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3:02-CV-02310 SEC V. CAPPEL

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12	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
13	FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
14	BY FAX
15	SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION. Case No. (LSP)
16	) COMPLAINT
17	Plaintiff, )
18	j ,
19	ILSE CAPPEL, )
20	Defendant.
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22	Plaintiff Securities and Exchange Commission (Commission) alleges:
23	SUMMARY
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25	1. This case involves a massive financial fraud at Peregrine Systems, Inc., a publicly
26	traded San Diego-based software company. During the fraud, Percegine filed with the
727	Commission materially false financial statements for at least eleven quarters, covering fiscal
Mys.	years 2000, 2001, and the first three quarters of fiscal 2002. In one portion of the wide-ranging
H	COMPLAINT-1

fraud, defendant IJse Cappel, then the Senior Treasury Manager at Peregrine, engaged with other persons, including Peregrine's Chief Financial Officer, in a scheme to conceal Peregrine's difficulties in collecting its accounts receivable. Those difficulties arose because Peregrine recorded revenue on contingent sales and other non-binding arrangements it entered into with customers. Cappel and the others concealed the accounts receivable problems by, among other things, selling fictitious receivables to banks and improperly accounting for cash collected at quarter end. In addition, while Cappel possessed material nonpublic information about the fraud and the company's true financial condition, she illegally sold more than 15,000 shares of Peregrine stock.

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2. By engaging in the acts alleged in this complaint, Cappel violated, or sided and abetted Peregrine's violations of, the antifraud, books and records, internal accounting controls, and reporting provisions of the federal securities laws, and unless enjoined by this Court, will continue to do so.

#### THE DEFENDANT

Cappel was employed at Peregrine from 1993 until she left the company in June Cappel held various positions at Peregrine, including Senior Treasury Manager. Her primary responsibilities included financing accounts receivable, international collections, and forecasting cash and days sales outstanding, or DSO. Cappel is a certified public accountant (on delinquent status for failing to pay license fees) and resides in San Diego, California.

DSO is the average number of days it takes a company to collect its accounts receivable. It is an analytical tool used by financial analysts and investors to track the age of a company's aggregate accounts receivable and to assess the quality of a company's receivables and, ultimately, its revenue. The formula for calculating DSO is accounts receivable divided by sales times days in the quarterly or annual period.

#### THE ISSUER

4. Peregrine, a Delaware corporation with principal offices in San Diego, California, sells infrastructure management software. Its fiscal year ends March 31. From its initial public offering in April 1997 to the present, Peregrine's common stock has been registered with the Commission pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Exchange Act [15 U.S.C. Section 781(g)]. It traded on the Nasdaq National Market System from its initial public offering until August 30, 2002, when it was delisted. On September 22, 2002, Peregrine filed a voluntary petition for reorganization under Chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code.

### JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to Sections 21(d), 21(e), 21A, and 27 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (Exchange Act) [15 U.S.C. §§ 78u(d) and (e), 78u-1, and 78aa].
- 6. Venue properly lies in this Court pursuant to Section 27 of the Exchange Act [15 U.S.C. § 78aa] because Cappel inhabits and transacted business in this judicial district, because offers and sales of the securities at issue in this case took place in this judicial district, and because certain of the acts and transactions constituting the violations in this case occurred within this judicial district.
- 7. Cappel made use of the means and instrumentalities of interstate commerce in connection with the acts alleged in this complaint.
- 8. The Commission requests that the Court permanently enjoin Cappel from engaging in further violations; impose civil penalties upon her for participating in the accounting fraud; order Cappel to pay disgorgement, plus prejudgment interest, and civil penalties for

COMPLAINT - 3

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insider trading, and order Cappel to disgorge any other ill-gotten gains, plus prejudgment interest.

#### PEREGRINE'S ILLUSION OF SUCCESS

- 9. Following its initial public offering in April 1997, Peregrine reported 17 consecutive quarters of revenue growth through the quarter ended June 30, 2001. During this period, Peregrine's publicly reported financial results met or exceeded analysts' expectations, and the company's stock price increased from \$2.25 per share (split-adjusted) to as high as \$79.50 per share on March 27, 2000.
- stock price artificially inflated. Many of its software "sales" that were recorded as revenue did not qualify for revenue recognition under Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Beginning no later than 1999, Peregrine management engaged in a myriad of deceptive sales and accounting practices to create the illusion of growth, including secretly adding material sale contingencies—by oral or written side agreement—to what appeared on their face to be binding contracts.
- Much of Peregrine's improper revenue recognition occurred in connection with its purported software sales to resellers, also known as "channel partners." Peregrine's written contracts with channel partners typically appeared to bind the channel partners to pay Peregrine. In reality, the channel partners' obligations to Peregrine often were not fixed, but instead were conditioned upon resale to an end-user. Peregrine personnel typically concealed these contragencies in written or oral side agreements. Although Peregrine personnel knew that the company's channel partners had not committed to purchase Peregrine's software, Peregrine nevertheless recorded these transactions as revenue.

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As a result of these improper revenue recognition practices, during Peregrine's 17 12. quarters of "growth," the company was accumulating, on its balance sheet, millions of dollars of aging receivables that Peregrine management knew the company would never collect. Large aged apcounts receivable were not turning into cash, and as a result DSO and other important indicators of Peregrine's financial health were deteriorating.

# CAPPEL SOLD RECEIVABLES TO BANKS TO LOWER PEREGRINE'S DSO

- Certain Peregrine personnel understood that the company's customers would not pay invoices generated from contingent sales and that if these purported accounts receivable remained on Peregrine's balance sheet, the company's DSO figure would increase. They also understood that if DSO became too high, securities analysts might suspect that Peregrine had improperly recorded revenue.
- Pereguine's Chief Financial Officer directed Cappel to remove receivables from Peregrine's balance sheet by selling them to banks at quarter end. Cappel followed the Chief Financial Officer's instruction. Each quarter she calculated the dollar amount of receivables she needed to sell to manage the DSO number down to the target range the Chief Financial Officer had set for her. After Cappel sold the receivables for cash, Peregrine removed them from its balance sheet. This practice, which Peregrine did not properly disclose to investors, reduced the company's DSO to the level the Chief Financial Officer prescribed, and perpetuated the illusion that Peregrine's customers were promptly paying Peregrine.

On August 29, 2002, Perceptine announced that its management "believes that the company should have accounted for its accounts receivable factoring arrangements as loans instead of sales of receivables without recourse," and that "previously reported balance sheets will be restated to reflect the loan balances, which were as high as \$180 million in past periods."

# CAPPEL SOLD FALSE INVOICES TO BANKS

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- available receivables but still needed to reduce DSO to make its target. Cappel, the Chief Financial Officer, and certain other Peregrine personnel agreed to prepare invoices for transactions that had not closed, totaling approximately \$12 million, and to sell them to a bank. Cappel then sold the bank the "receivables" that the invoices supposedly represented. As it turned out, not all of the contracts closed, leaving Peregrine with a shortfall of several million dollars.
- In June 2001, Cappel informed the Chief Financial Officer that Peregrine would miss the target DSO number because its receivables were approximately \$20 million too high.

  With the Chief Financial Officer's approval and encouragement, Cappel created a false \$19.58 million invoice and sold it to a bank. By selling false receivables to banks, Cappel and other Peregrine personnel caused Peregrine's financial books and records to overstate Peregrine's cash flow, and understate its accounts receivable.

#### CAPPEL IMPROPERLY ACCOUNTED FOR QUARTER-END CASH COLLECTIONS

17. Peregrine further falsified its balance sheet and DSO by improperly accounting for each collected from customers. Peregrine and the banks buying its receivables agreed that even after Peregrine sold the banks the receivables, Peregrine would collect the receivables and then remit payment to the banks within a certain time period. Thus there was generally a permissible lag time between the date Peregrine collected cash and the date Peregrine had to remit payment to the banks. Peregrine's practice was to reduce accounts receivable when Peregrine sold a receivable to a bank. Then, if and when Peregrine collected the receivable, Cappel would reduce accounts receivable again by the amount of the collection. When this

practice resulted in Peregrine's holding money at quarter end, Cappel called it the "double dip," because Peregrine had already taken the receivable off its books. In addition, Peregrine would fail to increase accounts payable to reflect its liability to the bank, and would record the cash as its own, instead of holding it in trust as required by the banks.

When the double dip occurred, Peregrine's reported receivables were artificially reduced, cash was artificially increased, and DSO was artificially decreased. In the following quarter, when Peregrine remitted the cash to the banks, Peregrine would reverse the double dip entries. Peregrine double dipped almost every quarter, beginning in September 1999. One of the most egregious examples of the quarter-end double dip occurred in the third quarter of 2002. On December 11, 2001, a Peregrine customer made an early payment of \$13.8 million on a receivable that Peregrine had sold to a bank. The payment was not actually due from the customer until February 12, 2002. Although Peregrine's contract with the bank required Peregrine to remit customer payments within two weeks and to hold them in trust, Peregrine did neither. As a result, as Cappel and the Chief Financial Officer knew, Peregrine's reported accounts receivable at quarter end were understated by \$13.8 million, as was its liability to the bank

## CAPPEL SOLD PEREGRINE STOCK DURING THE FRAUD

19. Between March 17, 1999, and January 2, 2002, Cappel sold 16,249 shares of Peregrine common stock for total proceeds of \$334,287, at split-adjusted prices ranging between \$14.45 and \$30.25 per share. She sold 10,116 of these shares at \$14.45 per share on January 2, 2002—just hours before Peregrine preliminarily announced disappointing results for the quarter ended December 31, 2001—for proceeds of \$146,176. The announcement of disappointing results was made after the market closed. The following day Peregrine stock closed at \$9.26.

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But the information Cappel possessed about the fraud was not disclosed in any fashion for nearly four months. On April 30, 2002, after Peregrine closed at \$6.85 per share, the company announced that it would delay the release of its fourth quarter and fiscal year financial results. The following day, Peregrine shares closed at \$3.45 on volume more than ten times greater than normal. A week later, on May 6, Peregrine announced that based on preliminary information certain transactions involving revenue recognition irregularities, totaling as much as \$100 million, had been called into question. The stock closed at \$0.89. Nearly four months later, on August 29, Peregrine announced the completion of an investigation conducted by forensic accountants and legal advisors retained by Peregrine's audit committee into accounting irregularities in the company's financial statements for fiscal years 2000, 2001 and the first three quarters of fiscal year 2002. The company further announced that Peregrine management believed that the company would reduce previously recorded revenue by approximately \$250 million during the 11-quarter restatement period. After this announcement, the stock closed at \$0.27 per share.

From 1999 through 2002, Peregrine paid Cappel a base annual salary. She was 20. also paid performance-based bonuses totaling \$9,750.

#### FIRST CLAIM

#### Cappel Violated Exchange Act Section 10(b) and Exchange Act Rule 10b-5 **Financial Fraud**

- Paragraphs 1 through 20 are realleged and incorporated herein by reference. 21.
- Cappel knowingly or recklessly participated in misrepresentations and omissions 22. of fact with the intent of materially misstating Peregrine's publicly reported financial results by selling false receivables to banks and by improperly accounting for quarter-end cash collections.

<sup>3 2001</sup> ed., p. 48, promulgated 12/22/48, as amended 8/11/51.

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abetted Peregrine's failure to make and keep books, records, and accounts, which, in reasonable detail, accurately and fairly reflected the company's transactions and dispositions of its assets.

- 31. Cappel knowingly and substantially contributed to Peregrine's failure to maintain its internal accounting controls. By doing so, Cappel aided and abetted the company's failure to devise and maintain a system of internal accounting controls sufficient to provide reasonable assurances that transactions were recorded as necessary to permit preparation of financial statements in conformity with GAAP.
- 32. By reason of the foregoing, Cappel violated Section 13(b)(5) [15 U.S.C. § 78m(b)(5)] and Exchange Act Rule 13b2-1 [17 C.F.R. § 240.13b2-1<sup>4</sup>] and aided and abetted violations of Exchange Act Sections 13(b)(2)(A) and 13(b)(2)(B) [15 U.S.C. §§ 78m(b)(2)(A) and 78m(b)(2)(B)].

#### FOURTH CLAIM

Cappel Aided and Abetted Violations of Exchange Act Section 13(a) and Rules 12b-20, 13a-1, and 13a-13 thereunder [Reporting Violations]

- 33. Paragraphs 1 through 20, and paragraphs 28 through 31, are realleged and incorporated herein by reference.
- 34. Cappel knowingly and substantially participated in Peregrine's inclusion of financial statements that were not presented in conformity with GAAP in its annual and quarterly reports filed with the Commission from the first quarter of fiscal year 2000 (the period ended June 30, 1999) through the third quarter of fiscal year 2002 (the period ended December 31, 2001).

i 2001 ed., p. 121, promulgated 2/23/79.

By reason of the foregoing, Cappel aided and abetted violations of Exchange Act 35. Section 13(a) [15 U.S.C. § 78m(a)] and Exchange Act Rules 12b-20, 13a-1, and 13a-13 [17 C.F.R.  $\S\S$  240.12b-20<sup>5</sup>, 240.13a-1<sup>6</sup>, and 240.13a-13<sup>7</sup>]. RELIEF REQUESTED WHEREFORE, Plaintiff Securities and Exchange Commission respectfully requests that this Court: I. Issue an order of permanent injunction restraining and enjoining Cappel, and her agents, servants, employees, attorneys, and assigns, and those persons in active concert or participation with her, and each of them, from violating Securities Act Section 17(a) [15 U.S.C. § 77q(a)], Exchange Act Sections 10(b) and 13(b)(5) [15 U.S.C. §§ 78j(b) and 78m(b)(5)], and Exchange Act Rules 10b-5 [17 C.F.R. § 240.10b-5] and 13b2-1 [17 C.F.R. § 240.13b2-1], and from aiding and abetting violations of Sections 13(a), 13(b)(2)(A), and 13(b)(2)(B) [15 U.S.C. §§ 78m(a), 78m(b)(2)(A), and 78m(b)(2)(B)] and Exchange Act Rules 12b-20 [17 C.F.R. § 240.12b-20], 13a-1 [17 C.F.R. § 240.13a-1], and 13a-13 [17 C.F.R. § 240.13a-13]. n. Issue an order directing Cappel to disgorge, with prejudgment interest, all ill-gotten gains resulting from her conduct described in this complaint.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> 2001 ed., p. 100, promulgated 2/13/65.

<sup>2001</sup> ed., p. 116, promulgated 7/24/97.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> 2001 ed., p. 119, promulgated 5/12/77, as amended 5/3/83, 7/9/85, 3/13/89, 3/27/92, and 6/14/96.

1 2 Ш. 3 Issue an order directing Defendant Cappel to pay civil monetary penalties under 4 Exchange Act Sections 21(d)(3) and 21A of the Exchange Act [15 U.S.C. §§ 78u(d)(3) and 78u-5 1]. 6 7 IV. 8 Grant such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper. 9 Dated: November 21, 2002 10 Glenn A. Harris (Lead Counsel) 11 Lawrence A. West Daniel H. Rubenstein 12 Neil J. Welch, Jr. 13 John Field III Nancy E. McGinley 14 Cory C. Kirchert Attorneys for Plaintiff 15 Securities and Exchange Commission 16 450 Fifth Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20549-0911 17 Telephone: (202) 942-7934 (Harris) Facsimile:(202) 942-9581 18 Local Counsel: 19 20 Nicolas Morgan 21 Securities and Exchange Commission 5670 Wilshire Boulevard, 11th Floor 22 Los Angeles, CA 90036-3648 Telephone: (323) 965-3877 23 Facsimile: (323) 965-3908 24 25 26 27

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