels over cooler places. Have you done any tests like that?"

"Yes, at a site in Texas. Those tests have averaged an additional thirty five percent increase." Zack replied with inflated facts. The truth was it was just a few panels on the roof of Son Source lab.

The two Arabs spoke to each other in Arabic for about two minutes and then Mr. Naimi said in English, "We appreciate your demonstration but a thirty five percent increase along with having to have the panels over water or missile silos is not an alarm for us.

"An alarm, what do you mean?" Zack asked with discouragement.

"A concern would be a better word. My English is not always that good," Obaid replied. "We also think the tinted windows are a good representation of overcast or smoggy days. Oil is much simpler! You drill a hole in the earth and the energy comes out; regardless of sunlight, weather or temperature."

Zach's stomach tightened! This meeting was a last effort to raise needed investment capital. "Could I at least finish my demonstration?" Zach pointed to the small one by one foot solar panel. "With you or without your investment this new panel will revolutionize the entire energy field."

"No one understands the energy markets like OPEC." Obaid replied firmly.

"Can I please finish my demonstration?" Zach begged.

"We have been to plenty of meetings where cars are supposed to get a hundred miles to the gallon. The latest scam is those giant windmills that self destruct or fall apart before they are even paid for. We don't feel threatened nor will we be blackmailed with your claim of an efficient solar world." Mr. Naimi pointed at the small panel.

"Solar doesn't have any moving parts like a wind turbine and they'll operate for over thirty years." Zach argued.

"That's not true, another lie. Solar farms don't put out power at night so the panels only are working at most fifteen years of your thirty year claim. We have heard all these falsehoods before," Mr. Naimi rebutted.

Mr. Gomez was turning the panel in and out of the direct sunlight. He wasn't paying that much attention to the conversation. He was astounded that smaller panel seemed to be putting out the same power the large one did."

Zach turned his sales pitch up to full speed. "If you two would just give me a few minutes." Zack drew in a deep breath. "I have found a way to increase the voltage of each individual solar cell by cutting and stacking the silicon wafer material. It is like taking a 1.5 volt flashlight battery and turning it into a 6 volt car battery!"

"Cars have a 12 volt battery, another exaggeration. Don't lie to us!" Obaid rebutted.

Zach swallowed hard. Mr. Obaid was right and knew his facts. "Old cars used six volt battery. I'm just using this for an example. You know an analogy."

"Yes, I know what an analogy is!" Mr. Obaid's eyes moved 136 137 away from Zach toward the light bulb. "I think it is brighter. That small panel is stressing the bulb." 138 "It should be about the same power. But, take note that the 139 panel is smaller." Zack was facing the table and Mr. Gomez 140 what at his side fine-tuning the easel directly into the sun. 141 "No, the bulb is much brighter then when it was hooked up 142 to the larger panel." Mr. Naimi argued. 143

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Mr. Rubin moved a switch on his control panel and then stood up. "The light bulb seems much brighter to me also."

Zach turned and looked at the test bulb. "Gentlemen, a light bulb is not an accurate way to measure the power of a solar panel. Solar panels are measured in watts not volts." Zach wondered if somehow Carlos had rigged the demonstration.

"So cooling this panel will give it even more power?" Obaid Naimi asked as he carefully examined the red and black wires that ran between the panel and test bulb.

"Yes, cooling will generate more power." Small beads of sweat broke out on Zach's forehead—something wasn't right.

"So the cooling fins are an improvement and stacking the cells is another improvement?" Mr. Naimi asked as he pointed at the back of the quad panel.

"Yes, I'm now stacking the crystalline cells like you do with batteries in a flashlight." Zach tried to swallow but his mouth was dry. It felt like it was over a hundred degrees in the room.

Mr. Rubin came forward to close the sale. "Gentlemen, there are a few minor bugs to be worked out, but look at that light bulb. You are looking at an ultimate power source." Mr. Rubin took the large panel and held it up. "Look at this old panel and then look at that one. Think of them as if they were weapons. More power in a smaller package is what ended the last world war. Don't you want to be in on this revolution?"

Carlos felt the sales pitch and was exhilarated. He wanted to do his part to help close the deal. With the green bottle of Freon in hand he sprayed the back of the small panel. "Don't do that!" Zach rushed toward the easel so to unhook the red and black wires. It was too late! The blast of white vapor was already spilling onto the Aluminum fins.

"Look, look!" Obaid Bin Naimi pointed at the light bulb.

The bulb was getting too bright to look at. Zach knew the demonstration would be short lived when some of the cells fractured and the bulb dimmed. He froze and mentally prepared to explain about thermal contraction of silicone when Carlos sprayed the panel with another blast of Freon. The bulb turned brilliant white and then went dark instantly. Zach knew the panel was destroyed.

Prince Amer Nasser straightened up and in plain unbroken English said, "We can offer fifty million dollars for ten years."

Overwhelmed by the panel failure and now an unbelievable offer Zach took a chair. He leaned forward and with his elbows on the glass ran his fingers through his thinning hair. I bet they think the bulb burned out? I have to explain about the thermal fracturing and self destruction caused by rapid cooling. But, with fifty million dollars for ten years I'm sure I could get that problem resolved?

"Fifty million seems like a fair offer!" Mr. Rubin stated and then laid the larger panel back down; it knocked over some of the gold war game pieces. "But, fifty million for five years would be a more acceptable offer. Ten million dollars a year to sit on an energy breakthrough like this is reasonable." Mr. Rubin pointed at the small panel on the easel.

"Fifty million for eight years would be an offer the consortium might consider," Prince Amer Nasser countered.

"I'm sorry, but to sit on a scientific breakthrough like this for eight years is asking too much."

"Seven years!" Prince Amer Nasser bartered forcefully.

Mr. Rubin acted like he was adjusting the control on the side of the noise canceling headphones. "I'm sorry I didn't hear you. Did you say six years?" Mr. Rubin paused for about ten

seconds and then said. "Solyndra Power, over in Oregon is interested in this new technology."

"Solyndra Power?" Prince Amer's tone changed.

"Yes, they are a private company that wants to mass produce solar panels in the United States. They just got a five hundred million dollar federal grant. They have contacted me about these small solar panels." Mr. Rubin poured on his deceptive sales pitch.

"Let us talk for a moment." Prince Amer Nasser motioned Obaid Bin Naimi to follow him. The two Arab men walked toward back of the room.

As they moved toward the darkness Mr. Rubin spewed out more potent words. "You two have a talk. Saudi Arabia can't compete with the United States. I just want to let my Muslim friends in on the next power revolution of the twenty first century!"

Cautiously Carlos approached Mr. Rubin and whispered. "I got another twelve volt bulb in my toolbox. When that test bulb flashed open it really got their attention. I'll go get it." Carlos tossed his noise canceling headphones next to the control panel and hurried out of the room.

Zach knew that it wasn't the bulb that had burned out. The excessive coolant Carlos had applied fractured one or two entire cells. The same as how a small crack in a windshield will run from temperature fluctuations.

Prince Amer Nasser approached from out of the shadow. "Mr. Slenski, would you accept a fifty million dollar deal for six years?"

Zach fought back his gut reaction to be fully truthful. "Fifty million dollars is more than enough for research and development. It should be a lot less than six years to work out any issues. Optimistically within two years Son Source could be mass producing guad panels."

"Two years to start mass production is not what we want to pay fifty million dollars for!"

240 "What?" Zach mind was jerked in an entirely new direction. 241 "It seems that Mr. Philip Rubin has not filled you in on all the details." 242 "No, maybe not?" Zach rubbed his forehead. So much was 243 happening he was having a hard time sorting truth from 244 deception. 245 "You do know what black gold means to Saudi Arabia?" 246 "Not really? I'm still at a loss why I'm dealing with 247 248 representatives from OPEC." Prince Amer pulled Zack back into the shadow of the 249 oversized conference room. "Did Mr. Rubin inform you that he 250 will keep most of the fifty million for himself?" 251 "What?" Zach's brain had been bounced around all 252 morning—now it halted to an abrupt stop. 253 Prince Nasser lowered his voice so that not even Obaid Bin 254 Naimi could hear. "If you like you can call me James. That is 255 the name I used when I attended USC. I graduated with a 256 doctorate in world economics and have a minor in religious 257 studies. I know all about the American profit motives and..." 258 Prince Amer Nasser words stopped when Carlos busted back 259 into the room with a blue and yellow package in his hand. 260 Carlos pulled his headset back on and took an automotive 261 262 12 volt bulb from the sealed package and replaced the burned out demo bulb. Everyone's attention was directed at the new 263 dim glowing bulb. 264 Zach was dumbfounded that any illumination came from the 265 bulb. He now knew that somehow the presentation display had 266 267 been rigged. Emerging from the dark part of the room into the light Zach discerned. I can't be to be part of this deception. But 268 fifty million dollars would.... 269 270 Carlos grabbed the green bottle of Freon and blasted the back of the panel. The intensity of the light increased twofold 271 Carlos grinned at Zach. "That's a 75 watt halogen light bulb. Do 272 you think it will hold?" 273

"I'm not sure?" Zach needed facts; he coyly examined the red and black wires. It didn't look like another power source was connected into the circuit.

Coming from the back of the room Prince Amer said, "Okay, you all have proved your point. It is obvious that this panel has the potential to revolutionize the solar energy field." Prince Amer Nasser paced back and forth; in and out of the cool darkness. At the window it felt like the heat had been turned on high—everyone was waiting.

In the stillness Mr. Rubin moved the large solar panel off the table and then repositioned the gold pieces. He waited just the right amount of time to ask. "So fifty million is your final offer?"

"Yes, that would be the final offer. Fifty million dollars for ten years!"

"Your offer before that was fifty million and six years for zero production." Mr. Rubin said while he pushed some jet fighter pieces around on the glass table. He then turned up a control; the gold war pieces were setting directly above the Middle East section on the 3D world map.

"Okay six years! But that includes zero research and development for those six years also," Prince Nasser sent a hard glare across the table—he didn't like being played.

"It's now up to you Mr. Slenski. Just say the word and you can walk out of this room a millionaire." Mr. Rubin stated in an imposing forceful tone from behind his control console.

Zach glared back over the table and the illuminated map started to dim. "So let me get this straight! I would get almost fifty million dollars for not mass producing my quad panels. Plus, I could not even do any R and D for a six year period?"

"That's sort of how it would go. You would get five million dollars today before the banks close. Tomorrow you could start on a six year sabbatical to spend time with your two children and beautiful wife."

"I couldn't do that. The most important thing to teach my children is to make the world a better place."

"What about your wife? Many well attention altruistic inventor, environmental types have had their wives run off with the family preacher or their therapist for not understanding their needs."

"What do you even know about my family?" Zack practically yelled.

"I do know that you are a good family man. And like every good husband want to be the head of the household and respected for that."

"Yeah that's right! So let's leave my family out of this." Zack felt better, now that he had put Mr. Rubin in his place. So, I would get five million dollars today and the remaining forty five million in six years?"

"Yes, I will make you a millionaire five times over before the banks close today." Mr. Rubin spoke with bold confidence and then added. "Your wife will be thrilled that she won't have to worry about what college your son attends."

Zach moved both his hands to his head and massaged at his temples; so much was coming at him all at once. Family was important—as was saving the environment.

The Arab's whispered to each other in Arabic. They felt played—the Middle East was at the boiling point and at the verge of a threesome tribal war.

Carlos had already folded his hand to Mr. Rubin for a work visa the month after the Twin Towers were taken down. Chicago had the best Trisomy 21 research hospital in the world and getting permanent residence into the United States at that time was impossible. Without even giving it a second thought Carlos slowly sprayed Freon. The intensity of the bulb increased to where it couldn't be directly looked at. Mr. Rubin was pleased with his loyal recruit.

It was a high stakes' poker game. Everyone was holding their cards waiting for Zach to fold. Mr. Rubin was very skilled at reading people; he had played this game so many times. He knew for certain that Zach would fold for the money—any man or woman would.

"Take the offer Mr. Slenski. Don't be a fool." Mr. Rubin said assertively—ready to reel in another weak soul.

Zach's moved his hands away from his head. "After six years how many millions would I get to ramp up research and development."

"After this afternoon we would be done. You'd be a millionaire and the Middle East would have a six year safety net. You will have done something that is for the good of the world."

"Are you bull shitting! You would keep forty five million dollars for arranging an investment capital meeting? No way in hell would I do a deal like that?"

"Here is a little piece of advice for you and that misconception that you are going to save the planet. It won't happen! Wealth and power will always trumps good intentions. That is how it was in the beginning, is now and always will be. That is a divine fact that mo man can change," Mr. Rubin spewed out.

"Maybe so, but I cannot sit on a scientific breakthrough like this! I get it about OPEC and other oil producing countries concerns." Zach pointed to his side at the solar panel. "But, we are talking about a much needed and clean abundance energy source. Not only for the United States but the entire world. While it may slow down the amount of oil we buy from OPEC. Our children will benefit and our grandchildren will benefit by not depleting the oil reserves." Zach took in a deep breath. "I just can't take an offer like this."

Prince Amer Nasser immediately spoke up. "Mr. Slenski, it's not about cleaner air or depleting the oil reserves. It is about people all over the Middle East. Do you have any concept on what effect your panels will have if the production of oil falls by just ten percent?"

"I don't have a clue! I'm a scientist, not an economist. I'm sorry, but I think I will wait and pray for a different offer. Maybe Mr. Rubin can arrange a meeting with Solyndra Power since they're located in the United States."

Carlos hurriedly jotted **Forget about Solyndra Power** on the back of one of the colored graph handouts. He casually turned the paper so that only Zach could see what he had written. Zach was more confused.

"Well then! I've got a plane to catch and I don't want to waste anymore time," Prince Amer Nasser said and then hastily headed toward the door.

Obaid Bin Naimi had has eyes closed, head down and had been mumbling to himself, *Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar, death to all infidels* 

The security agent opened the door. The Arab men were escorted down the darkened hallway past the seven portable booths to the private elevator. Mr. Rubin slammed both fists down on the table. "You fool! All you altruistic environmental types are alike. You all are a bunch of anal retentive misfits! You all have some grandiose idea that you can fix the world with technology." Mr. Rubin shot a death glare across the table at Zach. "You just cost me forty five million dollars and a foothold in the Muslim world." Mr. Rubin stomped out of the room and ordered the security guard to follow him.

Zach and Carlos were alone. "You just upset the wrong person," Carlos said in a low warning voice.

"Upset the wrong person! I didn't fly up here from Texas to have someone buy me off. Who the hell does this Mr. Rubin think he is?"

"He's a very powerful person. He's like a wild beast when he gets mad. You don't want to mess with him!" Carlos kept talking in a nervous lowered voice.

"Mess with him!" Zach was sorting out what had transpired for the last forty five minutes. This was not like any venture capital meeting he'd ever had. "I vaguely know about Solyndra Power up in Oregon. I'd be willing to meet with them. Could you setup a meeting with them?" \*

Carlos glanced around the room he knew that it was probably bugged, or possibly that the headphones had hidden microphones. He wrote on the back of a piece of paper: Solyndra Power is filing for bankruptcy. Mr. Rubin already bilked millions from them.

Zach read the words off the paper and then mumbled, "Now I get what Mr. Rubin is up to." Zach wadded up the message and threw it at the solar panel. "He's one of those hedge fund manipulators. Probably an arms dealer too."

Carlos put his index finger up to his lip. "Not so loud. This room could be bugged."

"I don't care!" Zach replied in a defiant tone. "When I get the quad panel perfected, I might expose Mr. Rubin. I'll tell the news media how he tried to blackmail the Arabs and tried to prevent clean environmental power from being developed."

Carlos Gomez was now shaking his head from side to side. "Quiet, don't say another word about exposing him."

"Why shouldn't I?" Zach snapped back.

Carlos leaned over and whispered, "Because he would go after your family."

Zach's stomach knotted. The look on Carlos's face was serious—dead serious.

Carlos changed the discussion by asking about the quad panel flaws. Zach was honest and filled him in on how the cells always fractured when they were cooled off too rapidly. Carlos hypothesized that the tinted windows somehow skewed the demonstration. For the second time he sprayed the aluminum heat sink to the point where the fins were covered with a layer of white frost. The 75 watt halogen bulb popped like a camera flash!

Zach and Carlos had their heads down examining for fractures when Mr. Rubin reentered the room. "Mr. Slenski, I caught up with the Prince and Oil Minister, they still want to

make a deal. Say the word and five million dollars will be in your bank account today. This afternoon you'd be going back home a Texas a millionaire."

Zach didn't look up or react to Mr. Rubin. He kept inspecting the quad panel.

Carlos thought Zach was playing it cool and holding out for a better offer. He held his breath as Zach unclipped the red wire and then the black wire and then placed the panel into the foam cutout in the aluminum case. Finally Carlos blurted out, "That's a good offer!"

Zach now had control, knowing that he had a lot less to lose than Mr. Rubin. He closed the aluminum case and didn't even glance over at Mr. Rubin. "Carlos, earlier you hypothesized the bronze window tinting was cutting down on the UV rays."

"Yeah, I did some research beforehand. The tint manufacture claims that fifty percent of heat energy is blocked. That was their sales pitch to reduce the air-conditioning load on the Sears Tower. They also claim that harmful ultraviolet rays are blocked so to protect office furniture."

"Could you send that data to me?" Zach grabbed the case and brazenly exited as though Mr. Rubin wasn't even there. A security guard followed Zach out the door down the hallway and opened the door to the small elevator.

"Damn it!" yelled Mr. Rubin. "You didn't say anything about Solyndra Power did you?"

"No, sir. I didn't say a word." Out of the bottom of his eye Carlos saw the piece of wadded up paper underneath the easel. "We were just spraying more Freon on the prototype panel. There is a major problem with it."

"I don't want to hear about any problems! Do whatever you have to do to get that sanguine human element onboard with us!" Mr. Rubin was using the L shaped stick to pull the war pieces into a pile. He had another meeting to prepare for.

Below on the observation floor Zach stood silent and closed his eyes in the warm comforting glow. The sun was reflecting

483	hard off of Lake Michigan. Most all the tourists were at the west
484	bank of windows taking photos of the other dwarfed Chicago
485	skyscrapers. The intensity of the reflecting sun was shedding a
486	different light onto Zach.
487	