

HOW TO DESTROY THE WORLD: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR EVIL GENIUSES

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Booyah Kong watched as the man waited outside his house, tugging at his trousers. *Was he adjusting or scratching himself?* He wasn't sure. He could have been nervous, either that or diseased. Probably both. Booyah watched the man on a tiny black and white television screen in the security room of Bubba Sudzilla, an old rundown carwash owned by his mother. It also doubled as his super top-secret villain hideout. He pushed a button on the control console and the camera zoomed in on the chest pocket of the man's uniform, or more specifically, the embroidered logo just above it. It read: *International Parcel Service*.

He buzzed him in.

The man let go of his dick and grabbed the clipboard and dolly, rolling it in through the doorway and down the hall, coming to a dead end—a wall of steel bars, like the kind you'd see in a prison cell. He set the dolly down easy, which turned out to be quite the task, since the wooden crate resting against it was oversized and heavy.

"Hello?," the man shouted into the darkness behind the bars.

On the opposite side of the bars, a small spark appeared directly in front of the man's face, the vision of a cigarette lighter sparking to life, and it was followed by a brilliant flash, interrupting the darkness as a handheld sparkler firework flickered and illuminated half the face of a smallish man with hard, chiseled features. He was wearing a pair of silver sunglasses with bright yellow rectangular lenses and looked somewhat like a chimp, but also balding.

“You got the goods?” Booyah asked, watching as the magnificent sparkles in his hand flickered and sputtered about.

The deliveryman stared at him with a confused look.

“Is that a sparkler?” he asked.

“Hurry, we’re running out of time,” Booyah said, ignoring the man’s question.

The deliveryman continued staring for a moment, and then raised his clipboard. The sparkler fizzled out.

“Goddamn it, man. I told you to hurry!” Booyah yelled, fumbling through his pockets for his zippo.

“Uh... I’m sorry, sir, but that sparkler is just... so distracting,” the deliveryman said.

“That so?” Booyah said, lighting a second sparkler.

The man shuffled through the paperwork on his clipboard, folding a couple pages back, and handed it over to Booyah through the bars.

“Sign at the bottom, if you would.”

Booyah signed the page and handed it back to the man. The man examined the messy signature, deciphered the name, and confirmed the package was indeed being delivered to the right person.

“Alright, Mr. Kong.” The man leaned the dolly back and wheeled the large wooden crate closer to the steel bars. “Here’s your package, where should I—”

The second sparkler fizzled out.

“Leave it. I’ll take care of the rest. Just go,” Booyah said, standing in complete darkness.

The deliveryman scratched the two-day scruff of his beard and examined the crate.

“You sure? I really don’t mind. It’s pretty goddamn heavy.”

A third sparkler flickered to life, revealing a slightly angrier version of the chimp-like face he had seen before.

“Are you saying you don’t think I can lift it?”

“Uh, no, that’s not what I’m saying at all, sir. I’m sure a man of your stature could—“

“A man of my stature? What the hell are you getting at?”

“Sir, I assure you, I mean no disrespect. This thing just weighs about two-thirds of an elephant turd. I just thought I’d help you get it inside, since... well, I’ve got the proper equipment and all.”

Uncomfortable silence. The deliveryman shifted his eyes over to the sparkler and then back to the crate.

“Okay, so, nevermind then. I best be getting on,” the deliveryman said, loosening the straps from around the crate and pulling the dolly out from underneath. As he was doing this, he came across a rather suspicious message. Stenciled across the slats of the crate in bright red spray paint were the words: NOT A BOMB.

“Whoa now, what the hell is this, some kind of joke?” the deliveryman asked. There was a nervous quiver in his voice.

“What do mean?”

“I mean did you seriously just have me deliver a bomb? I’ve been driving around with a live bomb clunking around the back of my truck all day? This is fucking insanity!”

“I think you’re overreacting,” Booyah said. “The crate clearly says that it’s *not* a bomb.”

The man began to hyperventilate.

“Oh my fucking god,” the man said, fanning the clipboard so cool air could get to his face. “I’m reporting you, man! I’m going to have you investigated!”

“Will you fucking leave already? Goddamn it,” Booyah said, pointing his stubby thick finger at the door.

The man flipped Booyah the bird with one hand and pulled on his dick with the other.

“You know, you should get a culture of that shit growing on your piece there, find out what it is. And goddamn it, if you’re going to scratch, you really should consider wearing gloves. You don’t want to spread that shit around, you know. It’s common fucking courtesy.”

“Fuck you!” the deliveryman yelled, slamming the door behind him as he went.

“Not till you get that shit taken care of, you won’t!” Booyah yelled. He could hear the IPS truck’s engine fire up and tires squeal out the driveway.

A wicked smile spread across Booyah’s face as he watched the deliveryman leave, that is until the fire on the sparkler got too close and burned his fingers.

“Damn!” he yelled, tossing the sparkler to the floor where it smoked and finally fizzled out.

For the next few moments, Booyah sucked on his fingertips, surrounded by darkness. He stood, nursing his wound, until he finally mustered up enough strength to slide open the steel door and move the crate.

Booyah Kong did not like to be burned.

Not one bit.

No, Booyah Kong liked to do the burning.

* * *

“Do you understand the mission?” Booyah heard a voice say. There was no one else in the room. Hearing this voice made him angry. He threw the box of sparklers across the room, causing thirty-eight of them to leap from the box and scatter across the floor.

“I told you to stop talking! I know what I’m doing,” Booyah said. He tried to stick one of his sausage fingers inside his ear, as if he could reach inside and flick the voice out like a ball of earwax, but his fingers were much too fat for that.

“You’re a shitty little man hiding in your mother’s shitty carwash. You need me,” the voice said.

“Maybe I don’t. Hell, maybe I should just set myself on fire and be done with you once and for all,” Booyah said.

“But then *they* would live, Booyah, and that’s the point, isn’t it? To get rid of *them*?”

“Maybe,” Booyah said, pausing a moment to collect his thoughts. “But that’s just what *you* tell me...”

“Have I ever been wrong?”

“Now that’s a stupid fucking question. Yes, you have. In fact, I’m not sure you’ve ever been right.”

“Not even with that Sanderson woman from the pool?”

“The one you had me choke with a jar of mayonnaise?”

“Yeah, that one.”

“It didn’t work. She wasn’t even allergic to mayonnaise like you said. It was a waste of time.”

“Well, she certainly *looked* like she was allergic to mayonnaise.”

Booyah shrugged his shoulders.

“She really did,” he said. He and the voice laughed.

“See, so I was right...” the voice said.

“But you weren’t, not with that, and certainly not with the cattle prod in the orphanage, or the razor blade toothbrushes we snuck into the bargain bin at Wal-Mart, or the time we replaced all the Mountain Dew at Taco Bell with antifreeze. You’re never right about anything.”

“This time I’m right,” the voice said. “Open the crate.”

“Not until we go over the plan again. I have a bad taste in my mouth now, recounting all that,” Booyah said.

“I knew you didn’t understand the mission,” the voice mumbled.

Booyah bent down and swiped a fistful of sparklers from the floor and angrily threw them at the wall again.

"If I'm so bad, why do you come to me with all of this, huh? Why not go find some other poor schmuck to do your bidding?" Booyah asked.

"You don't understand how brains work, do you?" the voice asked.

"You're not my brain."

"Yes, I am."

"The brain is me. I am the brain *and the brain is me*," Booyah said.

"I am the brain and you are you," the voice said.

"How am I supposed to know what you're saying is true?"

"Because I know, and I'm your brain. That's how you know," the voice said.

"So I know you're my brain because you know?"

"Yes, because I am your brain and we both know the same things. This is how you know, you know?"

"No," Booyah said.

"Think about it," the voice said.

Booyah thought about it for a moment and decided it best not to argue, despite the issue never really being resolved. It wasn't like he really cared anyway.

"The plan," Booyah said.

"The plan is we open this box, strap on the contents, and head for the Shell station on Cambridge Drive. It has to be the one on Cambridge because that's the one nearest to the fault line," the voice said.

"And the gas station explodes, agitating the crack," Booyah said.

"The explosion will trigger a massive earthquake, one so large the earth will split in two," the voice said.

"That's a big earthquake."

“The biggest. The conditions are ready. I’ve done the math in my head hundreds of times now,” the voice said.

“You mean my head?”

“Our head,” the voice said. “Open the crate.”

Booyah pushed the end of a crowbar into the space that separated the lid from the rest of the crate and hammered it in with the heel of his hand. The lid cracked and fell to the floor, causing the contents to come spilling out like an avalanche. Inside were loose matches, thousands of them, now piled knee-high and surrounding him. One by one, he attached them to his body.

* * *

Standing outside Bubba Sudzilla, Booyah Kong mentally prepared himself for the march down Cambridge Drive. *It would be epic*, he thought, and he felt more like a soldier about to march into war than the dwarfish son of a nearly retired carwash kingpin, angry at the world. With all 6,784 matches strapped taut against his body, each stick side-by-side and wrapping in tight spirals up each of his stumpy appendages and swirling around his barrel of a torso, Booyah took his first step down the drive, towards the Shell station.

“There you go, Kong. Make daddy proud!” the voice said.

“I don’t know my daddy. Why would I want to make him proud?” Kong asked.

“No, not your biological father. *I am your daddy. Make me proud,*” the voice said.

“I thought you were my brain?”

“Well, yes, I am the brain and you are you.”

“My brain had sex with my mother?”

“If I had, you’d know about it,” the voice said.

Booyah said nothing.

“Because I am your brain and we both know the same things,” the voice said.

Booyah dug his fists into his pockets and fished out two handfuls of sparklers. The matches around his wrists and pockets came loose from digging and tumbled to the dusty ground. He lit the sparklers, and soon after his fists were nothing more than balls of fire at the ends of his stubby forearms.

“This is for you, brain daddy!” Booyah yelled, as he ran full-force towards the gas station.

“Christ,” the voice muttered, then sighed audibly, at least to Booyah.

As Booyah ran, he quickly discovered something was wrong. Perhaps he had jumped the gun a bit and lit the sparklers prematurely. The matches strapped to his body lit as they received a kiss from a single renegade spark, and in turn each flaming match lit each neighboring stick until eventually all of them were burning strong and bright.

Booyah was getting hot and he was slowing down. He feared the gas station was far out of reach.

“I’m melting like a birthday cake,” Booyah said.

“Birthday cakes don’t typically melt. You’re thinking of a candle. Candles melt as the flame draws down the wick,” the voice said.

“Yeah, that’s it. A candle. I’m melting like a candle on a birthday cake,” Booyah said, his flesh dripping from his bones in long, ropey dribbles, and sizzling on the pavement below.

“Doesn’t really matter if it’s on a birthday cake or not, does it? You should just leave that bit off about the cake, really. It works best just saying candle,” the voice said.

“Okay, I’m melting...like...a candle,” Booyah said, then collapsed to the pavement. His flesh cooked for a solid three minutes before the flames died down and all that was left was a smoldering, blackened skeleton.

“Fucking hell,” the voice said, then pushed against the inside of Booyah’s burnt skull until it cracked and broke apart. It didn’t take much. The voice stepped outside the skull, revealing his form: an even smaller version of the same dwarfish man he’d just crawled out of. He walked over to one of the Shell station pumps and gave it a firm kick.

“Fuck everything,” the voice said, as he flipped the pumps the bird, and then ran aggressively down Cambridge Drive, tiny and naked, in the direction of the carwash.

No one seemed to notice.

THE END

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