

A&B Services

By Mark Caldwell (mark@impworks.co.uk)
26th March 2000 Published in Valkyrie issue 19

Sometimes someone wants a problem cleaned up unobtrusively without being connected to it. These people can call an unlisted phone number, deposit a fee into a Swiss bank and stop worrying. A pair of gentlemen, A and B, from A&B Services will see to their problem. A&B provide discreet "cleaning" services. Their motto is "Anywhere, Anytime, Anything, Anyone: Cleaned". B has been heard to sing, "We will clean it, we will fix it, we will sort it, da da da" to the tune of the mouse's song from Bagpuss.

A&B employ a secretary at their New York office. Few stay more than two months. Their boss, a mysterious woman, may be a cut out but someone takes a percentage for arranging their jobs. While they are paid each month they don't care.

A&B never rush into a job. A flies on ahead, hiring a discreet commercial unit and a van, which he re-sprayed with their logo. A begins long distance observation identifying obvious security measures and familiarising himself with the area. Meanwhile, B airfreights a container of equipment to the nearest airport and smuggles a few innocuous glass jars with him.

Once the office is set up A releases red Peruvian fruit flies or an equally unheard of insect within a building that will serve as their observation point. Soon A&B Services, who can conveniently be found in Yellow Pages and on the Internet as specialist bug exterminators, are called in to deal with the infestation. Looking like a strange hybrid of the Ghost Busters and the Men In Black they use smoke machines to begin to appear to fumigate. Once observation of the target is complete they kill the infestation.

When targeting an object, A releases a swarm of vicious insects into the target premises. Within twenty minutes of release they cause the buildings evacuation while A&B wait for a call. Using noxious gases allows them to work unmolested while insect larvae destroy the target.

When eliminating a person they arrange a fatal insect sting. They dose the target with a chemical before A releases an insect primed to attack the chemical's scent. When vanishing a person they are collected using a specially modified street cleaner fitted with tasers. The front opens into a gaping maw feeding a human sized holding compartment.

A

A is quite dashing even nearing fifty. With a hint of Eastern Europe good looks the frequent change of the secretaries can be attributed to his amorous adventures. He likes to cook and takes a small plant pot of herbs everywhere in a sturdy flight case. His favourite meal is trout stuffed with herb in wine with new potatoes and peas. A is an entomologist by training and breeds A&B's insect assailants. He has a cruel streak and B has caught him torturing insects after they have argued on several occasions. An expert safecracker and locksmith his experience covers most security devices and procedures. Fearing injury to his delicate hands and features he avoids violence and avoids risky physical activity. A likes to watch reruns of "Mission Impossible" in his spare time. His favourite actor is Martin Landau.

B

B is an aficionado of British animation. He collects original puppets and videos of Bagpuss, The Clangers and other shows, which he quotes from frequently. Responsible for logistics and smuggling he provides A&B's muscle being considerably larger than A. B resorts to violence when he feels he need to and can hold his own in a fight. He is normally quiet but can become very ebullient if a pet topic of his is discussed. He never drinks alcohol as he has nightmares about a giant hairy dog when he does. His backpack sprayer can be used as a flamethrower and to dispense gasses.

A and B have had serious arguments during operations when A feels B has resorted unnecessarily to violence to resolve a situation. B likes A but sometimes wishes he would loosen up a little. During quiet moments A and B will argue over the relative merits of different TV shows and quiz each other about classic children's programmes.

They ceased to live normal lives twenty years ago when they were kidnapped from a cult TV convention in London. Brainwashed by an intelligence agency and trained for a special mission that was cancelled. They were supposedly decommissioned when an investigation shut the project down. Instead, they were vanished by the project's head to finance his impromptu retirement. Should either of them be captured they will revert to their original personality forgetting everything that has happened.

Before their capture A was an entomologist attached to the Portland Down chemical and biological warfare facility and B was a factory worker and amateur boxing champion. They had been an oddball pair of

friends for almost five years meeting at various conventions and weekend gatherings.

Story Hooks

Manuel Ferdinand DeLeon the Spanish born elder statesmen of South American politics has disappeared. DeLeon was last seen in the reception of a hotel on his way to his room. There was a report of an infestation in the adjoining room to which A&B Services were called. DeLeon has been a thorn in the side of a number of corporations and governments for some time. The characters are asked to trace DeLeon by their employers or the hotel whose reputation for looking after their guests is now in serious jeopardy.

The CDC, or a similar body, has noticed an increase in incidents featuring the Peruvian Fruit Fly. There isn't a pattern to the geographical or chronological occurrence but the trend has worried an official. The characters are tipped off or sent in to try to make sense of this alarming trend.

The characters either get too close to A&B's operations or someone wants them out of commission and evidence in their possession destroyed. They will be observed and then attacked by A&B using insects. If this fails a more up close and personal attack will be made on some of the characters preferably when they are alone or in a small group in an exposed but private situation. As a last resort A&B will either flee or launch an all out assault on the characters using noxious gases an