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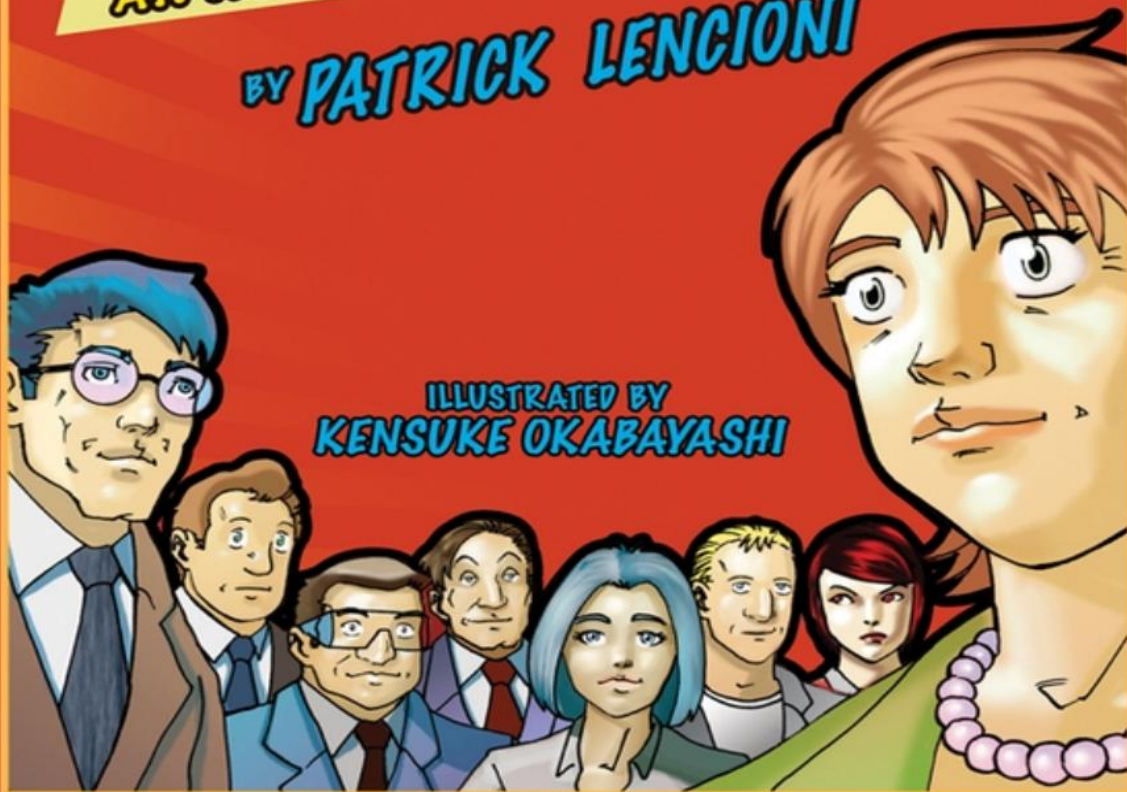
# THE FIVE DYSFUNCTIONS OF A TEAM

(MANGA EDITION):

AN ILLUSTRATED LEADERSHIP FABLE

BY PATRICK LENCIONI

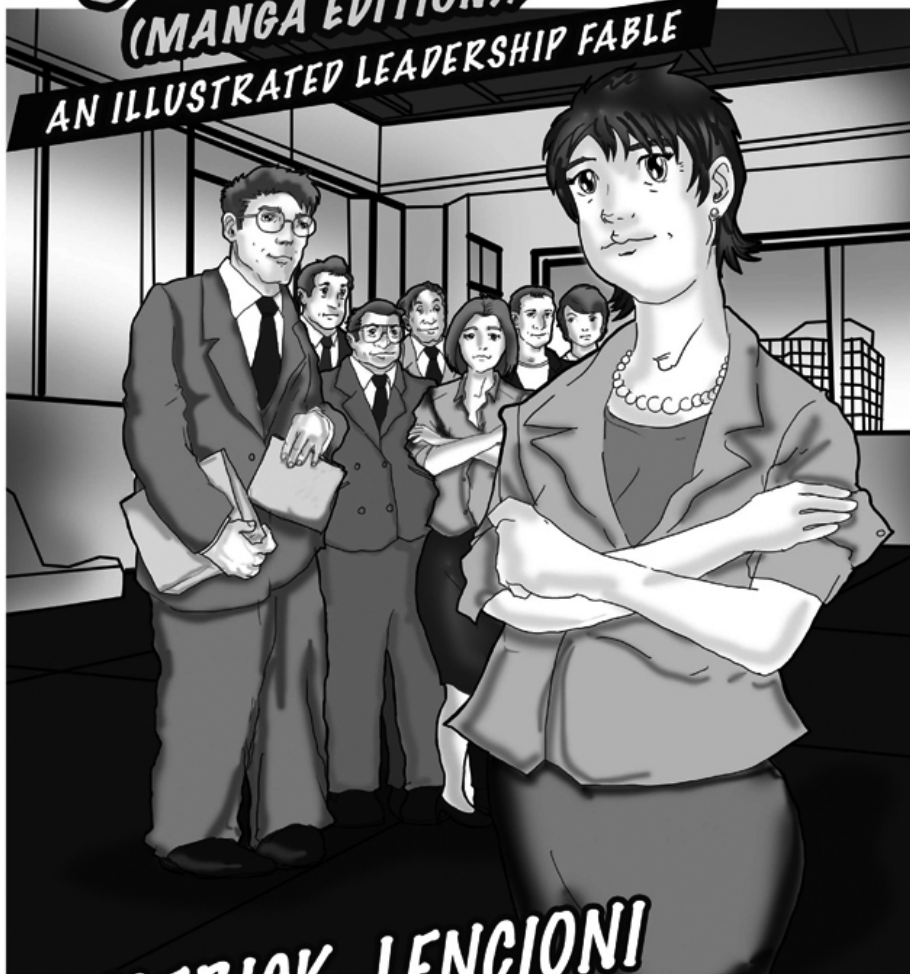
ILLUSTRATED BY  
KENSUKE OKABAYASHI



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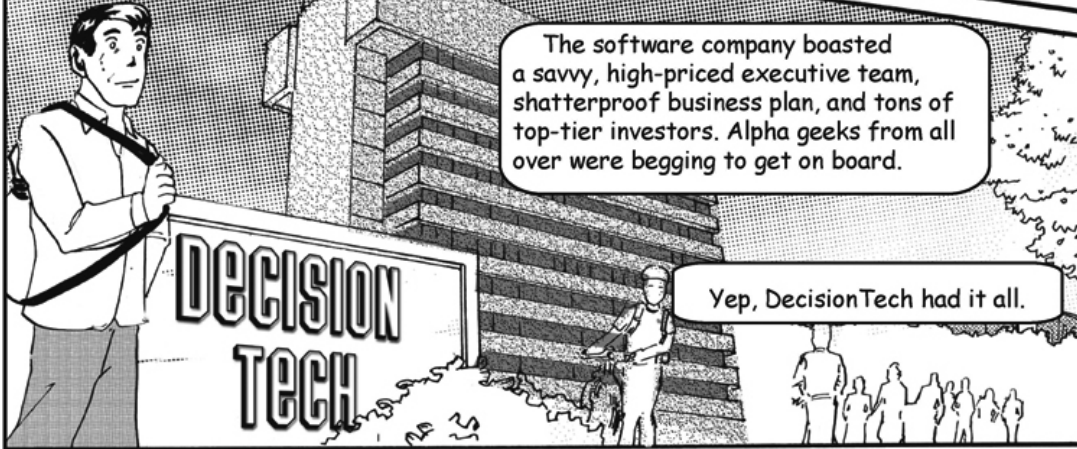
# ***PART 1***

## ***Underachievement***

Situated near San Francisco in a little coastal town called Half Moon Bay, DecisionTech wasn't in Silicon Valley. The Valley's mostly a state of mind, though, and in that sense DecisionTech was pure Silicon.

The software company boasted a savvy, high-priced executive team, shatterproof business plan, and tons of top-tier investors. Alpha geeks from all over were begging to get on board.

Yep, DecisionTech had it all.

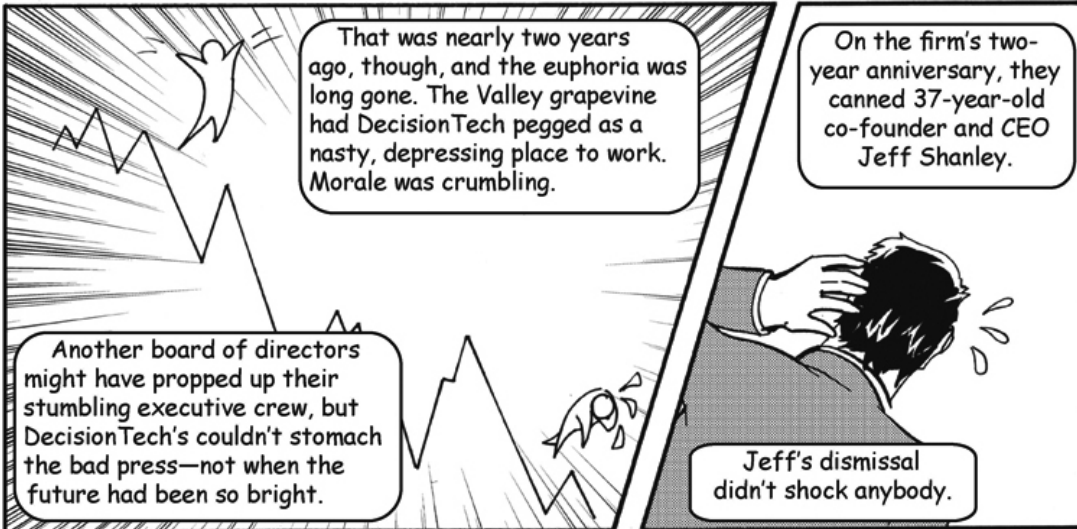


That was nearly two years ago, though, and the euphoria was long gone. The Valley grapevine had DecisionTech pegged as a nasty, depressing place to work. Morale was crumbling.

On the firm's two-year anniversary, they canned 37-year-old co-founder and CEO Jeff Shanley.

Another board of directors might have propped up their stumbling executive crew, but DecisionTech's couldn't stomach the bad press—not when the future had been so bright.

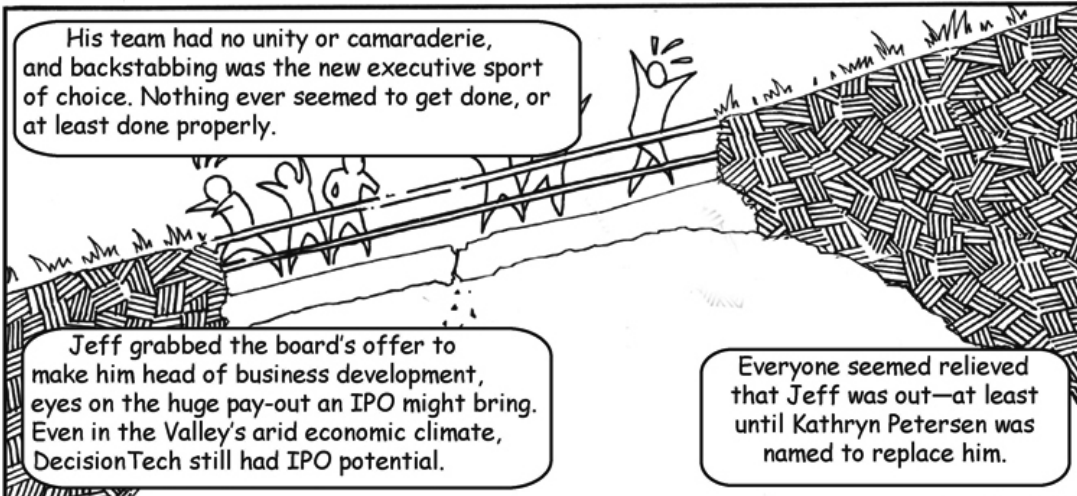
Jeff's dismissal didn't shock anybody.



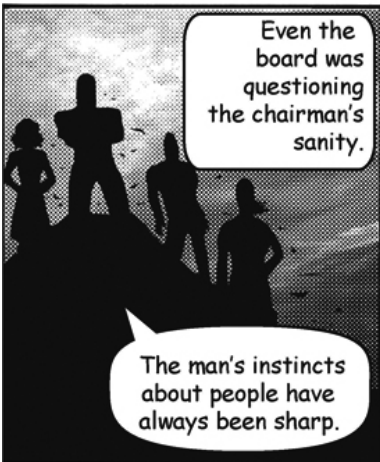
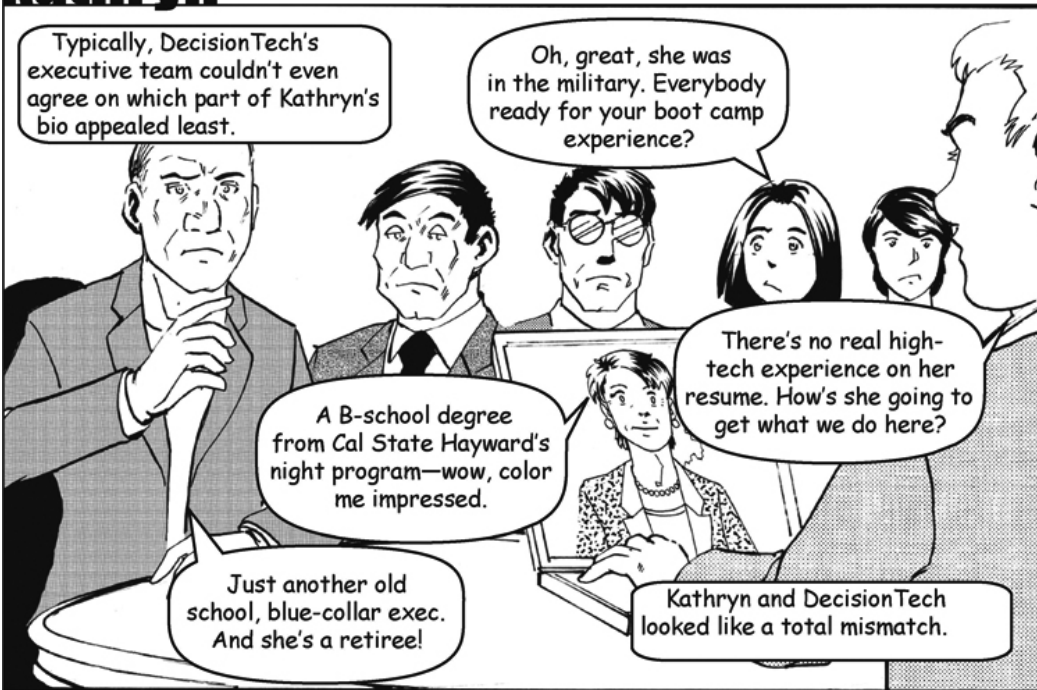
His team had no unity or camaraderie, and backstabbing was the new executive sport of choice. Nothing ever seemed to get done, or at least done properly.

Jeff grabbed the board's offer to make him head of business development, eyes on the huge pay-out an IPO might bring. Even in the Valley's arid economic climate, DecisionTech still had IPO potential.

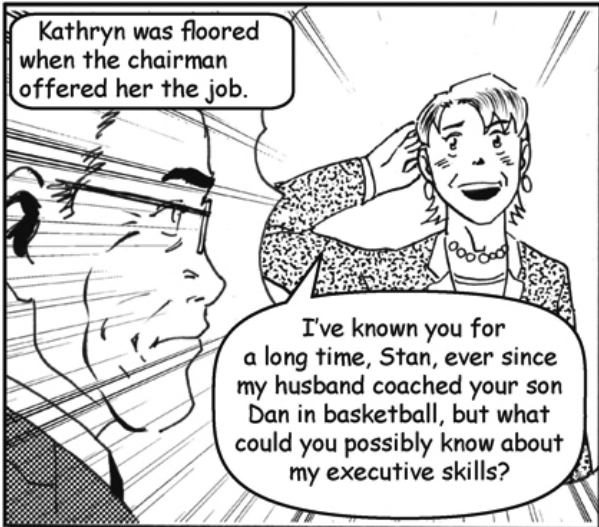
Everyone seemed relieved that Jeff was out—at least until Kathryn Petersen was named to replace him.



# kathryn







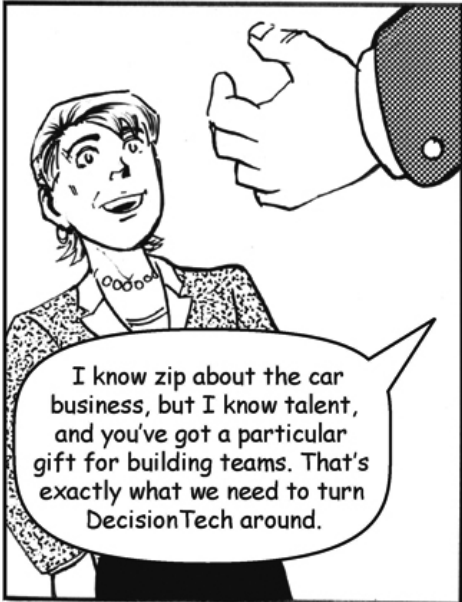
Kathryn was floored when the chairman offered her the job.

I've known you for a long time, Stan, ever since my husband coached your son Dan in basketball, but what could you possibly know about my executive skills?

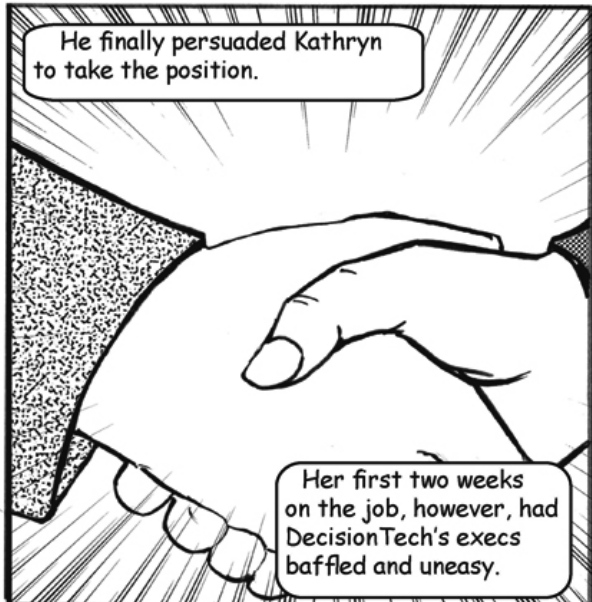


As it turned out, quite a lot.

I've been tracking your career for years. I saw how you turned that U.S.-Japanese JV auto manufacturing plant in the Bay Area into one of the most successful cooperative enterprises in the country.



I know zip about the car business, but I know talent, and you've got a particular gift for building teams. That's exactly what we need to turn DecisionTech around.

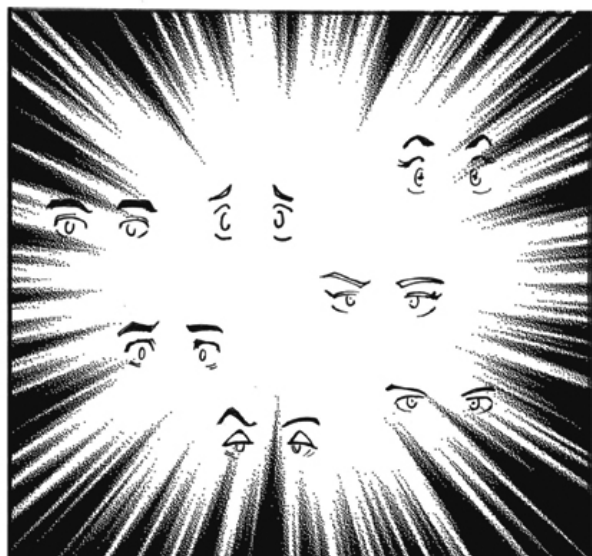


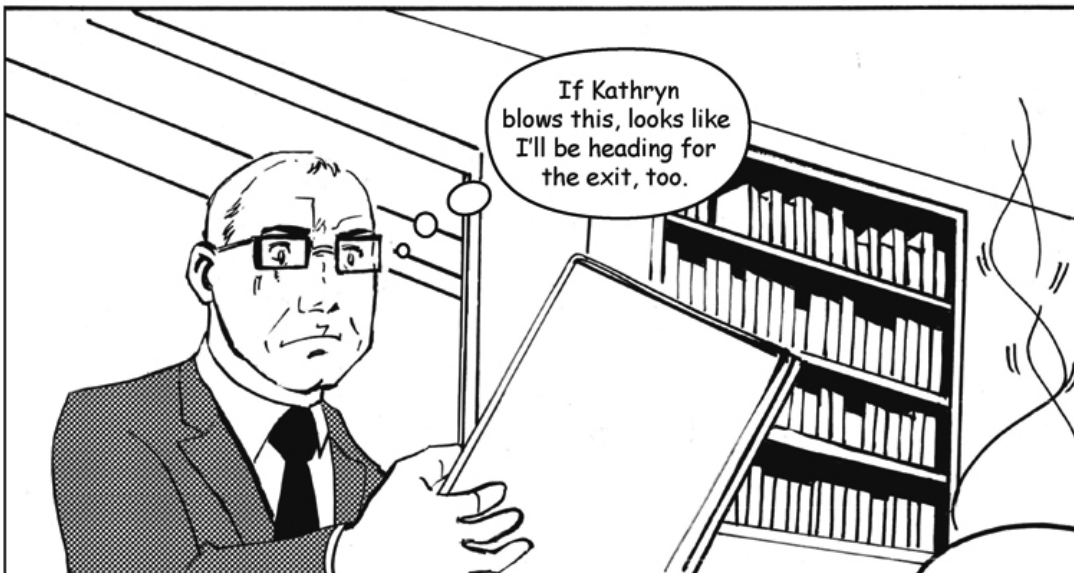
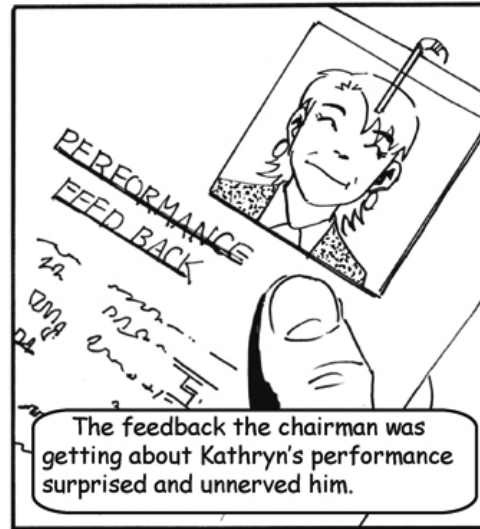
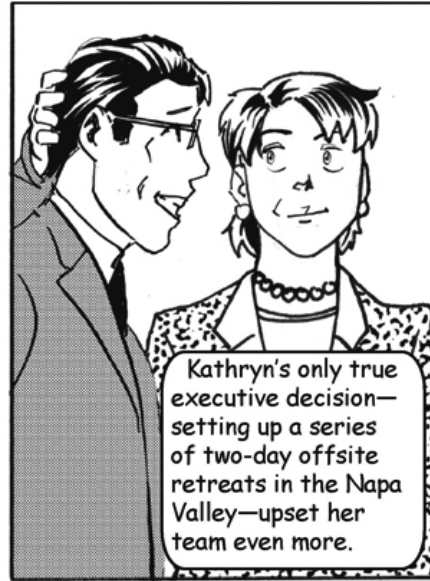
He finally persuaded Kathryn to take the position.

Her first two weeks on the job, however, had DecisionTech's execs baffled and uneasy.

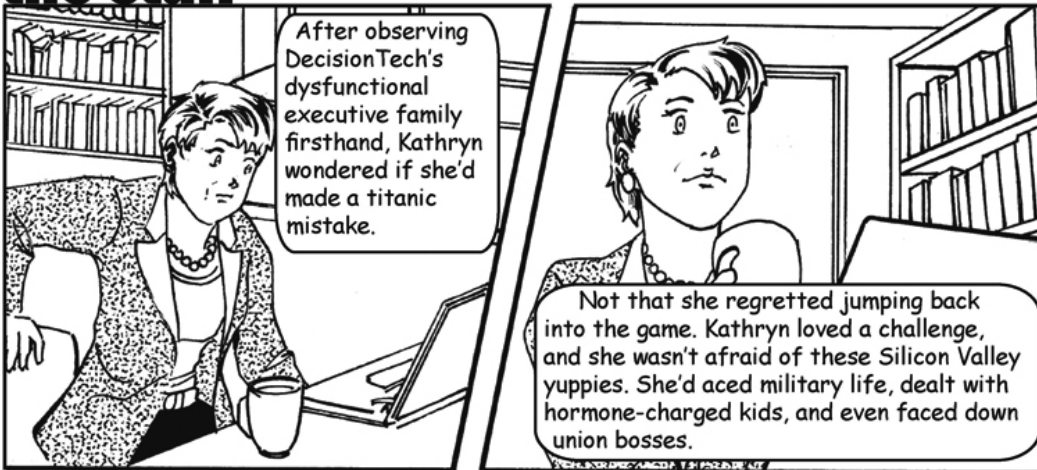


Aside from attending a welcome reception and interviewing her direct reports, Kathryn just walked the halls, chatted with employees, and observed meetings.



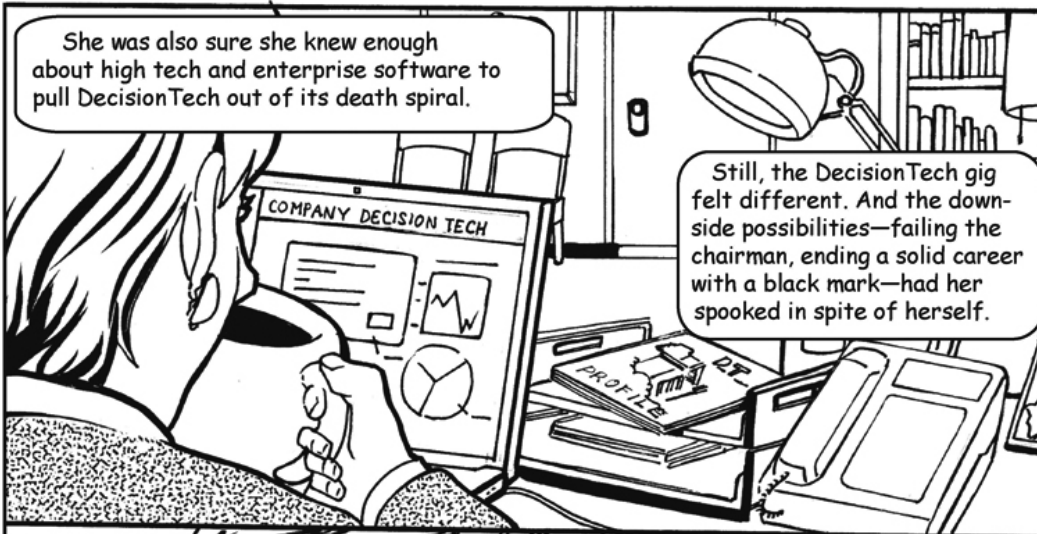


# the staff



After observing DecisionTech's dysfunctional executive family firsthand, Kathryn wondered if she'd made a titanic mistake.

Not that she regretted jumping back into the game. Kathryn loved a challenge, and she wasn't afraid of these Silicon Valley yuppies. She'd aced military life, dealt with hormone-charged kids, and even faced down union bosses.



She was also sure she knew enough about high tech and enterprise software to pull DecisionTech out of its death spiral.

Still, the DecisionTech gig felt different. And the downside possibilities—failing the chairman, ending a solid career with a black mark—had her spooked in spite of herself.



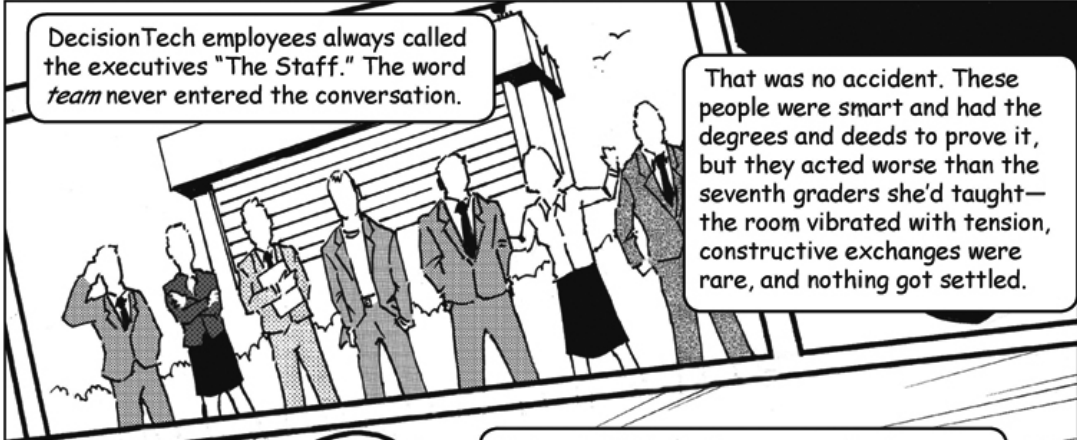
And maybe not knowing too much was a plus. Her staff's techno-mastery actually seemed to intensify their paralysis.

Well, Jack Welch didn't have to know about toasters to make GE work.

Kathryn's executive team, however, would prove to be even more screwed up than anyone had imagined.



DecisionTech employees always called the executives "The Staff." The word *team* never entered the conversation.



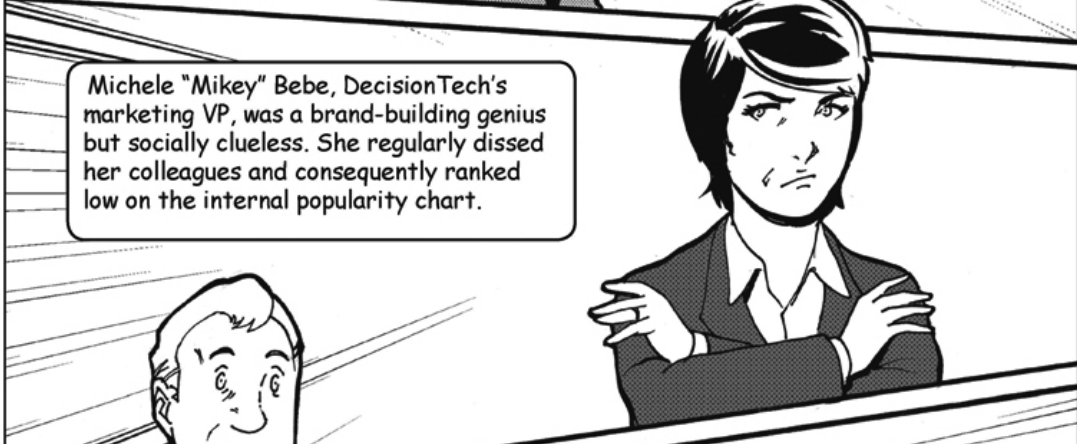
That was no accident. These people were smart and had the degrees and deeds to prove it, but they acted worse than the seventh graders she'd taught—the room vibrated with tension, constructive exchanges were rare, and nothing got settled.

Yet as individuals, they seemed to be mostly reasonable, well-intentioned people.




Former CEO Jeff Shanley was a wizard at conjuring up venture capital and wooing talent. As a manager, however, he was definitely a poster boy for the Peter Principle.

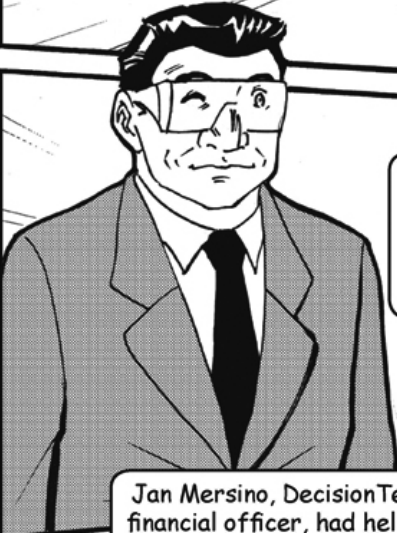
Michele "Mikey" Bebe, DecisionTech's marketing VP, was a brand-building genius but socially clueless. She regularly dissed her colleagues and consequently ranked low on the internal popularity chart.




Martin Gilmore, a DecisionTech founder and the company's chief technologist, was a Brit whose brilliance was overshadowed by his tendency to make snide comments at meetings and contribute little else.



The head of sales was Jeff Rawlins, whom everyone called JR. Although JR was a sales veteran he was a bit flaky, rarely following up on his promises with action.



Carlos Amador headed up DecisionTech's customer support. Carlos was helpful, modest, listened intently and spoke rarely, but always had something pertinent and constructive to add when he did.



Jan Mersino, DecisionTech's chief financial officer, had helped Jeff raise the cash that launched the company. Thoughtful and thorough, Jan treated the company's money like it was her own.

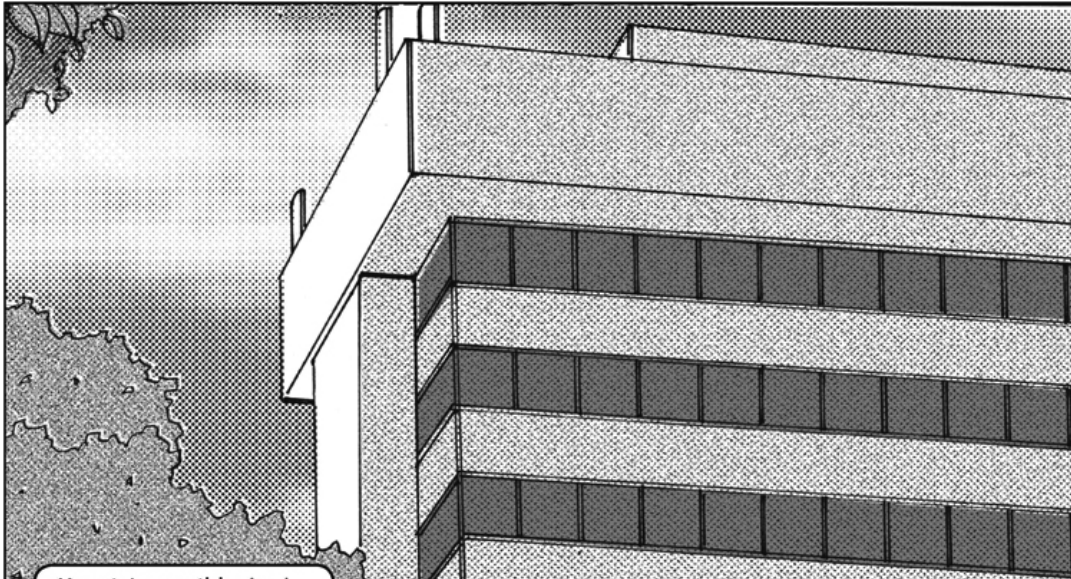


COO Nick Farrell was a former field operations VP at a big Midwest computer maker. DecisionTech's sputtering start had pre-empted Nick's primary duties, bruising his ego and frustrating him immensely.

## ***PART 2***

# ***Lighting the Fire***

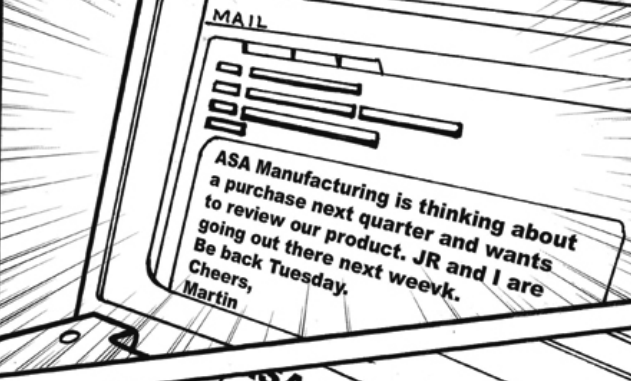




Martin's email looked innocent enough, but Kathryn immediately spotted its incendiary potential.



Addressed to the whole executive team, the message said:



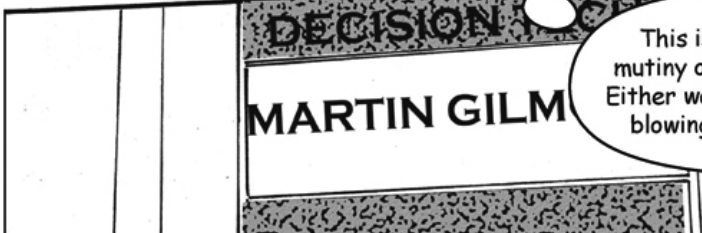
ASA Manufacturing is thinking about a purchase next quarter and wants to review our product. JR and I are going out there next weevk. Be back Tuesday. Cheers, Martin



Kathryn sighed. No mention of the date conflict with the Napa off-site. No request to miss the retreat's first day and a half, and no apology.



ASA Manufacturing is thinking about a purchase next quarter and wants to review our product. JR and I are going out there next week. Be back Tuesday. Cheers

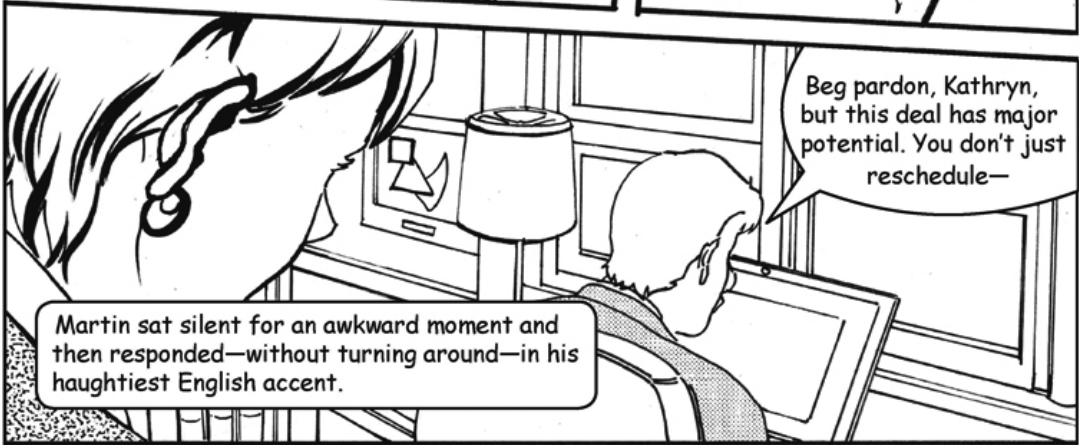


This is either a low-key mutiny or conflict avoidance. Either way, Martin, you're not blowing this off so easily.



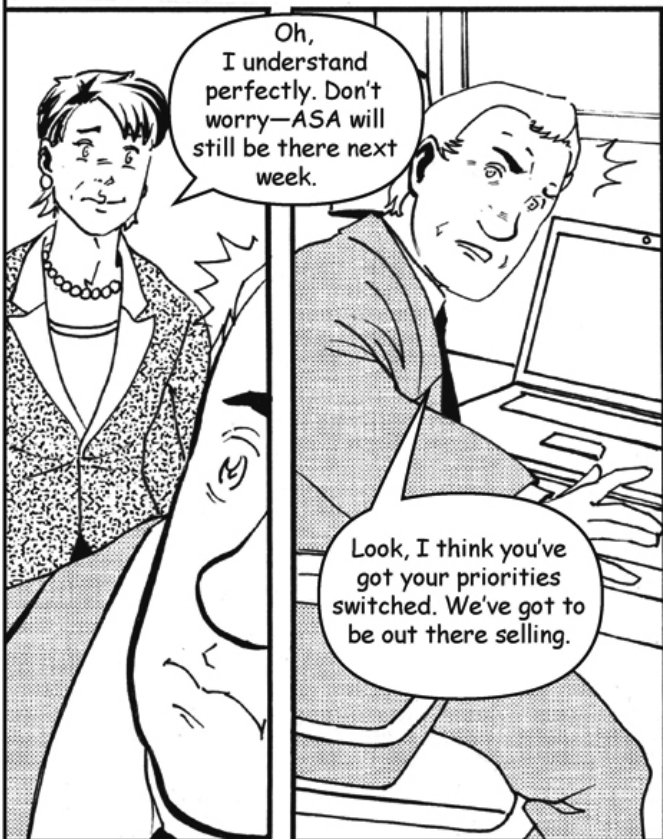
Excuse me, Martin.

I just saw your e-mail about ASA—that's great news. Unfortunately, you'll have to postpone. The off-site, remember?



Beg pardon, Kathryn, but this deal has major potential. You don't just reschedule—

Martin sat silent for an awkward moment and then responded—without turning around—in his haughtiest English accent.



Oh, I understand perfectly. Don't worry—ASA will still be there next week.

Look, I think you've got your priorities switched. We've got to be out there selling.



I've got just one priority right now, Martin—getting our team's act together. If we don't, there won't be anything to sell.



