

THE RIFLEMAN

RAYMOND CHEN & HAL AMES



CHAPTER 1

This story began when Raymond decided to go hunting for insects with his new invention, the Lego high powered HK416-C assault rifle. He was bored hunting insects close to his house, so he came up with a plan to go to an island in an uncharted part of the Pacific Ocean to find unique insects to hunt. His friend Tony thought it was a great idea and asked to come along.

It took several months to plan the trip. They had to save a lot of money for the tickets to get to New Zealand. Then they would have to charter a boat to get to the island.

Raymond and Tony worked hard to earn the money. They sold precious books over the internet around the world. Raymond was a collector of such books, so he had a lot to sell.

(Raymond was high ranking member of the Central Command. Tony did not know this. He thought that he was just a scientist looking to make a name for himself, when actually Raymond was on a secret mission to find the illusive Blue Nose Beetle that had special powers that could make the Central Command extremely powerful.)

When they had enough money, they began the long journey.

Since Raymond had been to New Zealand before, so he knew where to find the best insects there. He and Tony practiced shooting bugs for two weeks. Raymond continued to invent new guns that could shoot farther and more accurately.

Finally, the day came to charter the boat. They had a big box of Legos to take with

them so when it came time for the hunt, they would be able to build just the right gun they would need.

They walked down to the harbor and began to talk to the owners of the charter boats. They all said Raymond was crazy. There were no uncharted islands. But Raymond knew better. He was sure he could find what he was looking for and that there would be new and unique insects there to hunt.

Finally, they found a captain who agreed to help them, but he was expensive. Raymond and Tony offered to do work on the ship to help pay for the trip. It was a fishing trawler, so there were only two crew members. Raymond had to clean the fish while Tony had to sort the fish and throw back the ones they didn't need. It was a smelly job, and every night Raymond took a shower to try and get the smell off himself.

All they had to eat was fish, fish, and more fish!

Raymond sometimes used one of his high-powered rifles to shoot at the seagulls that were always looking for a free meal. They didn't taste very good, but better than the fish.

Four days into the voyage, the ship hit a ghost ship that had been hidden in the fog.

Raymond was sitting on the deck working on his latest Lego gun and saw it coming. He grabbed a life jacket. Just before it hit them, it appeared as a black shadow, then Bang! The ship went down. Raymond was thrown into the water. The only thing he had with him was the new rifle he was working on. Its name was M416, the biggest and most powerful rifle he had ever made. It used five thick rubber bands for its power. He had just finished it and was about to test it.

He bobbed up and down in the foggy night wondering if a shark might eat him. When he was younger, he swam with sharks. However, he had his M416 ready to shoot if a shark got too close.

He fell asleep, although he didn't want to. When he woke up, he was on a white beach with tall trees along the shore. He still had his rifle in his arms.

He stood up and yelled, "Tony! Are you here?"

There was no answer.

He looked around and saw the wreckage of the ship on rocks not far from the island. He raised his life form detector and it said, 'No life forms found'.

"I'm doomed!" Raymond said to himself.

He sat down on the beach and looked out at the sea and the wreck of the ship, broken on the rocks.

"I can't survive alone. I might as well end it right now and not suffer," he said to himself.

He took his rifle and pointed it under his chin.

Just as he was about to pull the trigger, something tapped him on the shoulder.

"Huh?" Raymond blurted out as he turned around to see Tony standing behind him.

"What are you doing?" he asked Raymond.

"Uh, I was just checking the rifle to make sure it worked," Raymond answered.

"At your chin? Isn't that a little dangerous?" Tony asked wondering why he would do that.

"Never mind, it's good to see you. How long have you been on the island?" Raymond asked.

"Not long. I've been walking on the beach looking for supplies when I saw you sitting here. I ran and yelled at you, but you didn't hear me," he responded.

"Do you think the captain, or his mate survived?" asked Raymond.

"I don't know. I haven't seen them," Raymond answered. "The ship looks pretty much destroyed."

Just then, Raymond saw some things floating in the water being pushed by the waves.

The two went into the water to get them. Raymond was excited! He saw his Lego box and his other rifles were part of the objects in the water. They also found some rope, box with bottles of water, a few cans of food, and a large piece of a sail.

Inside the Lego box he had a knife he used to make sure that all the pieces of Lego were smooth and fit together tightly.

They pulled the stuff they found up onto the beach. It was tiring work. They sat and rested for a while, but the sun was getting higher and it was getting hotter on the beach, so they moved up under the trees to get some shade.

CHAPTER 2

The first thing they needed to do was build a shelter from the sun and the rain. Raymond had bought a book about survival, and he was glad he had. He also had watched a YouTube channel called 'The Survival' where he learned how to build different kinds of shelters. He decided to build an underground shelter with a waterslide for fun, and another room for keeping rifles and bugs safe.

First, they had to cut bamboo and make shovels for digging. The knife in the Lego box was perfect for this. On 'The Survival' Raymond learned many skills that would prove to be very helpful in creating the shelter. What he did not anticipate was how much work it was. After one day they only had a hole in the ground so for the first night they had to sleep under the stars.

"Can you believe how many stars are in the sky?" Tony commented.

"It's beautiful, but I think now one of the stars is going to explode," Raymond said while staring up at the sky looking for the one that was going to explode.

"Are you joking?" Tony asked. "How do you know?"

"No, really," Raymond said. "Look!"

As he was speaking a large stream of energy beamed from the sky. It was really beautiful with the colors. It was Betelgeuse in the Orion constellation.

"How did you know that?" Tony was shocked.

"I read a lot," Raymond answered. "This is great. Now we have enough light to work."

"I'm tired. I want to sleep," Tony responded while he pulled his blanket over his head.

"We can see it during the day as well and it will last for about a month," Raymond said as he looked up at the sky in wonderment.

The explosion lit up the island, so it was like being in a city with night lights. It was easy to find things, not like when it was dark before.

Raymond went back to work on the shelter while Tony slept.

In the morning, Tony could not believe how much work was done. Raymond had the first room almost finished. There was enough room for their supplies. Soon afterward it began to rain. Tony was glad Raymond had worked all night.

“Now let’s get some rest until the rain stops. Then we can hunt for insects,” Raymond said as he lay on the ground of the new shelter, safe from the rain.

Raymond fell asleep.

Tony was not tired. He decided to start digging the second room. He went the wrong way and soon the roof began to fall down on him.

“HELP!” Tony screamed.

Raymond woke up just in time to pull Tony out of the dirt. Water began to flow into the shelter from the hole in the roof.

“What did you do that for?” yelled Raymond. “You were supposed to go that way!” he pointed to the other wall.

“Ah, so what do we do now?” Tony asked as he tried to get the dirt out of his ears and off his clothes. “It looks like we might have to start another shelter.”

Raymond suggested, “We should get a lot grass and stick them together with wet mud. When the mud dries off then put it on the roof. Lastly, we should stick the edge of the roof with wet mud. In the old days they were called soddies.”

Tony said, “That’s a great idea. I think the shelter will last longer that way, but it seems to be a lot of work.”

“We wouldn’t have to do this if you had followed the plan,” Raymond stated.

Raymond dug a ditch for the water to run out of the shelter until the roof was fixed. In the meantime, they began to dig the tunnel in the direction Raymond had planned in the first place.

It took two days to create the second room. Then the rain stopped, and they were able to start on repairing the roof. That part was fun, although finding everything they needed was a little hard.

Finally, the shelter was finished, and then Raymond got an idea.

“We need to dig a well, so we have fresh water in the house. Why don’t we dig in the corner until we find water? It will be easier to get water if we have a well,”

Tony agreed and they begin to dig.

Suddenly the dirt gave way and Tony fell into the hole and disappeared.

“Tony! Where are you!” Raymond yelled.

To his surprise, he heard Tony yell back, “Jump in! It’s great!”

Raymond jumped in and found himself in an underground river like a giant water slide and then dropped into an underground lake. There was just enough light that he could see Tony swimming around in the water shooting water out of his mouth into the air. It looked like fun.

After swimming for a while, Tony noticed where the light was coming from and swam toward it.

Once again Tony disappeared.

“AHHHHHH!” he yelled and then it was silent.

Raymond swam over to see what had happened, and then he got caught in the current and he too fell.

SPLASH! Raymond found himself in the sunlight in a pool of water at the bottom of a waterfall.

“That was really cool! I want to do that again!” yelled Tony.

“Me too!” responded Raymond.

“We need to swim the shore, or we’ll end up in the ocean. We might get eaten by a shark or stung by a jellyfish if we don’t,” Raymond said while trying to get to the edge of the river.

When they finally got out, they looked up and down the beach trying to figure how to get back to the house. After walking for about an hour, they finally found the path to the house.

“It isn’t that far to the river. We can do this every day. That way every morning we

can go for a swim before breakfast. That will be a lot of fun,” Raymond said.

Over the next few days, they realized that they needed salt to help preserve the food that they found. Raymond came up with the idea to build some drying ponds to evaporate the water from the ocean and make salt.

They dug a little river to a space where they could dry the salt. Raymond made a filter system out of bamboo and some of his Lego blocks. This helped to make sure the water was as pure as possible, and then the salt would be usable.

CHAPTER 3

After some days they finished everything. Now it was time to try the rifles and look for new things to shoot at. While Tony worked on making the shelter comfortable, Raymond was practicing his shooting skills. He found out that he needed to make some modifications on his rifles to make them more accurate.

Tony came to see what Raymond was doing.

He sat down and watched as Raymond figured out the solutions to his problems.

“You know what? I think we need to give our new home a name,” Tony spoke up.

“Huh? A name. Why do we need to give it a name?” Raymond asked.

“It will make it feel like we are home. I want to use my address from back home,” Tony suggested.

“I think we should call it ‘The Rifleman’s Lair’,” Raymond suggested.

“I like it. You have a great idea,” Tony agreed.

“I think I’m ready to go hunting. I’m tired of eating fruit all the time. I want meat!” Raymond declared.

“I don’t want to get lost, so we need to mark a trail so we can find our way back home,” Tony said.

“How do we do that?” Raymond inquired.

“Easy, we put red paint on the trees on our way out. Then when we come home, we will just look for the red marks,” Tony said proud of himself.

“Where are we going to red paint?” Raymond asked.

“Huh? Oh yeah, what if leave Lego bricks on the ground. We could follow them, right?” Tony came up with another idea.

“WHAT?! Use my bricks for a trail? I don’t have enough bricks for that. But I have an idea. We should make the island more like a city. We can use some of the wood off the boat to make street signs. Then we can just follow them,” Raymond came up with an idea

of his own.

“Yeah, and then we can name the streets after your Lego rifles,” Tony added. “But how are we going to get the wood from the boat? It is on the rocks.”

“We will wait until the low tide, then we can get to it easily,” Raymond answered. “And we can look for more supplies while we are out there. We just need to be quick before the tide comes back in.”

Raymond worked on his rifles and Tony went swimming while they waited for the tide to go out.

As the sun began to go down, it was time to go to the boat.

They ran down the beach and out into the shallow water to where the fishing boat was stuck. The light of the supernova star gave them all the light they needed.

Raymond was first on the boat and then Tony.

“What if someone is on the boat?” Tony asked.

“What do you mean? We haven’t seen anyone,” Raymond responded.

“I mean what if the captain is dead and he is still on the boat? His ghost might be here,” Tony was now afraid to go any further.

“Don’t be stupid. There is no such thing as a ghost. Let’s look for what we need and get off here,” Raymond answered, looking around to make sure. “I’ll give you one of my rifles, and if you really see one, shoot it, but I don’t believe that.”

The two found a wooden box and began to throw things into it. Raymond went below to the cabin while Tony stayed outside, watching for ghosts.

Raymond was alone when he suddenly heard a noise just under his feet. He looked down and said, “Great Scotland Yard! I found the Blue Nose Beetle right here on the ship. Who would have thought it would be here. I can’t let Tony know I found this, so I will have to give it a different name.”

CHAPTER 4

While Tony was standing outside, he heard someone coming for him. Tony thought it was ghost and shot him. Luckily, he missed, it was Raymond.

“Why did you try to shoot me?!” Raymond screamed at Tony.

“Uh, I thought you were a ghost?” Tony answered.

“You can be pretty stupid sometimes.”

“You’ll never guess what I found. I found a new species of beetle. I almost stepped on it. I think I will call it Rayton Dynastes Rifelus,” Raymond lifted the beetle to show it to Tony.

“Just looks like a beetle to me,” Tony answered.

“I would expect you to say that. You don’t know anything about beetles,” Raymond answered.

“Rayton what? What did you call it?” Tony asked curious about the name.

“I called it ‘Rayton Dynastes Rifelus’, you know Raymond plus Tony – Rayton. This is a beetle of the Dynastes family, only it is the biggest one I have ever seen. In fact, I think it is the largest beetle ever found. If you look at its horn, you will see that it is shaped just like one of my Lego rifles. Look here is the grip, here’s the trigger, and here is the barrel. You can look down into the barrel and see the bore. And best of all I didn’t even have to shoot it!” Raymond described his new find.

While he was looking into the barrel, a burst of blue energy blew out of it into Raymond’s face, knocking him to the deck of the boat. He sat motionless.

“Raymond! Are you dead?” Tony yelled.

There was no answer.

Tony began to look at Raymond to see if he was breathing, when suddenly he bounced up onto his feet.

“Woo, that was different. I feel great! Did you see that? I think I feel stronger,” Raymond said with a big smile on his face.

He lifted the wooden box with one hand, and the beetle in the other.

“Let’s get off this wreck and get back to our island. We have a lot to do,” Raymond jumped over the side into the rising water. Tony followed.

When they got to the shore, Tony looked around.

“I think I’m lost. I don’t know where our house is,” Tony was confused.

“Just follow me. I know where to go,” said Raymond.

He walked confidently up the beach and soon they were in the safety of the shelter.

“What do you think happened to the captain and his mate?” asked Tony. “I still think his ghost is around here.”

“I told you there are no things such as ghosts. Are you still a kid? Why are you afraid of ghosts? Come on, I’m here with you. You have nothing to be afraid of,” Raymond tried to compose Tony.

“I just have this funny feeling. I can’t get rid of it. I feel like we are being watched all the time. It’s scaring me,” Tony replied.

Then he saw something move behind Tony in the window.

“Wait a second,” Raymond began.

Raymond aimed his rifle at the thing and fired a bullet. There was a scream and then a thud as whatever it fell to the ground.

They ran out of the house to see what Raymond had shot. It was the captain! He was in pain since the bullet had hit him square in the forehead. Had it been a real bullet he would have certainly died.

“Don’t worry. He’s not dead. This rifle only kills insects. Otherwise it will only make things unconscious,” Raymond told Tony.

Tony bent over to check out the captain.

“You’re right, but the bullet left a big mark on his forehead. I think it is bleeding too,” Tony reported.

“No, that’s just the red from the bullet. He isn’t bleeding. He will be fine,” Raymond answered. “Let’s get him inside so we can put some cold water on his forehead.”

“I guess I was right. We have been watched for a long time. I wonder where the mate is at?” Tony said.

Just then there was someone at the door.

CHAPTER 5

“What did you do to the captain? Did you kill him?”

They turned around to see the mate standing in the doorway.

“I asked you, what did you do the captain?” he demanded.

“Didn’t you hear our conversation? He’s just knocked out. He’ll come around soon enough,” Raymond said calmly.

“Why did you shoot him?” the mate asked as he looked down at him laying still on the ground. “He looks dead.”

“I hit him with a Lego bullet. It isn’t strong enough to kill him. Just wait a minute,” Raymond said.

He picked up a glass of water and threw it in his face.

The captain came to, shook his head, and looked around. “What happened?”

“These stupid kids shot you,” the mate said in an angry tone. “They tried to kill you!”

“Huh?” he looked at Raymond. “Why would you want to kill me?”

“First of all, we’re not kids. We’re grown up. Secondly, I wasn’t trying to kill you. And thirdly, Tony thought you were a ghost,” Raymond tried to explain.

“A ghost? Why would he think I was a ghost?” the captain asked, very puzzled at what he was being told.

“Tony is afraid of ghosts. You were sneaking around like a ghost, so he told me he saw something, and when I saw you looking in our window like a thief, I shot you. If you had come to the door, we would have been happy to see you,” Raymond continued.

“Seems pretty stupid to me,” the captain answered as he got onto his feet. “Nice place you’ve got here. I like it. It is much better than our place,” he said looking around the room. “We ended up on the other side of the island, and while we were exploring, we saw you on the boat taking things from it. Then we followed you here.”

Tony jumped in, “How are we going to get off of this island?”

“Tony, shut up. We still have to go hunting for insects before we can leave, you

know that,” Raymond said a little louder than he wanted.

“I think we will be here a while. This island is not on any maps where people want to go, but it seems to be pretty comfortable. Lots of food and clean water, and that supernova is making it interesting,” Raymond said.

Tony added, “We can document what we see here and then when we are home, we can submit the information to the astronomers what we have observed.”

“Ok, let’s get something clear. Astronomers predicted that Betelgeuse would become a supernova when I was kid. I’m sure that it is being seen around the world because the Earth is spinning. There is nothing special to report,” Raymond said. “The one thing that we can report is this new species of beetle I discovered on the boat. I have named it Rayton Dynastes Rifelus.”

Raymond showed them the gigantic beetle he found while getting things off the ship.

“Now this is something that will make scientist want to come here in the future,” Raymond said proudly.

“First, they have to find us and rescue us,” Tony spoke up.

“Ah, don’t worry about that. We have everything we need right here,” Raymond explained.

“Not my family! Not my girlfriend! Not my video games! We don’t have everything I need. You’re the one who wanted to come here, not me. I thought we would be gone no more than a month. It could be years!” Tony showed how upset he was.

“Tony, it has been less than a week and we are doing fine. Just relax. We will be home soon enough. I think it’s time I told you about my plan,” Raymond began.

“Your plan? What plan is that?” Tony asked, now very confused.

“I think people can build a city here, once they discover it. This place could be the next big resort island. But first, I must explore it for new insects. Then we can go home,” Raymond went on.

“And how do you propose we get home?” the mate asked.

“That will take care of itself when the time comes,” Raymond answered.

Something was different about Raymond. He began to turn blue.

“What’s wrong with him? Why is he blue?” the captain asked.

“He got covered in blue smoke from the monster beetle he found on the ship. Suddenly he was really strong. Now he’s turned blue,” Tony told them.

“That’s strange. Do you think he is dangerous?” the mate inquired.

“Wait! I just turned blue? Yikes, how did that happen?” Raymond was surprised.

He looked into a pan of water and saw his reflection.

“How cool is this?” Raymond exclaimed. “I’m totally blue like Force Ghost.”

“You watch too many Star Wars movies,” Tony commented.

“I think it is time to go hunting,” Raymond said as he went to get his rifle from the other room.

While he was gone the captain said to the mate, “I think we need to get out of here. That guy is scaring me.” He turned to Tony, and said, “What is the fastest way out of here?”

“Jump into that hole over there. You will slide down into our swimming pool. Then go over the waterfall and you will end up on the beach. It’s the fastest way I know,” Tony directed them to the hole in the floor. “Don’t touch the water filter machine. It will break if you do.”

Just as Raymond entered the room with his rifle, the captain and the mate jumped into the hole with a scream.

“Where did they go? Why are they leaving?” Raymond asked.

“They are scared of you,” Tony replied.

“Why?” asked Raymond.

“Cuz you’re blue. I think they’re scared of ghosts too,” Tony surmised.

“Are you afraid of me?” Raymond asked.

“Naw, you’re just a little strange, that’s all,” Tony smiled.

“Let’s go hunting!” Raymond said as he headed toward the door.

“I want to take a nap. I will join you later,” Tony said as he lay on the straw bed he had made.

Raymond walked out into the sunlit day. The sun was just coming up in the horizon.

“It’s a good day to go hunting!” Raymond said to himself.

He walked down the path to the beach. He decided to go to the right and look for a stream coming out of the forest. He knew that beetles like to be near water.

He was getting hot. He looked down at his arms and he saw smoke coming off them.

“UGG! I’m BURNING UP!” Raymond yelled.

He ran to the ocean and jumped into the water to cool off.

He felt better, but then something was biting his legs.

“Ouch! That hurts. What is biting my legs?” Raymond was now angrier.

He lifted his leg and attached to it was a giant venomous Water Bug. He knew what it was from pictures in his science book.

“I’m a goner for sure!” yelled Raymond, but then nothing happened. He took his rifle and shot the bug in the face. It let go and sank to the bottom.

Raymond ran to the shore and looked at the bite marks on his leg. I should be dead. Then he realized that the blue smoke made it so the venom had no effect on him, but it made him very hot to be in the sun. So, he ran to the forest to keep cool.

The forest was dark and thick. Raymond walked slowly with his rifle pointed in front of him. He was ready for almost anything, except for the giant snake that dropped from a tree in front of him and wiggle its tongue at him and smiled.

Raymond shot two bullets and split its head into two. Then a hundred snakes came out of the forest and surrounded him.

“Uh Oh! I’m not sure I have enough bullets to kill all these snakes!” he thought.

He checked his magazine and then his pockets.

“I think I have enough, but if I use them on the snakes, I won’t have any left for the beetles.”

Then, to his surprise, he found another ten magazines with twenty rounds in each one in his cargo pockets.

“Where did these come from?”

But before he could finish, he began to fire his rifle and snake parts flew in every direction. He was bitten by two of them, but he did not feel it. His adrenalin was flowing. He had never experienced anything like this before.

“Bang, bang, bang,” the gun shot bullet after bullet.

Raymond remembered he could use full auto setting and the bullets flew out even faster.

Suddenly the forest was silent. The snakes were gone.

“Where did those stupid snakes go. I was having fun,” Raymond was not happy that his targets were now gone. “Maybe they will come back so I can do this again.”

Now it was time to look for beetles.

He took out his Rayton Dynastes Rifelus and made sure that it was ready to set his trap. Once again, the beetle blew blue smoke all over Raymond. He was now a very deep blue color.

“How do I get back to normal?” he thought. “Ah, it doesn’t matter. I kind of like being blue.”

Just then the beetle blew out black smoke. Now he was dark as coal.

“Hm, this could be good. I’m almost invisible,” Raymond seemed happy.

The beetle fired again, but this time it was like a giant trumpet.

“Do da da do!” was the sound.

Now he couldn’t see himself. He was really invisible. His rifle seemed to be floating in the air.

He looked around and saw what he was looking for. Giant Rayton Dynastes Rifelus Beetles were everywhere. He was completely surrounded. They began to make the same sound.

“Do da da do!”

He had to cover his ears.

He took out his rifle and began to shoot. The beetles began popping into the air, only they fell back to the ground and trumpeted again. He had to get his stronger gun, which

can kill a human. He made sure it was loaded and began to shoot, only the beetles did not die. They kept getting closer and closer.

Just when he thought he was going to be a goner; the beetles grabbed the Rayton Dynastes Rifelus and ran away. They disappeared into the forest.

“NO!” Raymond screamed. “Bring my beetle back! I have to show that to the world! Stop!”

It was gone.

Raymond noticed that he was now himself. He was a normal color.

“Drat! I liked being invisible,” Raymond was upset. “Anyway, if I am normal, people won’t be afraid of me. That’s a good thing, I guess.”

CHAPTER 6

Raymond walked home. He passed the dead snakes. And then out to the beach. He sat on the sand and looked up at what was left of Betelgeuse. It was not as bright. It would not be long before everything returned to normal. This made him sad. His discovery of the Rayton Dynastes Rifelus was now gone. He didn't have many bullets left, and he was all alone on the beach.

"What's next?" he was thinking when something crawled into his hair.

Raymond was shocked. He scratched his head, and something fell into his lap. It was a baby Rayton Dynastes Rifelus! It had just emerged from the ground.

He put it into his shirt pocket and ran back to the shelter.

"Tony! Where are you?" Raymond yelled as he entered the house.

Tony woke up from his nap.

"What do you want?" he asked while rubbing his eyes. "Hey, you're not blue anymore."

"Yeah, but look! I found a baby Rayton Dynastes Rifelus beetle on the beach!"

"Where is the giant one?" he was curious about where it had gone.

"There are thousands of them in the forest and they took him back, but then I found the baby," Raymond explained.

"Huh, they took him back?" Tony was confused.

"Yeah, they blew their horns like trumpets and then they came and took it. After that I was no longer invisible," Raymond told the story.

"Invisible? Now you're getting pretty strange, do you know that?" Tony said. "Why do you say you were invisible? How do you know that?"

"The Rayton Dynastes Rifelus blew black smoke at me and made a trumpet sound. After that I turned invisible. I looked down at myself and I couldn't see anything. I had to be invisible. All I could see was my rifle floating in the air," Raymond tried to convince him.

“Sure, sure, whatever you say,” Tony was not convinced. “We need to fix dinner. Let’s go inside.”

“You don’t want to hear the rest of the story?” Raymond was disappointed that Tony was not really listening.

Over dinner Raymond told the whole story. Tony really didn’t care, but he listened anyway.

After dinner they went swimming in the pool. While they were floating and relaxing, the captain and the mate returned. They began to take things from the shelter they needed for their home.

Just as they were about to leave with bags of food and supplies, something blocked the door. There was a loud noise like a trumpet and then blue smoke filled the doorway. The two fell back onto the floor, unconscious. When Raymond and Tony got back, they couldn’t believe what they saw. The baby Rayton Dynastes Rifelus beetle was guarding the door, and the captain and mate were laying on the floor, motionless.

“I think he killed them!” Tony blurted out.

Raymond went to check on them.

“They’re OK, just unconscious. I think the little guy blew smoke on them. I hope they don’t get the special powers.”

Then he saw the bags on the floor with their stuff inside.

“They were trying to steal from us, and the little beetle stopped them. I think he likes us,” Raymond commented. “Can you believe it?”

Tony agreed with Raymond and went to pet the little guy, but he ran away.

“Where did he go?” Tony said as he looked around for him.

“There he is. He’s on my bed,” Raymond noticed. “I don’t think he likes you.”

“Why not?” Tony was sad.

The captain and the mate began to come to.

“What happened?” the captain asked.

“You were trying to steal our things and our friend stopped you,” Raymond said

while pointing his rifle at them.

They both backed up against the wall, trying to get out of range of the Lego rifle.

“That won’t work. My gun is more powerful than you think. Remember when I shot you in the head?” Raymond said trying to make sure they wouldn’t try to escape.

“We’re sorry. You have so much more than we do, we just thought you would like to share some of it,” the captain tried to give an excuse.

“That is so untrue. You are thieves and you know it. Now just get out of here, before our beetle blasts you again,” Raymond threatened.

“You haven’t seen the last of us, Raymond!” the mate yelled at Raymond as they walked out of the shelter.

They watched as the two went down the path to the beach.

“I wonder if we can find more of those Rayton Dynastes Rifelus Beetles to help protect us,” Tony thought about how it had helped them. “If we can find more, we can set traps, and then they won’t be able to sneak up on us anymore.”

“That is a great idea!” Raymond responded.

He gets his rifle, put the little beetle in his pocket and headed for the beach where the beetle found him.

CHAPTER 7

Meanwhile the captain and the mate were struggling to survive. They did not have the same training that Raymond had done before the trip. They could only find coconuts and bananas to eat. The mosquitoes were eating them. Spiders, snakes, and rats were everywhere.

The managed to build a platform above the ground to sleep on out of bamboo. This kept the critters from biting them at night.

“I think we need to make friends with Raymond and Tony. They know how to survive out here,” the mate suggested.

“Are you kidding? They’re city boys. We know about survival on the sea. We’re too smart to need to ask them for help,” the captain responded.

“Ah.... Do you really think we are doing well? Look at what they have. Why did we need to steal from them? Huh?” the mate gave his opinion on how things are going.

The captain gave in and agreed with the mate.

“Let’s get our stuff and go over there and apologize. Maybe they will let us stay with them,” the mated suggested.

Reluctantly the captain agreed, and they walk down the beach towards the shelter Tony and Raymond had built.

While they were walking, something jumped out of the sand in front them. A sand snake raised its head and stared at them. It was huge. It wiggled its tongue in the air. The two men jumped back.

“What is that!” yelled the mate.

“I have no idea, but I think we need to run!” the captain responded.

They turned and ran, but the snake followed them.

“Head for the ocean. It was in the sand, so maybe it doesn’t like the salt water,” the mate screamed.

The snake raised its head ready to have a meal, when suddenly its head exploded.

Blood went flying everywhere.

When the two looked back, they saw Raymond with his Lego AK-47 Assault rifle in his hands. He was about a hundred meters away, smiling.

“Nice shooting kid!” the captain said.

“That is why I build these rifles. I have been doing this for years and I have been practicing shooting them. I’m a marksman,” Raymond explained proudly as he walked toward them.

“Where are you going?” he asked.

“Well, to tell you the truth, we were heading toward your shelter. We think yours is much better than ours,” he paused. “Why did I just say that?”

The mate was proud to agree.

“We don’t have room for you to stay in our shelter, but we can teach you how to build your own,” Raymond informed them.

They walked to where he and Tony lived, and he gave them the tools to build their own.

“We don’t want to build one. We want to stay with you,” the mate said as he threw the shovel onto the ground.

“Have it your way,” Raymond responded. He picked up the shovel, went to his house and closed the door.

The captain went to the door and pounded on it very hard.

“Let us in! You are not being fair!” he screamed.

Raymond and Tony ignored him and went swimming.

When they got back, the captain and the mate were sitting under a palm tree sleeping.

“Boy, those guys are really lazy,” Tony said in disgust. “Why can’t they do anything for themselves. “I think we need to teach them how to build a shelter.”

“I tried that, but they don’t want to. They want to live with us,” Raymond answered.

“Come on, you just gave them a shovel. We need to show them how to do it,” Tony suggested.

“No way. We will end up doing all the work ourselves. Let them do it,” Raymond responded and then went into their house.

Tony followed and began to prepare dinner.

About an hour later there was a knock on the door.

“Hey you guys, we’re hungry. We can smell the food out here. Can you share with us? We haven’t had a good meal in weeks,” the captain pleaded.

Tony looked at Raymond, “We have enough to share, why not?”

Raymond agreed, “You’re a good man Tony. I’m not so generous.”

Tony went out with food for the two men. They ate the food so fast Tony could not believe it.

Afterward, Tony secretly told them how to build the shelter and how to hunt for food.

“Thanks, we will try and follow your instructions. Can we use your tools?” the captain requested.

The next day, Tony waited until Raymond went out to hunt to give them the tools.

Every five minutes, the mate came to ask Tony to help. Raymond was right. Tony ended up doing most of the work. At the end of the day he was exhausted.

When Raymond got home, he was angry because nothing had been done to clean the house and no food was ready. He noticed Tony asleep on the bed.

He didn’t know why he was like that, so he cleaned the house and prepared a meal for himself.

He thought to himself, “Why is he so lazy? He usually does a lot of work around here.”

Just then Tony woke up.

“I didn’t hear you come in. Have you been home long?” Tony asked while rubbing his eyes.

“Yeah, I noticed you didn’t do anything around here. Why are you so lazy?” Raymond asked.

“I helped the captain and the mate dig their new shelter. I ended up doing most of the work. I am really tired,” Tony said as he looked around for some food.

“I am sure they appreciated it. I’ll get some food for you, OK?” Raymond offered.

“That’s very kind of you,” Tony answered.

Raymond went out to see the new shelter. Tony had done a really good job. Except for the tunnel to the swimming pool, it was just like theirs.

“Are you guys comfortable in there?” Raymond asked.

“Yes, this is really nice. Much better than our last place,” the captain replied.

Suddenly, Raymond had an idea and ran back to his shelter.

CHAPTER 8

When he arrived back at the shelter, he told Tony he had an idea on how to protect themselves from the snakes and the beasts on the island because many times snakes had come into the shelter through the windows.

“What’s the idea?” asked Tony.

“Get some rest and then join me on the beach,” Raymond replied.

Later, Tony went to the beach and saw Raymond sitting in front of a fireplace he had built by himself.

“What are you doing?” Tony inquired.

“I’m making solid glass to put on the windows. That way the insects and snakes can’t get in,” Raymond said proudly.

“How did you learn to do that?” asked Tony.

“I read the book ‘Robinson Crusoe’. In it he makes glass. I remembered about it just now. Didn’t you read this book?” Raymond asked.

“Yes, but I don’t remember much about it except for his friend Friday,” Tony answered.

“OK, you can help me get the sand into the fire. Then we can heat it up to make the glass,” Raymond gave instructions.

Once a pane of glass was made, they set it on some rocks to cool. It took most of the day, but when they were done, they were happy.

The glass fit perfectly in the windows. The bad thing was not as much air came in to keep the rooms cool. Raymond built a ventilator that turned with the wind outside.

“That is the coolest thing I have ever seen!” exclaimed Tony.

The next day the captain and the mate came to visit.

“Hey, we want windows and a fan too! Can you make them for us?” the captain asked while admiring what Raymond had built.

Raymond explained, “Make them yourselves. I can tell you how to do it. You take

sand.....”

The captain and the mate went down to the fireplace and began to work. It took them three days to make their windows.

When Tony and Raymond went to see how they looked, they had to laugh. They didn't fit the windows, and they couldn't see through the glass. It was too thick. When they went inside to see the fan, it was on the floor. They didn't know how to put it up.

“Man, we have to do everything for you. How did you ever live?” asked Tony.

There was no response.

Tony and Raymond mounted the fan and made sure it was working before they left.

“Do you have any food?” the captain asked.

“Yes, but why don't you get your own? There is fruit everywhere and lots of bugs to eat,” Raymond answered.

“BUGS? We don't eat bugs,” the mate responded.

“There are fish and birds. You can eat them, right?” Tony was disgusted at their attitudes.

“Oh yeah, fish. We Can do that,” the mate responded with a smile.

“Duh, you're a fisherman, you should know how to catch fish. Then you can share with us,” Raymond said, sarcastically.

Raymond and Tony went home to prepare dinner.

“Tony, we have more work to do, but I have another idea. You can prepare dinner and I will go back to the beach,” Raymond said as he ran out.

Later, Raymond came back with two big round pieces of glass. Each was half of a glass ball that were bigger than two grown men. When they were put together, they made huge ball. Raymond took one of the pieces and made a hole in the center of it, which could fit one of his sniper rifle's barrel perfectly. Then he drew a circle on the wall and started to dig through the wall big enough for the half glass ball. He put the half of the circle into the wall with the round side pointing out. The glass was strong enough to be bullet proof. He could see the beach from end to end, the forest as well as the captain and his mate's shelter.

No one could break through and he could see anything that was trying to attack.

A few days earlier, Raymond had come up with a new design. He called it the TAC-50 sniper rifle. It had the farthest range of any Lego rifle ever made. It could easily kill a human at the distance of a kilometer. He mounted the sniper rifle into the half circle and checked to see if it was perfect. He was satisfied that no one could get to the shelter without him being able to see them first.

After he finished, he checked to make sure the sniper rifle was secure and couldn't be pulled out by anyone. It had a full range of motion allowing Raymond to shoot anything he saw.

Then he went to bed to get a good night's sleep. The next day was going to be very important. While he slept Betelgeuse began to dim. The super nova was ending. Now the nights were only lit by the stars and the moon.

The next day when Raymond woke up, he didn't see Betelgeuse any longer. This made him sad.

Raymond got to work immediately. He had the other round glass to work with. He put the last round glass to face the forest. He cut another hole into wall, placed the glass into it, and then got his Lego DL-Q33 sniper rifle. He had brought this rifle with him from home. It is very strong and holds more bullets than Tac-50, but it doesn't have the same range. It can shoot hundreds of meters, which was perfect for shooting into the forest.

After Raymond finished, he went to eat. Tony had already made a big breakfast. That was a good thing, since Raymond was so hungry.

CHAPTER 9

Just after breakfast, the captain arrived at the shelter looking for food. He noticed the rifle mounted in the wall.

“This is amazing. Are you expecting an army to attack?” he asked.

“You never know. In stories I have read, pirates and savages could attack at any moment. I want to be prepared,” Raymond responded.

“I think you have read Robinson Crusoe too many times,” the captain answered.

“I just want to be ready for anything,” Raymond said proudly.

“Do you really think Lego rifles can protect you?” the captain asked while checking out the setup.

“Tell you what. Go down to the beach and let me shoot you. Then you will know how powerful this gun is, or maybe you will be dead. Who knows?” Raymond was very proud of his invention.

“Whatever,” the captain said sarcastically. “Do you have any food to share with us? The smell of your breakfast came all the way to our shelter.”

“Do you like beetles? The food is mostly made of beetle parts. Do you want some?” Raymond asked.

“Yuck! I hate beetles,” the captain answered.

He left to go catch some fish.

Raymond yelled after him, “Do you want an assault rifle?”

“Why?” responded the captain.

“It might help you catch fish,” Raymond replied.

“You’re crazy. You can’t catch fish with a rifle,” the captain said.

“You never know until you try. You don’t have any other equipment. You might as well give it a try. Just bring it back when you are finished,” Raymond suggested.

“OK, I will give it a try,” the captain took the rifle and left.

“HA HA HA! I can’t believe we fooled the captain about our breakfast. Why did

you tell him it was all beetle parts when you know I used eggs, vegetables and small fish?" Tony asked.

"I wanted to eat more," Raymond said smiling. "I know he hates bugs."

Afterwards, Raymond went to test his Tac-50 sniper rifle in the shooting room he had just made. He looked out the glass and saw the captain. He could see him clearly through the scope. Behind him he saw a big snake. The captain didn't realize it. Raymond set his sights on the snake and shot off a round at it.

Smash! The head of the snake went flying. The captain turned around and saw the headless snake right behind him. He looked around to see what had killed the snake. He saw nothing.

"Where did that come from?" he thought to himself.

He took his gun and shot it to make sure it was dead. The body snapped into two pieces.

"Wow, this gun is powerful!" he exclaimed. "I should have no problem shooting fish with it."

He then walked down the beach to the pond.

Raymond laughed, "I got that snake and he never knew where the shot came from. This is great."

"What are you talking about?" Tony asked.

"Nothing, I'm just having some fun with the captain," Raymond responded.

Raymond continued to watch the captain as he went into the water. He could see a big fish swimming around in the pond.

"Hm, I wonder if I can get that fish?" Raymond thought.

He took aim and when he fired, the fish leapt out of the water with a hole in its side.

Once again, the captain looked around wondering how that happened. He went over and picked up the dead fish. It had a hole right through the eye.

"Whoever is doing this is a good shot," he said.

Then he remembered Raymond had the gun in the window. He looked back up at

the shelter, but the gun was hidden behind some trees. Raymond had hidden it behind camouflage.

Then he had a thought, “What if Raymond doesn’t like me? He can kill me with that thing.”

He ran back to his shelter, carrying the fish. He forgot the rifle on the ground.

Raymond got angry. He ran down to the beach, grabbed the rifle, and took it back to his hut.

Tony saw him and that he was breathing hard.

“What’s going on?” he asked.

“That stupid captain. I loaned him this gun to catch fish and he left it on the beach. It might be ruined by the sand. I’m never going to do that again,” Raymond was visibly upset. “I think I’ll go hunting now. I’ll be back for dinner.”

First, he went to the gun he mounted at the back of the house. He used the scope to see if there was anything interesting, and then he noticed something he had not seen before. Attached to a tree was a big yellow blob. It appeared to be the larvae of something, but he couldn’t see it clearly enough.

“I have to go and find out what that thing is!” Raymond said with great excitement.

He picked up his AKS-74U, the gun he had loaned the captain and went out into the forest.

CHAPTER 10

It was hard going through the jungle. He had a big knife with him to cut the growth around him as he moved slowly toward the yellow blob. He had to be careful not to get lost. This was the first time he had ventured so deeply into the forest.

He spotted the yellow blob and moved closer to it. He took out his camera and began to record what was happening.

The size and shape were like nothing he had ever seen before. Then it began to move. It got bigger and moved slowly up the tree from the ground. It disappeared under a large fern.

“What kind of bug is that?” Raymond asked himself. “I think it is a beetle larva, but I can’t be sure.”

He zoomed his camera closer to get a better idea of what it was.

Suddenly the yellow blob stood up. It was huge. It looked right at Raymond and then began to move toward him. Raymond dropped the camera and raised his gun, prepared to shoot it to save his life in case it came any closer. Then it stopped.

They looked at each for a time, and then Raymond realized it was going to be OK, picked up his camera and began recording again.

It began to change shape. The yellow covering exploded inside was the largest Titan Beetle Raymond had ever seen. It seemed to be stuck. It struggled to get free, but its leg was caught on something, Raymond walked cautiously toward and helped it to free its leg.

“What? I just found a Titan Beetle larva. No one has ever seen its larva before! This is so cool!” Raymond shouted. “But now the beetle is out. I have to take the larva casing home with me.”

He thought for a moment and then commented to himself, “How did a Titan Beetle get here? They are only in South America. What a discovery! I will be really famous, and that is the biggest Titan Beetle I have ever seen.”

The beetle walked a short distance away and then turned around and watched what

Raymond was doing.

He had a bag over his shoulder and he put the parts back into it.

“This is an amazing discovery! I will be famous. I found the Rayton Dynastes Rifelus Beetle and now the larva of the Titan Beetle. No one will believe me! But I have the recording, and no one can dispute that!” Raymond was excited.

The beetle turned around and crawled toward Raymond. It seemed to be very curious. As Raymond turned to leave the forest, the beetle followed him.

“Maybe it thinks I’m its mother,” Raymond thought.

When he went fast the beetle went fast. When he went slow the beetle went slow. It was definitely following him.

When he got back to the house, he called to Tony, “Hey Tony, come look at this!”

Tony came to the door and looked outside.

“What do you want me to see?” he asked.

“Don’t you see it? It’s Titan Beetle and it followed me from the forest,” he pointed to the big brown beetle that was just coming out of the jungle.

“Shoot it!” yelled Tony.

“Why? It thinks I’m its mother,” Raymond responded.

“Its mother? You don’t look like a mother,” Tony was very curious.

“Insects don’t know the difference. I was there when it broke out of its shell, and since then it has been following me. I’m not sure what to do. I need my beetle book to find out what this thing eats. I hope it’s not us,” Raymond joked with Tony.

The beetle came to the doorstep of the cottage and looked around. Tony backed away, hoping it would not come in.

Raymond picked up his beetle book and quickly looked up the Titan Beetle. He discovers that they do not eat once they come out of the shell, but they can bite when they are in danger.

“What do you think it wants?” asked Tony, still afraid.

“From what I can tell, it’s just following me,” Raymond answered.

“Why don’t you go outside and then it will follow you away from here. I don’t want that thing in our house,” Tony was a little more than upset.

“It won’t hurt you, unless you make it mad. Anyways, it’s smaller the Rayton Dynastes Rifelus Beetle,” Raymond commented.

“Yeah, but it’s dead,” Tony reminded him.

“No one can deceive my eyes,” Raymond joked. “It’s really not dead, it’s pretending!”

Tony didn’t think it was funny at all.

Raymond picked up the Titan beetle and it began to move again. He had to use both hands to pick it up.

“I’m going to hunt for more Titan Beetles to see if I can find a mate for this one,” Raymond said as he left with his new friend.

“How are you going to prove you found that? Are you going to kill it to add to your collection?” Tony asked.

“You know better than that. I only collect beetles that are already dead, or the ones that die in my cage at home. If it dies, yes, I will add it to my collection, but I won’t kill it, I have never done that, on purpose, anyway.”

“Then why are you hunting with you Lego guns?” Tony asked.

“The one I’m using doesn’t kill beetles. It only stuns them so that I can find out what kind they are,” Raymond responded.

“Don’t you think you have enough already? I thought you said when you found a unique beetle we could go home,” Tony asked.

“I just want to find some more, and then we can work on going home,” Raymond answered.

“You know how to get home?” Tony asked, very curious about what the answer might be.

“I have some ideas,” Raymond replied. “Just wait. It won’t be too much longer.”

Tony wasn’t happy with the answer.

Raymond walked down the path to the beach.

CHAPTER 11

In the distance, Raymond saw black clouds growing. There was lightning flashing. The sound of thunder rolled across the waves.

“Oh no! A big storm is coming. I had better get back to the shelter!” Raymond yelled.

As he started to turn, he thought of something, “What if the lightning strikes my shelter?”

The storm was still far away, but it was moving fast. He ran back to the shelter and yelled out to Tony, “Tony! We need to get to work!”

When he got inside, Tony was not there. Raymond looked everywhere but couldn't find him. He looked down into the pool and saw him swimming. Raymond realized he had jump into the water too.

“Tony, there is a huge storm coming. We need to get out of here, and fast!” Raymond told him. “If the rain gets hard it could flood this river and then we will be gonners. We have a lot of work to do make the shelter stronger. Let's go!” Raymond swam to the waterfall with Tony right behind him.

They ran up the hill to the shelter and began to put palm leaves over the windows and added more wood to the roof.

Raymond got took one of the fishing poles he had gotten from the ship and placed it pointing to the sky. He was glad that he had gotten one of the professional metal ones from the case. He was also glad he had not given it to the captain. It made the perfect lightning rod.

“What about the captain and the mate?” asked Tony.

“They know how to get here. If they are smart, they will come soon,” Raymond answered. “But I am not going get them. We don't have enough time before the thunderstorm gets here.”

Once inside, Tony and Raymond organized everything making sure nothing was on the floor in case the water came inside.

Then they waited.

The air went silent. The birds began to fly away. The sky got darker and darker, until the storm let loose its fury.

There was a knock at the door. Raymond opened the door while the captain and the mate fell through the door, already soaked from the falling rain.

“Oh my God! That is as bad as the storm that brought us here!” the captain said. “I hope that the ghost ship doesn’t make an appearance. We have no idea what it will do to us this time.”

The wind picked up and when Raymond looked out the window, he saw the palm trees flying past and the rain was going sideways. He couldn’t see the beach; the rain was too heavy.

A hole opened in the roof and water began to run into the hut.

“Quick, we need to dig a trench so the water will flow into the hole, otherwise the hut might wash away,” Tony yelled while he went to get the shovel.

After digging the trench and trying to fix the hole in the roof, the rain stopped as suddenly as it had started. The sun came out and soon everything dried out.

Raymond went out to inspect the damage and saw that the beach was covered in broken trees and in the middle of it was the wreck of the ship that brought them there.

“I think we need to get out of here. This island is completely destroyed,” the captain reported what he saw to the others.

“No way! I should be able to find a lot of bugs in the forest now. Everything has changed and they won’t have so many places to hide. This is perfect!” Raymond responded.

The others looked at him in amazement.

Tony spoke up, “You want to go hunting for bugs? What about the mess that the storm created? Do you realize that the trench we dug is making the floor softer and it is starting to fall into the pit below? We have built another hut in a different place.”

“Anyways, we can use the palm leaves and make glass in many different shapes,” Raymond answered.

“What good is that going to do? Why do we need glass?” Tony was now frustrated with Raymond and his ideas.

“OK, you build the new hut while I make the glass. When I’m done you will see that we will have a stronger hut than before. Or you can go to the captain’s hut and make it better,” Raymond answered. “I taught you how to make glass windows and ventilators.

Soon after, the captain returned.

“Everything in our hut is destroyed. It is completely gone, and everything inside,” he reported.

“I guess we have to start from scratch,” said Tony. “At least we still have the tools we made.”

Raymond left to go hunting and to make glass for the new hut.

Tony decided he wanted to go swimming, so he jumped into the hole. That was a big mistake. The water in the pool was full of mud and the water was running very fast. He was swept out of the pool into the waterfall and out onto the beach. He was completely covered in mud. He had to wipe the mud off his eyes to see.

“What happened to you?” asked Raymond.

“Don’t ask!” Tony said as he went out into the ocean to clean off the muck.

Raymond went back to making glass for the new hut.

When Tony returned, with most of the mud cleaned off, Raymond asked him, “What were you doing?”

“Uh, a part of the floor fell down and I dropped into the pool. The pool was muddy, and the water was fast. Then I ended up on the beach,” Tony made up a story so Raymond wouldn’t know that he was being lazy.

“I guess we really do need to get the glass done so we can reinforce the floor. I will be done with the glass in a couple of hours. If you and the others work hard, we should have the repairs done by nightfall. Then I can start hunting again,” Raymond suggested.

“Why are you always hunting?” asked Tony. “It’s about all you do around here, except when you are making glass.”

“It’s my hobby and it’s the reason we came here, don’t you remember?” Raymond shot back.

“UH, yeah, I remember, but I really want to go home now. It is boring here for me,” Tony responded.

“Go get working,” Raymond ordered him and then went back to work, ignoring him.

“Whatever,” Tony shot back.

CHAPTER 12

A few hours later, Raymond returned with several panes of glass. He made them blue so when he walked on them it wouldn't seem like they were falling into the hole.

"Hey, I thought you said the floor fell in? It's the same was when I left. I made extra glass to cover a bigger hole," Raymond was frustrated.

"UH, I slipped into the hole," Tony corrected his story.

Raymond did not believe him.

"I think you went for a swim. Well, you got what you deserved. You looked pretty silly with mud all over you," Raymond told him.

The rest of the hut was in better shape. The roof was repaired and when the glass was on the floor it made it more secure. It even felt like they were in a very expensive hotel. Shiny clear floors.

"Tomorrow we will repair the walls around the underground river and ceiling and seal it," Raymond thought about what to do next. "Hopefully by tomorrow the flood will have gone down."

Then he looked around.

"What is over there? Did you build a new room?" Raymond asked.

"No, the captain and the mate did that," Tony answered.

"Why?" asked Raymond.

"I guess they plan to move in," Tony responded.

"NO! That is not the plan," Raymond was angry. "They have their own hut."

"Not anymore. It is completely gone," Tony informed him.

"Tomorrow you can help them build a new shelter someplace else, not here," Raymond stated. "I can help to make the glass."

"I don't think the captain and the mate will be happy about that. They worked hard to make a room for themselves," Tony told him.

"I don't like it, but if they agree to work hard, then I guess they can stay. BUT if

they are lazy, I will kick them out.” Raymond paused for a moment. “Are you ready to make four meals at a time?”

“Hmm... I didn’t think about that,” Tony wasn’t too happy about that. “I will have to ask them to help. I hope they will also help to get more food too.”

“It’s up to you. You are the one who helped them stay, not me,” Raymond answered. “Tell them if they don’t help, they will have to go!”

Raymond left to make more glass to use in the pool to make sure the walls did not collapse from the weight of the glass floors above. He planned to put them up the next day after the flood went down.

The rest of the day, Raymond made glass on the beach. He didn’t know what was happening back at the house. A monkey had gotten into the house, went to the kitchen and ate all of the vegetables Tony had picked from the forest.

Tony was furious and took Raymond’s rifle and began to shoot the monkey. The monkey got mad and started to jump around the house breaking the furniture. Finally, Tony got it to leave, but he left a big mess.

When Raymond got home, he saw Tony cleaning.

“What happened here?” Raymond saw how badly the house looked. “Did you get into a fight with the Captain?”

“No, a monkey came in here and ate all the food. When I shot him with your rifle, he got mad. When he got mad, he destroyed the house. Then he left,” Tony explained.

“Why didn’t you close the door?” Raymond sighed.

“I forgot. I was swimming and when I got back this is what I found. By the way, the flood hasn’t gone down completely yet,” Tony shared.

“Why were you swimming when the flood hadn’t gone down yet?” Raymond asked.

“It’s fun playing in the deep water,” he replied.

“You could drown, you know that?” Raymond was surprised.

“I didn’t, did I?” Tony retorted.

“Never mind, I will help you clean this place up. Then I will hunt for more food,” Raymond said. “AND don’t forget to close the door. We don’t need monkeys in here again.”

“I have the glass ready for the swimming pool. We can install it tomorrow if the water has gone down far enough. It makes me nervous thinking that the floor might cave in under us,” Raymond informed Tony

After the room was cleaned up, Raymond took his rifle and left.

CHAPTER 13

Raymond had a basket to collect fruit and berries. While he was filling the basket, he saw a wild goat grazing on grass.

“Ah, fresh meat!” Raymond thought.

It had been a long time since he had goat to eat. Raymond crouched down so the goat would not see him. He checked his chamber to make sure he had bullets. He added another rubber band to give it more power. He took aim and let go five rounds very quickly. The goat jumped into the air, and then fell to the ground.

Raymond got up and ran to the goat. He bent over to inspect his kill when suddenly the goat turned its head and looked with sad eyes at him.

“Why did you do that?” the goat asked.

“Huh? You can talk?” Raymond was shocked.

Then it died.

“It must have been my imagination,” Raymond thought to himself. “Anyways, I can carry it home and we can have it for dinner.”

As he was leaving the meadow, two goats came up to him with their heads down ready to run into him.

“Why did you kill our brother!?” the first goat asked. “We are going to kill you!”

Raymond dropped the goat and pointed his gun at the goat.

“I don’t want to kill you, but I have to protect myself. We only need one goat for meat, but if you force me to kill you, I will add you to our menu,” Raymond threatened.

The goats backed off, but still looked very angry.

“May I ask you something?” Asked Raymond. “How did you learn to speak?”

“We were going to ask you the same question,” the goat responded.

“OK, then how did your ancestors learn to speak?” Raymond responded with another question.

“We have always been able to speak. What about you?” the goat answered.

“I am a human. We invented our language. I thought goats should speak goatese,” Raymond laughed.

“So, you speak humanese?” the goat commented.

“NO, I speak English and Chinese,” Raymond answered. “These are both human languages. Plus, humans have thousands of languages.”

“We only speak this language. All goats speak one language. It would be too complicated to speak more than one. Why do humans have so many languages. It’s stupid,” the goats were very curious.

“Stupid? You’re saying we are stupid?” Raymond questioned.

“Yeah, you’re stupid. One language is all you need,” the goat was now getting annoyed at Raymond.

Raymond bent over to pick up the dead goat, and as he did, the two goats charged him and headbutted in his backside and sent him flying across the field.

“Ouch! That hurt! Why did you do that?” Raymond asked while rubbing his butt.

“You killed our brother! You will pay!” the goat yelled at him.

Raymond was afraid. He looked around and the field was surrounded by other goats.

“Where did you all come from?” Raymond said as he looked at the goats. “I have been on the island for months now and I’ve never seen one goat.”

“We have been watching you. We know this island very well. It is not hard for us to hide from you,” an older goat who walked slowly up to Raymond answered.

Raymond reached into his bag and pulled out a small device. He put it to his ear and then said in a soft voice, “Tony, I think I need your help. I’m surrounded by goats who want to hurt me. I need you to go to the shooting room with the TAC-50. You will see the goats. I need for you to start shooting the goats so they will go away and not bother me anymore.”

There were 183 mags next to the TAC-50 so there was plenty of ammo.

Tony looked through the scope and saw the goats. He began firing and the goats began to jump into the air when they were hit.

Raymond pulled out his own rifle and begins to defend himself with the full auto turned on. Goats went flying in all directions having been hit by the TAC-50. Tony was having fun. It was like being on his favorite video game.

Raymond blasted the goats that were threatening him as well. It was not long that the remaining goats ran away into the forest.

Raymond spoke to Tony, "Great shooting! I never knew you were so good. They've gone now. I will bring a couple of them home for dinner tonight."

Raymond threw two of them over his shoulder and headed back to the shelter.

When he got back, Tony had already started a fire outside to roast the goats.

"That's a lot of meat," Tony said. "Should we invite the captain and the mate to join us?"

"Yeah, I think that would be a good idea. If we feed them, they might be more likely to help us defend ourselves from the goats if they come back, which I am pretty sure they will," Raymond agreed.

Tony left to get the captain and the mate, who were swimming in the pool to invite them to dinner.

Meanwhile, Raymond cut the goats and prepared the meat for the fire.

He heard a sound behind him. He looked to see what it was. There was nothing there.

"I guess I was just hearing things," he said to himself and went back to work.

Then he heard it again, only this time it was louder.

He picked up his rifle to defend himself. He turned and didn't see anything, but when he looked closer, he saw a line of army ants coming out of the forest. They had smelled the meat and were coming to have a feast of their own.

Raymond turned and ran away. He knew better than to fight army ants.

He met Tony, who was returning from getting the captain and the mate.

"Army ants are attacking our house! They are eating all of the meat. We have nothing for dinner now!" Raymond was panting from fright.

"Slow down. What is happening?" Tony asked.

“Army ants! They are eating our meat!” Raymond yelled.

“OK, I have an idea,” Tony replied. “We can get some branches and make torches with fire. We can throw them into the army ants to make them go away.”

“You didn’t see how many there were. We would have to burn down the entire forest to kill them all,” Raymond responded.

“We don’t need to kill them all, we just need to scare them away. They don’t like fire,” Tony was now trying to calm Raymond down. “I studied about them in school. I had an assignment to create a presentation for my class. It will work, but we have to hurry, or the meat will be gone. They eat a lot in a very short time.”

“OK, Let’s get going! If this works, I will be very happy. I hate ants!” Raymond was ready to try anything to get rid of the army ants.

The captain and the mate came up the path.

“You need to help us! There is a swarm of army ants attacking our dinner. We need to make torches to chase them away,” Tony advised them of what needed to be done.

For the first time the captain and the mate proved to be useful.

They made the torches and ran up to the where the meat was on a log ready to be cooked. The ants had already devoured about half of the meat. The ants were so thick that the log and the meat were completely covered.

Tony threw his torch at the log. It landed under it and the log began to burn. This caused the ants to scatter. Raymond lit the grass in front of them so the ants wouldn’t attack him. Then the captain tossed his torch into the jungle, followed by the mate. The ants retreated leaving the meat behind. Once the dead ants were brushed off the meat, Tony began a fire to cook it.

“That’s pretty disgusting you know. The meat is mostly eaten and has a lot of holes in it. What if I eat an ant?” the captain was not too happy.

“Don’t worry, the ants will be cooked too. They won’t bite you. In fact, they have a lot of protein,” Tony said.

“You’re joking. Aren’t you?” the captain asked.

“No, really. I studied these ants in school. Cooked ants are very nutritious,” Tony responded.

He took what was left of the meat and cut it into sections. He put them on a long stick over the fire. The smell was wonderful. It had been a long time since they had had any meat.

“What if those ants come back?” asked the mate.

“Don’t worry. I have an idea,” said Raymond. “I will show it to you later. Let’s eat and enjoy what we have. I’m glad I brought back two goats instead of one. Otherwise there wouldn’t have been enough for one meal.”

After dinner, Raymond went to see if he could bring back another goat, but when he got to the meadow, there was nothing there.

“Hm, the army ants must have finished them off as well,” Raymond thought to himself.

He looked up and in front of him was a line of goats. They had their heads down ready to attack.

“OH NO!” screamed Raymond.

Just as he was about to get trampled, the goats went flying this way and that. Raymond dropped to the ground waiting to get killed.

When he looked up, they were gone.

“What just happened?” Raymond said over the communicator back to Tony.

“I had a feeling those goats were going to return, so I had your back! This TAC-50 is a lot of fun. I still have 50% of the mags left. Got anything else I can shoot?” Tony was excited.

“Thanks for having my back, but we need to conserve our ammo. When it is gone, it will be gone. I’ll bring back another goat, but we need to put it somewhere where the ants won’t know where it is,” Raymond said.

He moved very quickly knowing that the army ants would return for another feast provided by the TAC-50.

CHAPTER 14

The next few days were very quiet. They spent their time relaxing. Raymond went out to the meadow a few times to retrieve the bullets Tony had killed the goats with. He didn't find many, but the ones he did find would be needed at a later time.

After that Raymond took an inventory of the bullets and counted about three thousand rounds. He was getting a little worried that if they continued to use them at the pace they had been. If they ran out, that would be bad.

He returned to the hut, had dinner, and fell asleep.

Raymond decided to walk up the beach to see what might be on the other side of the mountain. He was exploring. He made sure he had his rifle with enough ammo in case he came across some goats or other strange animals.

He was admiring the view of the ocean when he passed a large fallen tree. On the other side he stopped suddenly. In front of him on the beach was a large boat pulled up out of the water. Fortunately, there was no one to see him. He ran around the tree and hid in the branches. He got his gun ready in case he needed to use it.

He sat for quite a while, but just before he thought about leaving, someone came out of the forest toward the boat. To his surprise, it was a young lady, a pretty young lady. Following behind her three men carried goats and fruit. It appeared that they were going to take the food somewhere by the boat. They got into the boat and pushed off the island. Raymond looked to see if he could spot another boat somewhere, but nothing was there. He took out his binoculars to see farther out into the ocean. Quite a way out, he spotted the boat. It wasn't very big, and the four strangers were headed straight for it.

When he felt it was safe, he left the hiding place and went to where the four people had come out of the forest. He followed the trail and a few minutes later he found a straw hut. He looked inside and found a few pieces of trash they had left behind. Nothing else.

"I wonder what they were doing here and how long had they stayed?" he thought to himself.

He continued to search but he found nothing more of interest.

He sat down to rest. Then he heard a noise. It sounded like a rifle shot. He looked behind himself and standing behind a tree he saw a short man wearing only a loin cloth. He had dark skin and was holding a rifle. Raymond dropped to the ground.

“Why is he trying to kill me?” Raymond thought.

The strange man walked up to him, pointing the rifle at Raymond’s head.

Raymond curled up in a ball thinking his was a gonner.

“Hello,” the man said.

“Huh? Uh, Hello?” Raymond responded. “Why did you shoot at me?”

“I didn’t shoot at you. I shot that big monkey behind you,” he said while pointing at the dead animal. “He was about to jump on you, so I shot him.

“UH, thanks?” Raymond responded, not really sure about what he was saying. “That monkey was my friend. Why did you shoot him?”

“I thought he was going to hurt you,” the man replied.

The man helped Raymond to stand up.

“May I ask you a question?” Raymond asked.

“Sure, what is it?” he responded.

“How is it that you speak my language?” Raymond asked.

“That’s a silly question. I was about to ask you the same thing,” he answered. “Don’t you know that everything on the island can speak?”

Raymond remembered the goats.

“I ran into some goats and they nearly killed me. Thanks to my friend Tony, he used my homemade sniper rifle and saved me. Then they spoke to me. I was really surprised.”

“I have been watching you since you washed up on the beach after that big storm. You have done quite well. Usually people come here only for supplies and food. No one has stayed as long as you have before,” the man said.

Raymond stated, “I thought this was an uncharted island.”

“It is, but many people know about it. They like to keep it a secret. If many people

knew about this place, they would come and ruin it. While you have been here, you have done a lot of damage to the island. If others came, they would do the same.”

“Well, we’ve just been trying to survive. My friends and I have done the best we can. By the way, my name is Raymond, what is yours?” Raymond offered his hand to shake.

“Kevin, but most of the people who know me call me Kev. I have been here about ten years,” he answered as he shook Raymond’s hand. “Since you got here, you have done a lot of things. You are a smart person, but in many ways you are stupid.”

“Stupid? How have I been stupid?” Raymond asked.

“Your house almost fell apart, you almost got killed by the goats, you have damaged the beach with your glass making, and you have killed a very important beetle. I wish you would just go away. You don’t belong here. This has been my island,” Kev complained.

Raymond wanted to explain, but suddenly, Kev and the whole island flew away, and he found himself floating in the ocean.

“KEV!” his voice echoed. “Where did you go?”

He heard someone yell out, “Raymond, what are you doing? You are punching yourself.”

It was Tony.

Raymond opened his eyes. He was on his bed in the hut. He jumped up in surprise.

“Man, that was a bad dream! I met a guy named Kev and then everything disappeared, and then I was floating alone in the ocean. Thanks for waking me up. I was really scared,” Raymond said as he sat on the edge of his bed rubbing his eyes. “I wonder if those speaking goats were part of my dream.”

“Goats? What are you talking about?” Tony asked.

“You know, the talking goats that you shot with the TAC-50,” Raymond reminded him.

“Oh yeah. I remember. The meat was really delicious,” Tony recalled. “Sometimes I forget things. It is so boring here. Are we ever going home?”

“You have to check the forest first with me and the captain and mate have to come too. So, pack up and get ready,” he implored Tony.

Raymond went to the swimming pool to get the captain and the mate. They didn’t want to go to the forest, but Raymond insisted.

When they returned to the hut, he gave each of them a rifle and ammo.

“What is this for?” asked the captain. “Are you expecting trouble?”

“Kind of like that,” Raymond answered.

He still had the dream fresh in his memory. He wanted to be ready for anything they might encounter in the forest.

“If we need to use our rifles, only shoot when you have a good shot. Don’t waste our ammo. We don’t have a lot left,” Raymond instructed them.

“Where are we going?” asked the mate, who was not very excited about going into the forest. He wanted to relax in the pool.

“What about breakfast? We haven’t eaten yet,” Tony begged.

“We’ll come back later for that. I have something I have to do, and we need to do it now,” Raymond expressed how serious he was.

They left the hut and entered the forest. There was now a path from where Raymond had gone before, but the deeper they went into the jungle, the harder it was to walk and to see what was ahead.

“This is dangerous,” the captain said in a loud voice. “We can’t see anything. What if we are attacked by those goats?”

“Shush!” Raymond said in a soft but strong voice. “We must be quiet, or they will find us.”

“Who will find us?” Tony was really curious.

“The goats, or maybe even Kev,” Raymond answered softly.

“Kev? Who or what is Kev?” the mate asked.

“Never mind, you will find out soon enough,” Raymond replied while staring into the deep jungle expecting at any moment that something would jump out at him.

“I have never seen you so nervous. What are we doing out here?” the captain asked while he cut the small trees in front of him.

“This is very serious. If we fail, we will never get off of this island. You want to go home, don’t you?” Raymond responded.

“Of course, but I don’t want to die either,” he replied.

Slowly they moved forward. The jungle was thick, and the trees were tall blocking out most of the sunlight. Beams of light shown through the trees and lit up the insects who were flying above their heads.

As they chopped the vegetation in front of them, they came upon an opening that led to the beach on the other side of the island.

“This is where our old home was,” the captain stated. “We could have just walked around the beach to get here. Why did we have to go through the forest? That was really hard.”

“Just wait, you will understand in a couple of minutes. Stay in the forest and watch what happens on the beach,” Raymond responded. “If we had come down the beach, we wouldn’t be able to surprise them.”

They sat for a long time and nothing happened. As the sun began to set for the night, Tony got upset.

“Why did you bring us here? This was a waste of time. I’m going back!” he said as he started to get up.

Just then, a boat appeared headed for the beach.

“I knew it!” explained Raymond.

“What did you know?” Tony asked.

“I knew that part of that dream was true. Now everybody stay down and be quiet,” Raymond ordered.

The people in the boat pulled it up onto the beach and then headed into the forest.

“OK! NOW!” Raymond yelled.

The three men followed him, but they didn’t know what he was doing.

“Jump into the boat. We are going to steal it!” Raymond ordered his friends.

As they jumped into the boat, Raymond pushed it out into the water. The mate took the oars and began to row.

“Where are we going?” the captain asked.

“Back to our home. We need this boat later to get out of here and go home. We can hide it in our cave,” Raymond answered him.

“Those people didn’t look very friendly. What if they come looking for us?” Tony asked.

“I want them to,” Raymond answered.

“Why?” asked the mate.

“You’ll see,” was Raymond’s response.

They rowed the boat around to the other side of the island and pulled into the cave where the water flowed out from the river.

“Tony, smooth out the sand and captain help me cover this with branches,” Raymond ordered.

“What about me? What should I do?” asked the mate.

“Help Tony,” Raymond realized he had not said anything to him.

After the boat was hidden the four went back to the hut to watch for the strangers to see if they would come looking for the boat. Just as Raymond had said, they saw them walking down the beach looking into the forest to see if the boat was there.

Raymond laughed, “Look at them! They are never going to find the boat. Then they will be stuck here just like us!”

Just then Raymond frowned, “Wait a second. I noticed something strange.”

He used his sniper scope to see them more clearly. They had guns and knives.

“I think we may have made a big mistake. They must be pirates! The middle one is wearing a strange hat. I think I have seen that before in the books I read about these islands. They are entomologists who market unusual insects to businesses and schools who use them in experiments. That is why they have such a big net. If they find my *Dynastes Rifelus*

Beetle, I won't be famous. We have to protect it!" Raymond was now in a panic.

His practical joke was going to cause him to lose what he had come for.

"What do we do now?" he put the question to Tony.

"Let's just give them their boat back, and then we can get off this island and go home," Tony gave his opinion.

"Why do you always want to go home?" Raymond asked.

"I hate this place," Tony spoke up.

The captain and the mate agreed with him.

"No way! I haven't finished my work here yet. I need another rare beetle to take home with me," Raymond was upset that they wanted to leave before he had completed his mission.

The captain ran out the door to run down to the people on the beach.

"COME BACK OR I'LL SHOOT!" yelled Raymond as he went over to the TAC-50 and aimed it directly at the captain.

He stopped and turned around. He looked at Raymond who was staring down the barrel of his gun at him.

"You won't shoot me. I'm getting off of this island!" the captain responded as he turned and ran away.

Raymond fired two rounds to try and scare him, but it didn't work.

He watched as the captain ran up to the pirates and pointed up the hill to where the house was.

"He has betrayed us! He let them know where we are. I should shoot all of them!" Raymond was really mad.

"Wait!" said Tony. "You can't do that! Let's talk to them and see what they are doing. Then we can decide what to do. Come on Raymond. Settle down. It won't be worth it to shoot them. I am sure they have friends who will come after them."

"You're right. Let's go down and meet them. At least then they won't see my beetle," Raymond calmed down.

He released the clip from the gun and set it on the table.

They walked down to the beach to meet the strangers.

The captain was excited, “These people are here on a scientific exploration just like you Raymond. They have been coming here for over two years. They told me they have never seen a beetle like you have.”

This made Raymond angry, “Why did you tell them that?”

“They were telling me about their work here,” the captain answered. “They want to see your beetle. I told them it is up in the house.”

Now Raymond was really angry. He knew that if the entomologists got his beetle, they would get credit for finding it. He had to come up with a plan quickly to save his discovery.

He ran up the hill and got the clip from the table. He loaded the TAC-50 and pointed it at the group.

He yelled down to them, “If anyone comes close to the house, I will shoot them!”

One of the entomologists yelled back, “We don’t care. We’re leaving now that we know where our boat is. You can keep your beetle. We have enough already.”

The captain showed them the boat. As they dragged it to the sea, Raymond spotted another person joining them. He ran down the hill with his assault rifle on his shoulder, and, stopped about halfway.

Raymond knew who he was.

He called out, “Paul! What are you doing here?”

Paul looked up the hill and saw Raymond.

“I come here often. We are doing research on rare beetles, but this trip we didn’t find anything interesting. What are you doing here?” he asked also curious.

“Ah, we got stranded here after a storm. Kind of like Robinson Crusoe,” he replied. “I have something you might be interested in seeing.”

“What is that?” he asked.

“Come up here. I will show you, but you have to promise me not to tell what you are

about to see to anyone. This is my property and I found it. I have to get the credit for finding this. Do you promise?" Raymond was excited to show his rare beetle to Paul, but afraid he might try to take the credit for finding it.

Raymond knew he was taking a risk, but he was too excited to see someone who appreciated beetles the same as he. What made him nervous was Paul had cheated him once before.

Paul walked up the hill to see what Raymond was talking about.

Raymond took him to the house and showed him the beetle.

"This is what I found! I have given it a name, Rayton Dynastes Rifelus Beetle," Raymond was smiling. "It blows blue smoke and then some very strange things happen."

Paul looked at it closely.

"What you have found is a Paulus Dynastes Beetle. I found one of these last year here on the island," Paul told him.

Raymond was surprised. He did not expect this at all.

"Did you register the name?" he asked.

"Not yet. I plan to do that when I get back," Paul answered.

Now Raymond was suspicious. He didn't believe Paul. He thought that Paul was not telling the truth. He decided to play along and let Paul think he had fooled him. Raymond was sure he had a unique beetle.

"I have something else to show you," Raymond said. "I found another beetle after it emerged from under a tree. I am sure you have seen the adult beetle, but I bet you have never seen its larvae," Raymond went to show it to him.

"What? A Titan Beetle's larvae? No one has ever seen that before. Where did you find it? Actually, I don't believe you," Paul was skeptical.

"I have a video recording. It is proof that I found the larvae before it came out of its nest. I'm sure I will get credit for this," Raymond was proud.

"We'll just have to see," said Paul. "The association members will review it and then they will give their decision on if it is true or not."

Raymond put his beetles back into the box and then put them in the hiding place in his room.

When he came back, Paul was gone. He was already at the boat ready to leave.

Raymond was nervous. Everyone was leaving and he would be alone on the island. He thought about asking Paul if he could join them, and then he changed his mind.

“Have a good trip. I’ll see you back home when I get there,” Raymond said his goodbyes.

The boat pushed off and soon it disappeared around the large rocks.

Raymond ran up the hill to the house. He took out the radio he had hidden under his bed.

He turned the crank to give it power and then called out on the microphone, “Central Command, this is Raymond. I’m ready to come home. Can you come and get me now?”

There was a pause and then a voice returned, “This is Jack speaking. It is good to hear from you Raymond. We were wondering when we would hear from you.”

“I just met Paul. He was here on the island and he wants to get credit for the beetles that I found. I have to get back before he does. How soon can you get here?” he inquired.

“Just give me one second,” said Jack.

Raymond smiled. He looked out of the window. There on the beach was his rescue craft. It was a silver jet, and the pilot was waving for him to get on board.

Raymond collected all of his guns, his Legos, his clothes, and the box with the beetles inside and ran down the hill to the waiting jet.

When he got inside, he said, “Hi Jack, you got here quickly!”

Jack stared at Raymond angrily over the joke and then they had a good laugh.

The jet took off, and in a flash, they were at Central Command in New Zealand.

“Now I have to get back to China. I have to file my report before Paul does,” Raymond said to Jack.

“First you have to meet with the Director. He wants to make sure that the mission

we sent you on was worth the cost,” Jack informed him. “We can have you in China long before Paul gets there by boat.”

CHAPTER 15

When they got inside of the building, Raymond asked Jack to show him on the map where the island was.

“I’m afraid I can’t do that?” Jack answered. “We don’t know where you were.”

“Then how did you find me?” Raymond was very curious.

“We just connected to the signal from your radio and the jet did the rest.” Jack replied.

“Doesn’t the jet have a memory chip of its flights and the GPS coordinates?”

Raymond was getting desperate for an answer.

“Now that you mention it, yes, but only the director has that information. You will need to ask him.”

“Alright, will you take me to see him, please,” Raymond requested.

“I’m sorry, but that is impossible,” Jack answered.

“Why?” Raymond demanded.

“He is not here,” Jack replied.

“Where is he?” Raymond was getting upset.

“He is at his home,” Jack responded.

“Take me to his house then,” Raymond asked.

“I’m sorry, but that is impossible,” Jack said calmly.

“Impossible!? What do you mean?” Raymond yelled.

“It is impossible for you to meet the director. He doesn’t want to meet you,” Jack explained.

“Why, is he ill?” Raymond continued to ask.

“No, he just said he will not meet with you, and that is final,” Jack gave him an answer that he did not like.

“Well, if you can’t take me to see the director, will you take me back to China?” Raymond requested. “I need to deliver my beetle to the committee before Paul does,”

Raymond asked.

“No, that is impossible,” Jack stated again.

“WHAT!?! Why is it impossible to take me home?” Raymond was getting even madder than before. “Is it still about the director?”

“Yes, he has ordered that you stay here,” Jack answered.

“For how long?” asked Raymond.

“I don’t know. You will just have to wait until the director lets you go,” Jack was getting tired of all of Raymond’s questions.

Raymond sat down and crossed his arms in front of himself.

“This is really not fair! If you don’t let me go, I will lose all of the work I have done over the past few months,” Raymond complained.

(He had found the Blue Nose Beetle he was looking for, but he didn’t want anyone to know about it until he had a chance to show it to the experts in China. Then he would be famous.)

Raymond sat with his head in his hands trying to think of a way to get to China.

Jack began to laugh.

“What are you laughing about? This is serious,” Raymond looked up at Jack wondering why he was laughing.

“Joke’s on you!” Jack said.

Unknown to Raymond it was April 1st and Jack was playing an April Fool’s day joke on him.

“You can’t meet the director because *you* are the director!” Jack explained.

“Huh? What are you talking about?” Raymond was now very confused.

“April Fool’s! The director resigned yesterday and appointed you as the interim director. Next week it should become official!” Jack smiled and was happy that his joke had worked so well.

“Well, then if I am the director, I demand that you take me to China, and I mean NOW!” Raymond ordered.

“Yes, sir!” Jack said as he turned to run to the jet. “By the way, the coordinates to your island are stored in the memory of the jet. You can look them up while we are flying to China,” Jack informed him.

“Will I have enough time?” Raymond answered. “This jet is so fast; I may not be able to read them in time.”

“We won’t be traveling so fast. You have time. If we flew that fast to China, they will be suspicious, and sometimes flying that fast might make you vomit. Then I have to clean the plane. I would rather not have to do that,” Jack stated as he climbed into the cockpit.

Raymond took the seat next to him and brought up the GPS coordinates for the island. Then he had a thought.

“The beetle was on the ship when I found it. How did it get there? Did someone plant it there or did it fly there on its own? Maybe it was never on the island. Maybe it didn’t matter where I found it. Maybe someone is trying to fool me,” he surmised.

All these thoughts were going through his mind as he wondered if his discovery was going to be credited to him.

It was not long before they arrived at the Institute in Entomology. Raymond had the beetle in a large box. He walked in the front door and was greeted by the secretary.

“Hello, Director Raymond, how are you today?” he asked.

“Director? How did he know?” Raymond thought to himself.

“The board is waiting for you in the meeting room. They are ready for your presentation,” he directed Raymond to the staircase leading to the second floor.

When he walked in, he was surprised to see Paul! He was sitting at the table smiling at Raymond. Then he saw Tony.

He wanted to ask them how he got there so fast, but the other members of the board walked up to him to greet him.

“Hm, what’s going on here?” he questioned himself. “How did they know I was coming? And how did they get here so fast?”

The chair at the front of the room was open. He was told to go there and to prepare his presentation.

Raymond greeted the members of the board, “As you know I have been gone almost six months researching and searching for a new species of beetle. I believe I have found one. The illusive Blue Nose Beetle which I have renamed Rayton Dynastes Rifelus.”

The members of the committee looked at each other.

“We have already seen this beetle. Paul brought it to us, and we have documented the Blue Nose Dynastes Beetle in our journal. We are sorry that you worked so hard to bring this to us,” one of the members informed him.

“Alright, I guessed that Paul may have already found it, but I have something else you have never seen, I’m sure of it. It is the larvae of the Titan beetle. When I met it, it had just emerged. I recorded it as it transformed from a larva to an adult. Would you like to see the recording?” Raymond was confident that his discovery was going to change the way the committee reacted to him.

Raymond took out his phone and projected the recording onto the wall. The committee watched as the image began to appear.

It started as Raymond was walking through the forest. He had his Lego rifle and his pack with him.

“Ladies and gentlemen, I have a discovery that you will be amazed to see,” Raymond’s face was in the frame. “I have searched this jungle for the illusive Blue Nose Beetle, but I have found something even more amazing. I have found the location of the Titan beetle’s larvae and you will see how they transform into adults. Watch and learn,” Raymond’s voice on the recording informed the viewers of what he had discovered.

In the background, unknown to Raymond was herd of goats. They were watching him.

“What are those goats doing?” asked a member of the committee.

Raymond was embarrassed the goats were on his recording.

The goats attacked Raymond and he shot them with his Lego gun while he yelled at his friend Tony to help him. The goats went flying and blood was everywhere.

The committee was shocked.

“Why did you kill those goats?” Paul asked. “They were always so friendly to me.”

Before Raymond could answer, the voices of the goats were heard on the recording.

“Those goats can talk?” another member asked.

“Uh, yeah. They were threatening me. I had to defend myself,” Raymond responded. He had no idea that he had recorded any of this.

“That is amazing! What a discovery! Talking goats! Who would ever have believed it if we had not seen it? You are amazing!” the comments were flying across the room.

And then one of them stopped and said, “Why did you kill them? You have killed the only talking goats in the world. Now we only have your recording to prove they exist. How could you be so stupid?”

“Wait! Wait! There are some left. I didn’t kill all of them. Several of them ran away before I could shoot them. Actually, the meat was very tasty,” Raymond answered.

The last part of his confession was not very well received.

“You ate the goats?” one them asked.

“Yeah, I was hungry,” Raymond responded.

“You are an animal! You ate a living breathing scientific miracle. You should be put in jail for that,” the leader stood up to blame him of destroying something very special.

“Hold on! Calm down. I cooked them before I ate them,” Raymond spoke up. “If you want to meet them, come to the island with me and I will introduce you.”

He paused for a moment then continued.

“But wait, what about the Titan Beetle larvae? Don’t you want to see it?” Raymond inquired.

The room was so full of conversations about the talking goats, so they did not hear him.

Paul was upset. He liked the goats.

“Why did you kill the goats? They have never hurt anyone. They helped us every time we went to the island. No wonder they were mean to us the last time we were there. I had no idea you had killed them. How many did you kill?” Paul questioned him.

“Um, let’s see. I lost count after six or seven. I think we ate four. The good news is that most of them escaped and ran back into the woods,” Raymond said a bit embarrassed.

“Now the whole world will know about them. They will be studied and cut up to see what their DNA is and how they evolved to be able to talk. You have ruined everything!” Paul was really upset.

“Why? If we don’t study them, they will ruin us,” Raymond asked.

“They have already developed their language and can read and write. They have built a village and have a social society. When the explorers go there, they will destroy it all,” Paul tried to explain to Raymond the effects of finding the animals. “I have kept their secret for years, and now you have exposed them.”

“If we don’t research them then they might want to take over the world,” Raymond responded.

“What makes you say that? I have known these goats for a long time, and they are friendly. You have no idea what you are talking about!” Paul was now very angry. “I kept the secret to protect them. Now every scientist in the world will want to research them.”

Then Raymond said, “Your eyes can deceive you. You can study the animals but not their societies and government, and I don’t think you know too much about psychology.

“What does that have to do with it? Raymond you can be so stupid sometimes,” Paul was very confused at what Raymond was trying to say.

Raymond responded, “When people controlled the world, nothing could stop us.

When someone wants to stop us, we can defeat them. When the goat society grows their ambition will also be bigger. Then they will think of taking over the world. The only civilization that can stop them is we humans. So, they will try to have a duel with us, but we will have no problem stopping them. They won't be able to defeat us.

“If you are keeping it a secret, we might not have enough time to stop them. So, we humans should get control of them quickly. Then they will not have powers to defeat us.”

Paul shook his head.

“What are you talking about? Goats taking over the world? Are you nuts?” Paul could not understand where Raymond was coming from. “There is only one small group on an island that is not even on a map. How are they going to take over the world? Where are you coming up with these ideas?”

“I can give you an example. Do you think apes can take over the world?”

Raymond asked.

“You mean like in the movie ‘Planet of the Apes’?” Paul asked.

“To tell you the truth, I have never heard of that movie,” Raymond answered. “But actually, the apes did take over the world.”

“When?” Paul was now getting curious at Raymond's logic.

“Thousands of years ago the apes roamed the planet. They made their weapons and tools. Then they developed further and began to cook food with fire. After thousands of years, these apes became human. That is how apes ruled the world,” Raymond explained. “You may not believe in evolution, but in logic this can happen, and it might happen again. You're not going to keep it a secret for very long. They can already speak and have a society, and of course they are having babies. So, their society will get bigger.

“That beats the fact that they are on a very small island. Soon they will get off the island and spread around the world. You just wait and see.”

“Raymond, I think you were on the island far too long. Now you are seeing things that do not exist. Your brain is delirious and causing you to hallucinate,” Paul is so confused he doesn't know what to think.

“You’ll see. In the not so distant future, we will have to fight these goats. They are developing too fast,” Raymond tried to explain. “In just fifty years we will have the battle for supremacy of the planet.”

“You’re crazy Raymond,” Paul shook his head in disbelief.

The rest of the committee sat quietly listening to the argument.

One of the members spoke up, “What does all of this have to do with your beetle?”

“Yeah, I was about to tell you about that,” said Raymond. “Do you want to see the video of the larvae as it immerses?”

“That is why we are here,” the committee chairman said, frustrated at the time they spent listening to Raymond’s strange ideas.

“As I said, I was walking through the forest when I came upon this tree. I was videoing the plant life looking for new species of beetle when all of a sudden I saw this,” he said as he pointed to the place where the larvae poked its head out of the soil and then became a Titan beetle before his eyes.

A chorus of “Ahs” rang out around the room.

“Now that is something to research. Not the nonsense about talking goats,” the committee chair stood up take a better look at the video that Raymond replayed again.

Another member of the committee asked, “Do you think you could find another one of those?”

“Maybe, but it is so rare, it might take a long time. I’m afraid the goats will attack me if I go back,” Raymond explained.

“Stop with the goats, OK?” the committee chair yelled at him.

Then Raymond had an idea about how to protect himself from the goats, if he were to go back to the island. He stopped talking about the goats and just smiled.

CHAPTER 16

Raymond made the arrangements to return to the island, but when it came time to leave he had more important things to do. As the new director, he had to go to many meetings and make decisions on what was needed to be done. He became so busy he didn't say about his project to defend himself against the goats. His real plan was to get rid all of the goats and protect humankind from them. He was sure they wanted to take over the world.

When things slowed down, he remembered something.

He asked Paul, "Hey Paul, can you tell me how you were able to get to China before me? My jet was so fast, and yet you were already here. I thought you were on the boat with everyone else."

"What are you talking about? It took me about a month to get back," Paul informed him. "This is strange. You must have been on the island alone longer than you thought."

Raymond was confused. He went to the doctor to investigate what may have happened to him.

When he got to the doctor, he explained what he was worried about. The doctor took blood and tissue samples and gave him a complete checkup.

"I'll have the results in a few hours. Try to relax until then," the doctor told him.

Raymond went to his room to rest. He fell asleep almost as soon as he laid down on his bed.

He had a very strange dream. The goats were outside the gates of the compound and were trying to get over the wall. There were thousands of them. When the guards shot them with their Lego Rifles, the bullets just bounced off.

They were screaming, "Get Raymond!"

Raymond woke up with sweat running down his face. He was scared.

Just then his phone rang. It was the doctor. He asked Raymond to come right away. He had something important to tell him.

“Hmm... that is not good. Why does he have to tell me to my face and not over the phone,” Raymond thought.

When he got to the clinic the nurse immediately took him to a room and said the doctor would be there in a minute.

Raymond was nervous.

The doctor walked in and had his tablet with him.

“We ran several test on you. The results are here on my chart. It seems that you have been poisoned with a toxic gas. Do you remember anything like that?”

“I remembered the Blue Nose Beetle blew blue smoke into my face. I became really strong and then my friend said I was invisible. Since then I have been stronger and able to find interesting things. My mind is going faster, and I have been more creative. Is that a problem?” Raymond was now getting a little scared.

“Have you been seeing things that you are surprised about?” the doctor asked.

“Well, I saw a Titan Beetle larva and I met some talking goats that threatened me. Tony was always swimming when he should have been taking care of the house. The captain and the mate had their own house and were always annoying. My friend told me he took several months to return to China, when I was able to get here in only a few minutes, and he got here before me. I was promoted to director. Other than that, everything is normal, I guess,” Raymond answered the question.

“Hmmm.... that makes sense,” the doctor said.

“What? What do you mean?” asked Raymond.

“I’ll get back to you later,” the doctor said as he walked out of the room.

Raymond was confused. What was going on? Why was the doctor asking him so many questions?

A nurse came to the room and told him he could go.

Raymond went to his office, but when he walked in the room, Paul was sitting at his desk.

“What are you doing here? This is my office. I’m the new director, not you,”

Raymond stated.

Now Paul was confused.

“Who told you that this was your office? I have been the director since I got back. Why do you think this is your office?” Paul stood up to respond to Raymond.

“Jack told me that he appointed me as director. You’ve only been here a couple of days,” Raymond sat down and put his head in his hands.

Were all the things he had seen and done fake? Did the blue smoke from the Blue Nose Dynastes Beetle make him imagine all of this?

He sat there for a long time while Paul watched him.

“Paul, did I see you on the island?” Raymond asked.

“Yes, but you were distracted. You kept talking about talking goats. I wasn’t sure what was going on. My team found the Blue Nose Dynastes Beetle, but you kept calling it the Rayton Dynastes Rifelus Beetle. I had no idea what you were talking about and still don’t,” Paul responded.

Raymond left and went back to the doctor.

“Doc, I am so confused. Do you know what is wrong with me?” Raymond was now doubting everything that had happened to him over the last few months.

The doctor picked up his tablet and began to explain to Raymond why he was seeing the things he saw.

“The blue smoke that you inhaled has a chemical called triethyls porin. It is very rare. It causes you to see things that are not really there. In fact, it is still in your system. We have an antidote for it, but it rather painful since we have to inject it into your blood system. It will take a couple of days for all of it to be removed. You’ll have to stay in the hospital until it is finished,” the doctor informed him.

Raymond began to think that the doctor was also a dream.

He decided to leave, but two big men blocked the doorway and forced him back into the room. The pushed him down on the bed and tied his arms so he could not move.

The doctor came at him with the biggest needle he had ever seen!

“AUGGGGGG!!!” screamed Raymond.

The next thing he knew he was in the hut on the island laying on his bed.

“Hey lazy! Get up. We have a lot to do today,” Tony said as he pushed Raymond’s bed. “We have to finish building our house.”

“What happened to me?” Raymond rubbed his eyes.

“I think you just had a bad dream. You were yelling. What was it about?” asked Tony.

Raymond answered, “Nothing, it was too scary to talk about. I think I want to go home.”

THE END