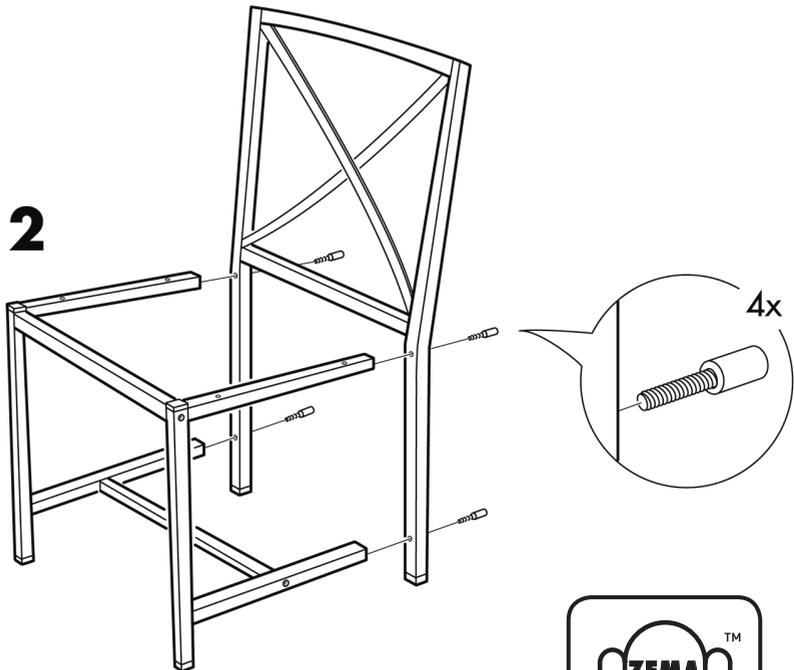
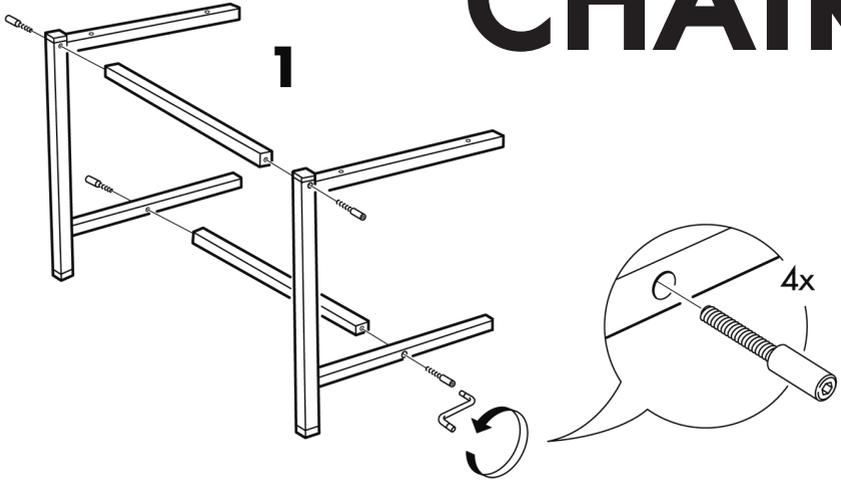


# THE DREAM CHAIR



## 4. Carl Jung's Wet Dream

Winter J Zema IV rests his palms on the smooth polished surface of his vast empty desk. He is alone for the moment. On his desk a bank of little lights blink on and off in time to the clicking of the air conditioning. If he spins in his chair one hundred and eighty degrees he can see the whole of downtown Los Angeles sprawled out fifty-three floors below him. Gods live in the clouds.

Winter J is a thin, tweezers shaped man with smooth, greased back hair, conical chin and black bullet eyes. He slides around corners rather than walks and he has a reedy, squeal of a voice that he has to lift to be heard. He thinks he's special. His ancestry should be enough to prove this – but in his mind he's even more special than that. At thirty-five, courtesy of his Pop's impromptu demise, he is the youngest ever president of the company. So there's one up on his ancestors, right there. But that won't be enough for Zema Junior. Ambition is in his blood. I asked Carl Jung what he made of this, and he was candid in his reply:

'You might contest,' he's speaking Swiss don't forget, 'that Winter J suffers from acute attention deficit disorder; a father who didn't spend time playing games with him as a child. May be even some physical or mental abuse. I, however, prefer to subscribe to the theory that he's just a spoilt little shit...'

A paper-thin monitor scrolls up from a gap in the desk and Lydia, his Personal Assistant, appears full screen all lipstick smiles and big mascara eyes. The make up barely disguises her contempt.

'Graham is still waiting Mr Zema, can I tell him he can come on in?'

'Okay, okay,' Winter J sighs and leans back in his chair. Moments later Graham edges into the room. Another figure has slipped unannounced through the door behind Graham. He wears white dungarees and whistles the star-spangled banner under his breath. Opening the toolbox by his feet he unravels a scroll of vinyl letters and proceeds to re-imagine the title on the door: Winter J Zema, CEO, Zema Vision Corporation: A new name, a new era, a new Vision.

Graham gulps dryly. His face is on fire and his lips have gummed together. He is one of Winter's 'scouts'; a team of research and development hacks commissioned

to seek out and analyse new technologies – anything, anything at all as long as it fits Zema's specific brief: New, exciting and guaranteed to make a barrel load of cash.

'Graham, Graham – give me something. Dear God, give me something.' Winter J leans his chin in the cup of his palm and sets his eyes on stun. 'How hard can it be?' Graham's heart pounds behind its bony prison bars. He hates his boss when he's in this kind of mood. Like it's his fault the world has dried up on good ideas – there's only so far you can stretch a rubber band.

Now, the generous scriptwriter would construct a scenario a little like this: Morgan, the creator, the artist, by happenstance should meet Winter J Zema IV, the patron, the finance. Perhaps they should contrive to be sat at the same café table one wet November morning, or share the time of day in the buffet car of some great rattling train. But that's unrealistic isn't it? That's a dream and this, so I'm lead to believe, is reality. Anyway there's no easily contrived link between Wealdstone and Los Angeles that this writer can readily summon to mind. So, you'll have to do with the following turn of events:

For three long years Morgan has been lost in a wilderness of self-doubt. One moment, thanks to his discovery, he is spinning upwards on the promise of what might be, the next he is crushed flat by the weight of realisation. No one comes calling. Not really, not seriously. Oh, yes of course there's lots of well-intentioned interest. But only in the same way a small schoolboy is fascinated by a sideshow of dissected animal brains in glass jars. And with every faint and unrealised promise Morgan's heart aches a little more. Why can no one see the possibilities? His courtiers are a strange cornucopia of rubbernecking wasters: Neighbours and opportunists, journalists and amateur enthusiasts. Rejection becomes not so much a fear but a way of life. And Marianne, for one, is unimpressed. There's a brief moment there (around five o'clock one Tuesday afternoon last May) when she thought maybe, just maybe, she had been hasty to call her husband a pointless dreamer. But that apparition soon passed. So Marianne barely speaks to him now. She overcooks his supper, she snags his washing and she rams the vacuum into his feet. And all the while Winter J Zema IV is waiting there for him. The one man rich enough and foolish enough to breath life into Morgan Sweet's stupid, stupid little dream.

So, Winter J grabs the slim folder from Graham's clammy hand. It's the last folder in a pile of folders that the young assistant is making a poor attempt to juggle.

