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To whom it may concern:

Jon has been a reader of my work and we have been acquainted for some time, but we were able to spend some serious time together in January 2009, when circumstance brought him to Tallinn, Estonia, where I had been living.

Jon impressed me immediately. He is a very good writer--smart and funny--and also, and most important, curious. He does not hesitate to investigate and see for himself, one consequence of which is his impressive collection of passport visas. The time he has spent traveling makes him a sensitive analyst of culture and people. His firsthand experience with the joys and troubles of the world--I am thinking here of his extremely valuable and harrowing emails sent from Bombay during the terrorist attacks there of last year--has burnished his work. (And from Jon I learned that "Bombay," rather than "Mumbai," is still preferred term among many Indians.) Rather than trying to push an idea, Jon is more concerned with questions. It's an admirable trait, and, thus, I would like to recommend him to you for consideration.

He is a young man, of course, and needs the opportunity to grow. I have faith that, with the right direction, he will be someone you will be proud to have helped along. He is an interesting, talented, and passionate writer, and a fine and decent person.

Very sincerely yours,

Tom Bissell