

ne For The X-philes

Graham Aldrid

You remember the episode where a new life form was generated in a load of toxic waste from Russia? For the record and those who missed a good episode, here follows a brief rundown:

Strange things happen. A man gets attacked in the sewer but gets off OK apart from big scar on his back. In the shower the man gets ill, throws up some red paint, bits of offal, other nasty stuff, dies. More strange stuff. Finally Mulder & Scully capture the life-form which is a sickly translucent grey colour with red eyes, strange shaped mouth but shows signs of intelligence.

It turns out to have part human DNA, part reptile, part other strange stuff. The thing escapes. Chase. In sewer, from whence it came, Mulder manages among the S**t to get the thing chopped in half. Hero wins, everybody happy. Final scene: floating corpse of thing in sewer, minus bottom half. Close up on face. Eyes open. Mein Gott in Himmel! Mon Dieu! (whatever the Italians would say, but as I don't speak Italian, you can fit in an expletive,) I say that's going to be a bit of a problem, chaps. It's still alive, and can probably still breathe and threaten humanity.

(In 10 years time it's brought up a family, lives in a semi-detached little house in the suburbs. With it's ability to prey on humankind it has got a senior job at one of the big banks. Sorry, I shouldn't reprint extracts from How to Build a Career in Banking, by Alucard Lestat...)

So for 2 million years Homo Sapiens and their ancestors have grown to rule the earth, only to be threatened by a monster from a toxic Russian lavatory, literally in all senses directly as a result of their own activities.

Will humanity survive?
Will the monster breed?

Will it mutate further?
Will humanity fight back and win?

Turning this idea on its head, if the grey translucent beings were attacked by a multi-coloured predator, which seems to have evolved directly from them, what would they do?

Are you following this line of argument?

Maybe this is why the stock price of Apple is being discounted, despite profitable results. With a good single product, it won't be long before the greys mutate into other colours. Or worse all the IT mandarins, who are keeping their little empires intact by sticking with DOS/ Windows/IBM and making it too complicated to change, will just dismiss good products because they're only pretty colours and don't address the real issues of computing.

For don't address the real issues of computing. Read - I can keep my job as long as no-one knows enough about it for me to get caught out and so that I'm the only one who can fix the problems that I blame on users but is caused by the crappo system I'm foisting on everyone because:

I'm not capable of—

Don't want to—

Can't be bothered to—

Don't want to have to give up my jollies because everybody will understand by—

Don't want to have to give up my Industry status and invitations to lecture—

Don't want to have to give up my Invitations to corporate hospitality at Wimbledon, US Open, Super Bowl, Monaco Grand Prix because of—

learning anything other than I started to learn 25 years ago.

Or is that just cynical old me again?

I went to a Compaq Roadshow a while ago. It was a reasonable, semi-professional bun fight. I got a CD of War of the Worlds for my pains. Fell asleep during one presentation, hope I didn't snore. Decided to stick with Mac. It was only a short distance away from home or work, in a nice venue and the vegetable samosas were good.

At this point our friends elsewhere in the world can substitute their own beefs along similar lines but I can only speak from my experience.

Let me address my final question to my friends in the United Kingdom & Yorkshire:

Can you remember the last time you were invited to anything by Apple, which didn't involve you traveling to somewhere in the South East of England?

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