

DANGER: READING THIS BOOK WILL MAKE YOU SMARTER.



20
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1



MATT HAWKINS • RAHSAN EKEDAL

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MOT/S ACTIVE

MINOTAUR PRESS, A TOP COW PRODUCTIONS COMPANY, PRESENTS...

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"DEDICATED TO MY MUSE JENNI CHEUNG"

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

**ROBERT KIRKMAN
MARC SILVESTRI
ERIC STEPHENSON
FILIP SABLİK
RICK JOHNSTON
RICK JACOBS
ZACH COX**

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$$\oint \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{A} = \frac{1}{\epsilon_0} q_{in} \quad \oint \vec{B} \cdot d\vec{A} = 0 \quad \oint \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l} = -\frac{d}{dt} \int \vec{B} \cdot d\vec{A}$$

$$\oint \vec{B} \cdot d\vec{l} = \mu_0 i_{in} \quad \vec{F} = q(\vec{v} \times \vec{B} + \vec{E}) \quad i \equiv \frac{dq}{dt}$$

point charge $E = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r^2}$ $V = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r}$ $\rho = qd$

$$V_f - V_i = -\int_i^f \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{s} \quad E_x = -\frac{\partial V}{\partial x} \quad \vec{\tau} = \vec{p} \times \vec{E}$$

$$C \equiv \frac{Q}{V} \quad U_E = \frac{1}{2} QV = \frac{1}{2} CV^2 = \frac{1}{2} \frac{Q^2}{C} \quad C = \epsilon_0 \frac{A}{d}$$

$$R \equiv \frac{V}{i} \quad P = Vi \quad P = i^2 R = \frac{V^2}{R} \quad R = \rho \frac{L}{A}$$

"SCIENCE IS A WONDERFUL THING IF ONE DOES NOT HAVE TO EARN ONE'S LIVING AT IT."
 -ALBERT EINSTEIN

$$\frac{1}{R_{eq}} = \frac{1}{R_1} + \frac{1}{R_2} + \dots \quad \frac{1}{C_{eq}} = \frac{1}{C_1} + \frac{1}{C_2} + \dots$$

$$d\vec{B} = \frac{\mu_0}{4\pi} \frac{d\vec{s} \times \hat{r}}{r^2} \quad B = \frac{\mu_0}{2\pi} \frac{i}{r} \quad B = \mu_0 n i \quad \vec{\tau} = \vec{\mu} \times \vec{B}$$

$$\mathcal{E} = -\frac{d\Phi}{dt} \quad \mathcal{E} = -N \frac{d\Phi}{dt} \quad L = \frac{|\mathcal{E}|}{|\frac{di}{dt}|} = \frac{N\Phi}{i}$$

$$u_E = \frac{1}{2} \epsilon_0 E^2 \quad u_B = \frac{1}{2} \frac{B^2}{\mu_0} \quad U_B = \frac{1}{2} LI^2$$

$$q = q_0 e^{-t/\tau_c} \quad q = C\mathcal{E}(1 - e^{-t/\tau_c}) \quad i = i_0 e^{-t/\tau_L} \quad i = \frac{\mathcal{E}}{R}(1 - e^{-t/\tau_c})$$

$$L = \frac{L}{R} \quad \tau_c = RC \quad \mu = NiA \quad \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} = 9 \times 10^9 \quad \frac{\mu_0}{4\pi} = 10^{-7}$$

M means 10^6 μ means 10^{-6}

Fimo

WHEN I WAS SIX,
FIBONACCI CODING
WAS MY PASSION
FOR TWO WEEKS.

Two-One-WildFire
you are not
cleared to fire.

Need visual
confirmation
of target.

Roger
that.

EQUATIONS AND NUMBERS
ALWAYS CAME EASY TO ME.

Target in
range.

MATH IS SIMPLE,
ELEGANT AND PURE.

Roger that
Two-One-WildFire.

SO DIFFERENT
FROM PEOPLE.

Verifying
target.

F110a

BY AGE 14, I HAD ALREADY SOLD MY SOUL TO THE MILITARY.



Captain, that's him.

LAT (MTRS): 14259.6
 LON (MTRS): 17611.6
 ALT (MAGL): 96.7
 AZM (DEGS): 82.5
 SPD (KMH): 243.1
 LOCAL: 20:57:22
 CAM FOV: 0.09%

Permission to Fire?

Give it a minute, airman. Let's make damned sure this is our guy.

FLIR AUTO ON
 MTS-A ACTIVE
 TESAR ACTIVE

GPS ACTIVE
 UHF ACTIVE
 VHF ACTIVE



FULL SCHOLARSHIP TO CAL TECH.

Last thing we need is another Friendly Fire incident.

Yes, sir.

100% MATCH

22 seconds left for safe strike.



THE PENTAGON EVEN GOT ME GIRLS.

Permission to engage.



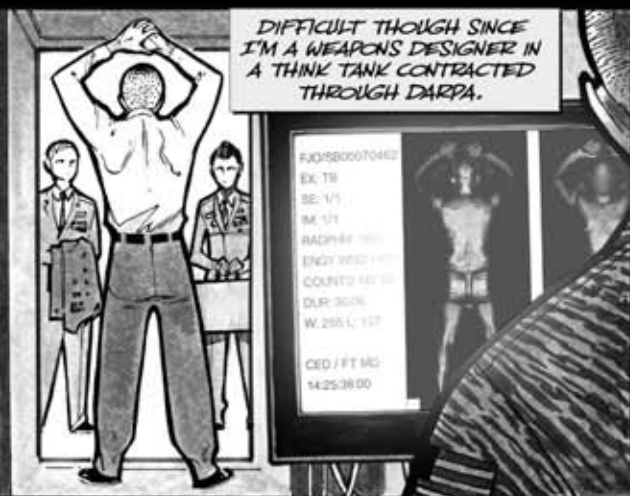


F-100 MY IQ IS SUPPOSEDLY 205, BUT THOSE TESTS ARE FLAWED.

I CAN'T BE THAT BRIGHT...

...IF I CREATE THINGS THAT KILL PEOPLE.





Fimo

I ALWAYS HAVE TO EXPLAIN THE PARDON PART.



LET'S JUST SAY THAT SOME OF THE SMARTEST PEOPLE THEY HAVE WORKING HERE AT CED ARE NOT HERE BY CHOICE.

Dr. Manish Pavi, I presume?

Yes.

YOU DO THE MATH.

Where is he?



AND THEY SEND PRICKS LIKE THIS GUY TO GET ME IN LINE.

COLONEL MARK HARRISON. I'VE HEARD HE'S A NICE ENOUGH GUY IN REALITY, BUT HE'S HERE TO KICK MY ASS.

AND IF THE MILITARY DOES ONE THING RIGHT, IT TEACHES GUYS HOW TO DO THAT.

SIGN ON MY DOOR SAYS DR. DAVID LOREN, PH.D. THAT'S ME. I'M OTHER THINGS, TOO.



Your reputation precedes you... Doctor.

I know you were informed of my imminent arrival. I'll get right to the point.

CHILD PRODIGY.

INVENTOR.

GENIUS.

SLACKER.

MASS MURDERER.

AND MY LIFE IS ABOUT TO SUCK.

ECHOES



No chit chat?

I was really hoping to get to know you better before we got to the screwing.



Effective today, this lab falls under my command.

I don't condone your methods, but your algorithms for the Predator drone continue to work well in the field.

You've saved a lot of lives.

And ended a few.

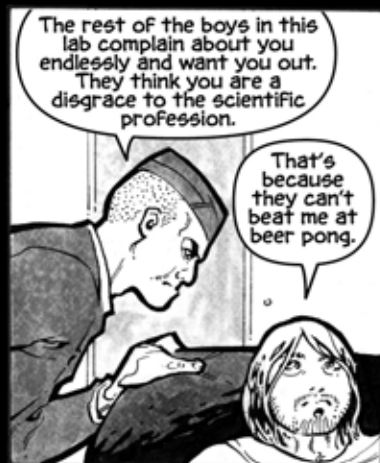


Yes, that's the way The Real Game is played.

That was three years ago, though. Your last three "projects" were failures however...and this is a results business.

You have a pretty cozy setup here, free reign and the ability to live however you feel like as long as you deliver.

Don't ever forget that.



The rest of the boys in this lab complain about you endlessly and want you out. They think you are a disgrace to the scientific profession.

That's because they can't beat me at beer pong.



Only Dr. Pavi can seem to stomach you.



Your recent projects showed promise but none were ever finished.



A personnel sized EMP device to take out enemy electronics.

A light-weight chameleon suit to make our troops virtually invisible in the field.

And my personal favorite, the Suggestion Gas that would make Sodium Pentathol look like a slingshot in a nuclear fight.



All great, any one of which would save American lives.

1 in 10 DARPA projects meets its goal. I'm 1 For 4.



LISTEN TO ME, SMART ASS!

You need to finish one of these or clear one of the other projects on the wish list.

Otherwise you're out on your ass.



Security Clearance revoked.

We'll make sure you're unemployable.





F:mg

HE WANTS TO READ MY MIND.

READING AND UNDERSTANDING WOULD BE TWO VERY DIFFERENT THINGS.

I'VE BEEN A STUDY IN CONTRADICTIONS SINCE PRE-SCHOOL.



A WALKING OXYMORON.

A SMART IDIOT. A LAZY OVERACHIEVER.

AND THE LOGLINE OF MY CAREER?



CREATIVE DESTRUCTION.



THE DARPA WISH LIST IS FUN.

SOLAR POWERED WEAPONS. SURFACE THOUGHT READING. TACTILE RECONSTITUTION.

SANTA'S DEATH LIST FOR THE NAUGHTY.

EVER SINCE DARPA WAS FOUNDED IN 1958 AS A RESPONSE TO THE RUSSIAN SPUTNIK LAUNCH, IT HAS MAINTAINED A POSSIBLE PROJECT LIST RANGING FROM IMMINENTLY PRACTICAL TO THE BIZARRE, INCLUDING PARANORMAL AND PSYCHIC.



I THINK IT WAS HEINLEIN THAT SAID, "ONE MAN'S MAGIC IS ANOTHER MAN'S ENGINEERING."

SO WHILE I DISAPPEARED INTO CREATIVE MODE, MANISH MANNED THE WEEKLY PROGRESS MEETING.

OR WHAT I CALL THE DICK SWINGING CONTEST FOR DORKS.

DR. SEJIC HERE IS YOUR TYPICAL EURO-SCIENTIST SNOB.



The military currently uses the BA-2950 battery for robots in the field and the disposable BA-5590 for night goggles, communications, etc.



If we assume a 10,000 hour run time on my new micro power device it would last longer than 1,400 of those batteries.



BLAH, BLAH, BLAH LOOK AT ME AND HOW SMART I AM.

Thank you, Dr. Sejc. The brass from the Pentagon are coming here tomorrow at 10am for a live demonstration of your device.

General Clarkson will be pleased if it works as you say.



I was being conservative, the device will impress.



Some of us take our work seriously. Dr. Loren too busy to come see how real scientists conduct themselves?



Yes, where is he?

Working. I think he was caught up in new research and forgot about the meeting. He took what you said to heart, Colonel.



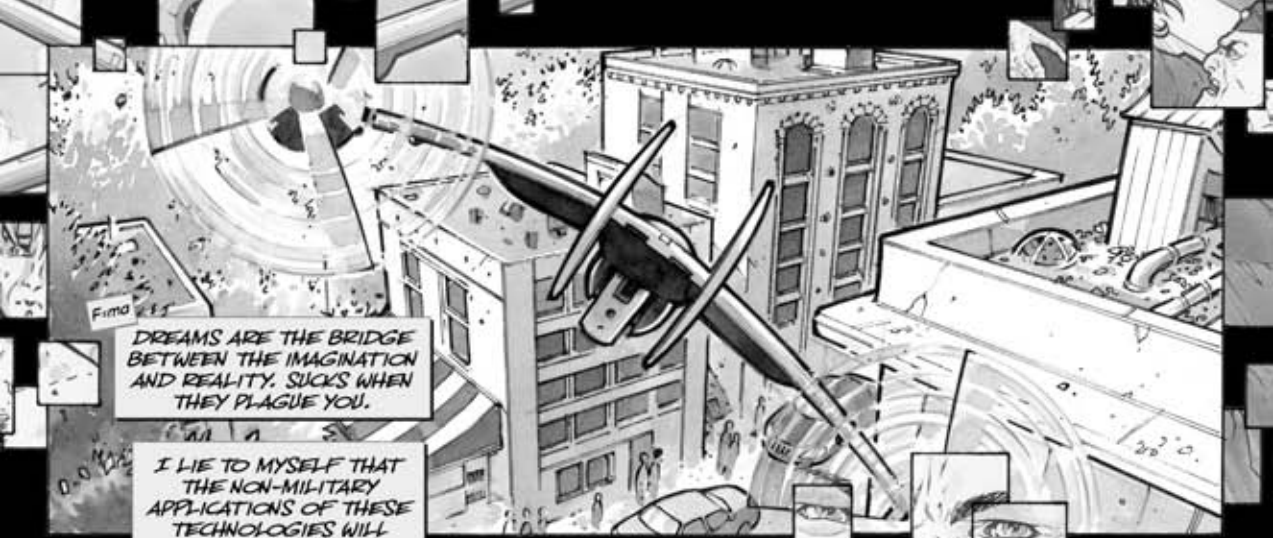
Oh really?



Let's see about that.




LOREN CAM0053



DREAMS ARE THE BRIDGE
BETWEEN THE IMAGINATION
AND REALITY. SUCKS WHEN
THEY PLAGUE YOU.


I LIE TO MYSELF THAT
THE NON-MILITARY
APPLICATIONS OF THESE
TECHNOLOGIES WILL
TRUMP THEIR
DESTRUCTIVE USES.




THAT IT WOULD
JUST BE SOMEONE
ELSE INVENTING
THESE THINGS IF
IT WASN'T ME.



THE GOVERNMENT
USES FANCY TERMS
LIKE "DUAL USE
TECHNOLOGY" TO
SUPPORT THE
PROLIFERATION OF
BETTER, FASTER
AND MORE
EFFICIENT WAYS OF
KILLING THE MANY.



OR TARGETING
THE ONE.



BUT EVEN ONE DEATH
IS MORE THAN I WANT
TO THINK ABOUT.

Fima

ULTIMATELY,
THE PROBLEM
WITH THE
MILITARY IS
THEY HAVE NO
SENSE OF
HUMOR.

You were brought here
because the suits at Cal
Tech said you could help
motivate and control
Dr. Loren.

I have known
him since our
Freshmen year. We
were roommates
since we were the
only two under
16.

We are
Friends but
I cannot
make him do
anything.

JOYLESS
MOTTOS LIKE
"ALWAYS
FAITHFUL."

You will
need to find a way.
General Clarkson
has an eye on this
lab and Dr. Loren
in particular.

Dr. Sejic, who
has the General's
ear, believes he
is intentionally
sabotaging his
efforts here.

CORE VALUES
LIKE "HONOR,
COURAGE,
COMMITMENT."

Dr. Sejic's
opinion of
David is
suspect. He
was one of our
professors at
Cal Tech.

He accused David of
cheating after setting
the curve on the final
without ever going
to class.

The Academic Board
cleared him of cheating
after a four hour oral
exam from another
professor, but David's
reputation was damaged
after that and the other
students all hated him.
David's revenge against
Sejic was...unique.

I don't care
about any of
that.

Let me speak
very plainly. You
will help me or
not only will you
be fired but your
E-B2 visa will be
revoked.

And you'll
be on the first
plane back to
India.

WORDS ON
PLAQUES THAT
GET PUSHED
ASIDE AS NEEDED.



Fina

THIS IS 10 YEARS AGO.

THE CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, OR CAL TECH, IS NOW CONSIDERED THE BEST COLLEGE IN THE WORLD.

BEATING OUT HARVARD AND THE OTHER IVY LEAGUE SNOB SCHOOLS.



YOUNG ME.

YOUNG MANISH.

This should even be the score.

You sure this won't hurt him?

NOT SO YOUNG PROFESSOR SEJIC HITTING ON CO-EDS.



Nope.

MANY OF THE GREAT SCIENTISTS OF TOMORROW GO HERE, AND A FEW OF THOSE ACTUALLY STAY IN THE U.S.



CAL TECH IS A MERITOCRACY FULL OF THE BRIGHTEST MINDS IN THE WORLD.



AHHHH!



REVENGE AT A SCHOOL LIKE THIS IS ON A WHOLE OTHER LEVEL.

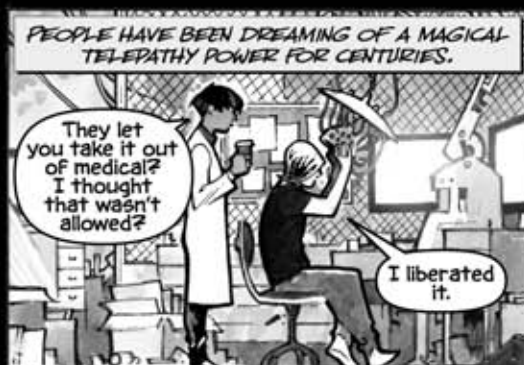


Fimo

CREATION IS A DRUG THAT I CAN NEVER GET ENOUGH OF. DESPITE MY SCHINDLER PLEDGE, I REALLY CAN'T HELP MYSELF WHEN A CHALLENGE IS PRESENTED.

Is that Medical's EEG reader?

Yeah, I borrowed it.



They let you take it out of medical? I thought that wasn't allowed?

I liberated it.



THIS ISN'T QUITE THAT, BUT IT'S A BABY STEP.

Is that what you've been working on these past few days?

Think of something.



AND IT'S BABY STEPS THAT LEAD TO BREAKTHROUGHS THAT REVOLUTIONIZE ENTIRE INDUSTRIES AND CHANGE LIFE AS WE KNOW IT.

What, like the Colonel threatening to deport me because of you?

Ah, buddy, sorry about that. Harrison is just another military dickhead.



You are reading my thoughts?

Yep. And they get displayed as text here on my reader.

How?

Elementary, Dear Manish. Pretty simple actually, surprised no one beat me to it.



Your surface thoughts are electro-magnetic, bio-chemical messages sent along neural pathways in your brain.

Brain chips inserted into the brain that intercept these signals already exist, but they're not real useful for military application. They want something portable and non-invasive.

I guess sawing open a Foreign dignitary's head and inserting a chip to see if he was lying or not isn't field practical.

This device can penetrate the skull and grab the info without the other person ever realizing it.



That is fantastic!
What is the build?

I took the latest smart phone tech from the boys downstairs and rebuilt it with the EEG brain scanner.

The only issue is power: it requires an enormous amount of energy in a burst. Works fine in the lab with our nuclear reactor but this thing would eat a cell battery in about 5 seconds.



What about Sejic's micropower project?

His what?

Don't you read any of the briefs?



And miss the latest Big Bang Theory on Hulu?

I can talk to Sejic tomorrow and see if he'll let us test it.

Tomorrow?
Are you kidding me?
Let's get it now.



What?

Fima

MILITARY BUILDINGS ARE GENERALLY DESIGNED TO KEEP PEOPLE OUT. PRISONS ARE DESIGNED TO KEEP PEOPLE IN. OUR BUILDING IS BOTH.

BUT IF YOU KNOW WHERE TO LOOK NOTHING IS ALL THAT SECURE. THE BIGGEST PROBLEM WITH "WORKPLACES" IS THAT PEOPLE STILL HAVE TO COME AND GO WHICH CREATES OPPORTUNITY.



IN THE CASE OF DOUCHEBAG SEJIC'S LAB, HE HAS THE MOST ADVANCED SECURITY SETUP AVAILABLE WHICH ACTIVATES ONCE THE DOOR LATCHES.



SOMETIMES THE SIMPLEST THING WORKS.





F110

CAMERAS CAN BE A BIT MORE TROUBLESOME.



EASY THING WOULD BE TO LOOP THE CAMERA FEED BUT THAT ONLY WORKS ON TV.



THE SYSTEM WOULD IDENTIFY THE LOOP IMMEDIATELY.

FORTUNATELY FOR ME, HACKING IS A SKILL THAT COMES EASY TO A MATHEMATICIAN.



SEJIC

CAM0047

AND REDIRECTING A CAMERA FEED TO ANOTHER IN A BUILDING WHERE 90% OF THE WALLS AND DOORS LOOK THE SAME IS AN EASY SOLUTION.

AFTER FIVE MINUTES IT WILL REVERT TO THE CORRECT VIEW.

MOI'S ACTIVE

18:35:39



BUT THAT'S ALL I NEED TO GRAB THE POWER SOURCE AND GET OUT.

WITH SOME QUICK ENGINEERING TO INTEGRATE SEJIC'S MEGA BATTERY INTO MY DEVICE, MANISH AND I CAN CONDUCT A FIELD TEST.

AND RETURN IT BEFORE ANYONE NOTICES IT'S GONE.

ENGINEERING THE DEVICE FROM MY LAB ISSUED SMART PHONE MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO EXIT THROUGH THE RESTRICTED AREA.

We are so dead.

Just relax.

THEY LOOK FOR THINGS OUT OF THE ORDINARY AND EVERYONE CARRIES THE CELL PHONES THEY GIVE US.

RESTRICTED EXIT

KEEP IT SIMPLE.

MANISH HAS BEEN A GOOD FRIEND TO ME SINCE OUR COLLEGE DAYS.

Do you think that using the reader on someone will cause brain damage?

HIS NAME DOES CRACK ME UP THOUGH. FOR A "MANISH" HE COULD USE A LITTLE MANNING UP.

Josephine Room

AND HERE WE ARE.

Dunno. If we keep using it on you we can find out.

THE PERFECT CLINICAL SETTING TO FIELD TEST A PORTABLE SURFACE THOUGHT READER.



Time to say hi to some ladies and see if this works.



All right, get your game face on, wing man.



What a dork.



Does his mom dress him?



He's cute.

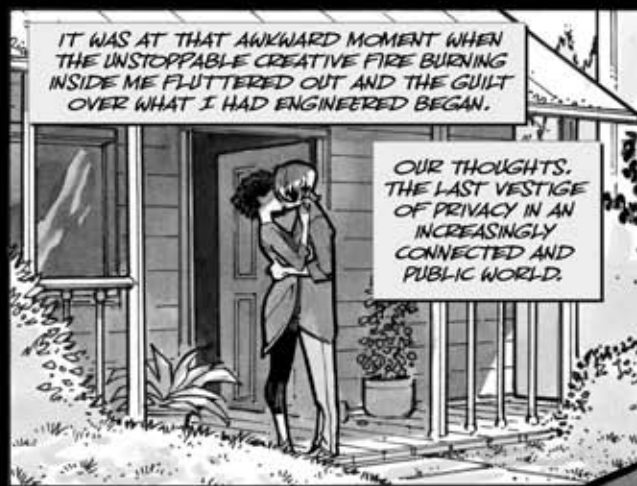


SOME WOMEN HAVE A THING FOR SMART GUYS WHO DRESS BADLY.

Hi, I'm David.

Mirra. Mirra Sway.





Fima

PLUS THIS PROBABLY
SCREWS MY CHANCE
FOR A SECOND DATE.



TO BE
CONTINUED...



NEXT ISSUE:

THINK #2
TANK

SCIENCE CLASS

by Matt Hawkins

Why *Think Tank*? I want people to like Science. It's awesome and fun and not boring like people think. The idea for *Think Tank* came to me when I started hanging with some friends from college who had stayed in the science field. I've visited several Think Tanks including RAND and DARPA and have seen only the declassified stuff, but even that is fascinating. Just walking into one of these you feel like you're stepping into the future. I studied science for many years in college and have a few degrees but have only learned to love it recently, many years after leaving academia far behind.

I'm not quite as smart as David Loren, but this character has a lot of me in it. I've always been interested in people who are conflicted and I feel that way myself all the time. With David we have a guy who loves what he does, but is troubled by how his creations are used. I would love to write about this character for 100+ issues but that all depends on whether I can find an audience for the book so if you like it please tell a friend! I love to hear from readers directly so feel free to pester me on:

Twitter @topcowmatt

Facebook Matt Hawkins (both actual and "likeable" author page)

Google + Matt Hawkins (for all you Google employees)

Warning: if you are easily offended you may want to pass, as I tend to speak my mind on these.

Anyway, wanted to give some thoughts and commentary on why I did some of what I did here and how a lot of it is based on real science. I'm happy to answer some questions in the back pages of future issues so hit me up!



IN THE LAB

DR. MANISH PAVI



Albert Einstein

Einstein's quotes are pretty fascinating considering what all he accomplished. He was not an atheist like myself and many other current scientists. This is my favorite quote and I've had many comic book writers/artists tell me that it is also applicable to working in comics as well.

LOSING THE GLASSES

$F=ma$

The $F=ma$ on the first narrative balloon on each page is Force = mass times acceleration which is one of Physics core equations. If you note on David's shirt in this issue it says Fun = Mating X Alcohol which is me just having some fun of my own, although I want to make that shirt! I'd wear it.

Predator MQ-9 Reaper (Drone)

Featured on this issue heavily is the Predator MQ-9 Reaper, the current workhorse of the Air Force and the one you see predominantly on those *YouTube* videos. The interesting thing about this Reaper is it's based on designs from over 15 years ago. What they have now is far more insidious! The Drones were originally exclusively used for reconnaissance but very quickly adopted weapons systems. Drone technology is getting smaller and smaller. Remote control bullets with facial recognition software are just around the corner. Pretty soon, if not already, they'll have insect sized Drones that can be remotely controlled and flown under doors or through small cracks in windows. The applications are endless. My father was in the Air Force and I will never forget when I was a kid he told me that the payload storage compartment on the top of the Space Shuttles was conveniently sized so that it could also hold an ICBM nuclear missile. I've never thought of the Space Shuttles as being weaponized, but you can see the potential.

CED

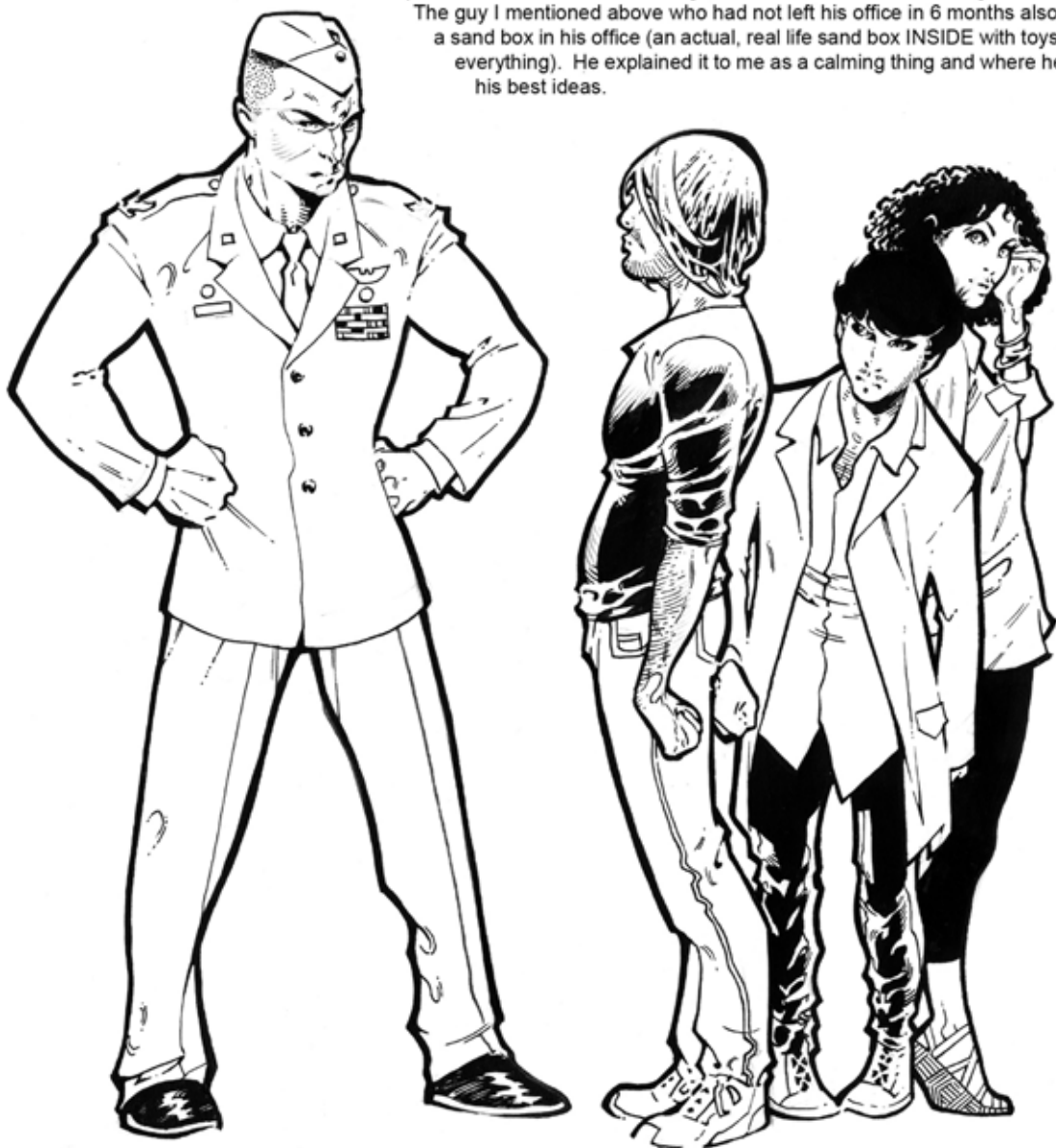
The Think Tank lab's corporate name is CED. I had a nice reason for calling it that, but I couldn't find it in my notes so I'll have to make something up by the next issue or so.

DARPA

DARPA is a real thing. Some of the stuff they do is pretty amazing and scary as hell. Google "DARPA" and scroll through and watch some of what pops up. First time I did that I lost a whole weekend. Also, the idea of Colonel Harrison is that most of these government funded labs are supposed to be autonomous of the military but they really aren't. Most of these military contractors ONLY make goods for the military so, as their one and only customer, the military basically "supervises" them. The DARPA wish list exists by the way, and it's pretty scary.

Think Tanks

Think Tanks are full of wonderfully smart men and women who are socially awkward and don't always leave their offices/labs for months at a time. I spoke with a guy last summer who admitted to me that he had not been to his house in almost 6 months. These people are either pure or applied researchers. The applied researchers tend to be more "normal people" and are often married with children, etc. Pure researchers are off in Never Never Land and are the ones I'm talking about. The easy way to explain the difference is that Applied research has a specific purpose, like an AIDS vaccine, and pure research has no specific goal other than curiosity or expanding knowledge. Pure research leads to Applied research. Physicists are interesting people. Many make low salaries (by Los Angeles standards) and spend thousands of hours sitting around in their offices thinking about stuff. The guy I mentioned above who had not left his office in 6 months also had a sand box in his office (an actual, real life sand box INSIDE with toys and everything). He explained it to me as a calming thing and where he got his best ideas.





Colonel Harrison

Colonel Harrison is my "bad guy" for the first part of the story, but I have ALWAYS hated one dimensional bad guys. This guy is a soldier and a patriot and he's doing his job. These guys play a very hard game at the upper levels and their decisions kill people so I really wanted to show that he is a no nonsense guy, but not a sociopath.

COLONEL HARRISON



Cal Tech

The California Institute of Technology is the best college in the world. So if you apply to go there and get accepted come find me and I'll buy you a steak dinner and some beers!

Running out of space for this issue – will continue in next but let me just leave you with the thought that, although I've taken some creative license, all of the technology in this book is possible now based on current technology. I'll get into the science of the surface though reader more next issue, I hope you'll come back for it.

Thanks for reading!

Matt Hawkins

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