

## 9. LURE

John, an 18-year-old college freshman, tackled a history assignment that required research about people who affected change through civil disobedience. Sitting at his computer in his dorm room, John trolled through websites of rights, advocacy, radical, and militant groups. He followed a winding path that led him to groups like Greenpeace, Human Rights Watch, the National Urban League, the Black Panthers, and Students for a Democratic Society. He went on to sites of radical religious and nationalist groups and organizations like Lashkar-e-Taiba, RSS, National Liberation Front of Tripura, Hindutva, and Bodu Bala Sena. John eventually ended up on the website of the radical group, FundoAuctoritas.org.

John's family is only slightly religious and does not attend services regularly, nor do they discuss religious beliefs or moral values at home. John, a typical angst-ridden and confused teenager, feels the pull towards a belief system--any belief system--that can make sense of the world for him. As John made his way through posts on FundoAuctoritas.org, he was excited to find a local group that claimed to meet clandestinely twice a month to plan "events".

John went to the website every night for the next few weeks. The site, however, was actually constructed and maintained by the FBI to find people with terrorist-leanings. He eventually started blogging about the perceived injustices in his school, his family, and his community. An FBI agent, posing as a local member of Fundo Auctoritas, started discussing upcoming "events" with John. The agent fed John fictional but convincing-looking news stories that noted the exploits of Fundo Auctoritas.

It took a few more weeks for the agent to convince John that Fundo Auctoritas's causes were just, and that he should participate in the next planned "event": a bathroom bomb to be detonated in a local Dallas mall. The agent told John that the explosive device would rupture pipes and flood the mall on a busy Saturday afternoon. As people fled, they would be showered at the exits with propaganda for Fundo Auctoritas, dispensed from containers concealed on the mall's roof. The containers were triggered to deliver their payloads 30 seconds after the bathroom bomb. The agent told John that the bomb might hurt people, even though that wasn't the primary intent. John knew (as did the FBI agent with whom he had been conversing) that the mall in question was the hangout for the popular clique from his old school: a group of teenagers he hated for bullying and embarrassing him most of his school days. He assured the agent that he was OK with some collateral damage to further the just causes of Fundo Auctoritas.

When John arrived at the pre-arranged meeting place outside the mall to assist in Fundo Auctoritas's event, he was met by FBI agents and charged with felonies under the Patriot Act.