

A Chimera

“Robert Danzig is reckless, aggressive and independent. He is one of science’s true cowboys, always operating in an uncontrolled and unregulated manner.” Perhaps those were the characteristics that Kapil Vasana was looking for in his attempt to solve his problem.

“Problem or no problem, I would have been extremely wary of appointing Cowboy Danzig; his propensity for monumental cockups is about equal to his genius. It’s not a chance that I would have taken.”

“Well that’s academic now. We simply have to find a way of dealing with a very serious situation.”

He shrugged, “Point taken. Let’s go address the meeting.”

The two walked down the corridor and entered the secluded, secure lecture room through a side door.

Taking his place behind the podium, he surveyed the assembled top brass.

“Good morning gentlemen and thank you for arriving here at such short notice. Before I outline the nature of the problem we will be asking you to address, here is some background.”

He paused and took a sip of water.

“Dr Kapil Vasana, the Indian Minister of Science and Technology, was faced with a problem. The Ganges is ranked as one of the five most polluted rivers of the world with faecal coliform levels more than one hundred times the official Indian government limits. The pollution threatens not only humans, but also more than one hundred and forty fish species, ninety amphibian species and the endangered Ganges river dolphin. However, the government’s Action Plan to clean up the river, has been a major failure due to corruption, a lack of technical expertise and good environmental planning as well as a lack of support from religious authorities. It thus became obvious to him that he needed an outsider, an outsider with a bullish attitude, to come to grips with the problem.”

“Vasana approached his Alma Mater, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, for advice as to whom would be the best person to tackle this problem. I am sure that the Dean saw this as a heaven sent opportunity to get Professor Danzig out of his hair for a while and provided Dr Vasana with the ultimate CV.”

He paused, half amused by the number of brass who, by their chuckles, were evidently well acquainted with the professor.

He continued, “Professor Danzig knew that the Ganges was infested with the E. Coli and MSRA. Now, as you probably know, when a person drinks water

contaminated with E. coli they face vomiting, diarrhoea, respiratory problems, pneumonia as well as raising the possibility of contracting meningitis. MRSA, in turn, can cause a lot of trouble as it cannot be killed by the antibiotics methicillin, penicillin or amoxicillin.”

“Danzig quickly noticed that there were cockroaches everywhere. Moreover, despite the fact that they live in some of the filthiest places around the Ganges he never saw any dead ones. This tweaked his curiosity as these insects crawl on dead tissue, in sewage, in drains, etc. This detritus did not appear to harm them in any way and he wondered how they coped with all the bacteria and parasites?”

“Well, let me give you some more background. Cockroaches are among the hardiest of insects. Some species are capable of remaining active for a month without food and are able to survive on limited resources, such as the glue from the back of postage stamps. Some can go without air for 45 minutes. In one experiment, cockroaches were able to recover from being submerged underwater for half an hour. In addition, cockroaches have a much higher radiation resistance than vertebrates, with the lethal dose perhaps six to fifteen times that for humans.”

“This is where his cowboy tactics came in handy. He wanted the best available brains to work on this project and he has extremely powerful contacts. You have all been sworn to secrecy so I can reveal something that is known only to a select few approved by the Majestic 12 Group. A group, which incidentally, does not include any president of the United States.”

A few uncomfortable faces now concentrated on him.

“The United States has been developing Alien technology in conjunction with Aliens since 1947 in a program that is still headed by Professor Knight who is a hybrid Piscean and Homo sapiens. Genius is too small a word to describe him. He not only got 100% for a Mensa test but he completed it in less than two minutes – and at the age of ten. His IQ, on a human scale, is simply not measurable.”

You could hear a pin drop in the room.

He ran his eyes across the dazed faces of the military top brass, before continuing, “With his Majestic contacts he got Professor Knight involved. The two began grinding up different parts of cockroaches and put the mixtures in Petri dishes with various types of harmful bacteria. In dishes with the fat, muscle tissue and blood of the insects, the bacteria survived. However, ground-up tissue from their brains and nerves killed almost all the harmful bacteria. This suggested that the insect brains and nerves must contain chemicals that kill the bacteria.”

“This is where Professor Knight suggested that they experiment with a certain type of radiation that the Pisceans had identified which could enhance the growth of the cockroaches and so provide vaster qualities of brain and nerve material. In addition to the radiation, he began using the experimental data that he has worked on in Area 51. Just as they had merged Piscean and human DNA to “create” Dr Knight, he began merging human DNA with cockroach DNA in the hope of growing creatures that are even more intelligent. Furthermore, radiation would use the insects’ resistance to it to increase their actual size.”

“However something went wrong with the experiment and the insects grew to six feet in length. Not only that, they proved almost impossible to kill. While Dr Knight was experimenting on methods to kill them something devastating happened. One night all these large creatures escaped from the extremely secure facility in which they had been kept, and simply vanished. As you can imagine, they can fly with even more agility than their original cousins.”

The stunned silence seemed to weigh heavily on the room, highlighting a few very worried visages.

“The reason that we have you military men here is that Professor Knight, drawing on previous situations with similar experiments in the Piscean system, is convinced that the cockroaches are regrouping and planning to launch a revenge attack on the whole complex that spawned them and we need weapons that will kill them.”

Just then, the doors on either side of the stage burst open and what seemed like a myriad of these gigantic creatures swarmed in and immediately set about devouring the hapless, defenceless occupants of the room.

I sat bolt upright. Damn, I thought, cursing myself for letting my wife persuade me to kill that bloody cockroach last night.

Ray Hattingh