

**Stan, Stan,  
the  
Bacteria Man**

a novelette by

Stephen M.A.

This novelette contains frank depictions of truth.

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This is a work of fiction. All characters, organizations, and story elements are fictional, because reality is too implausible.

# *Chapter One*

**STAN THE BACTERIA MAN** appeared in the Oval Office on a gloomy Tuesday morning.

Stan the bacteria man had a very bacteria plan, that man.

Do you know about bullet points? I have come to understand bullet points, and I find them quite useful.

Here, have some now:

- The air outside was 98 degrees Fahrenheit and 57 percent humidity, with a heavily overcast cloud cap under a dome of exceedingly stagnant high pressure, which was very important, but would not be so for much longer (you know how weather is).

(I enjoy sharing that with you.)

- The air inside was 69 degrees Fahrenheit and 25 percent humidity, because the Chief Of Staff liked to giggle and wink at assistants and use his mouth hole to say, “Hey check the thermostat for me.” Also because the building held a variety of priceless national treasures that would begin to mold above 45 percent humidity, although the staff of the National Archive responsible for protecting those treasures from horny Executive officers were not aware that fully 34 percent of pieces in the collection were already quite heavily infiltrated with a variety of thriving microflora who did not know how to read thermostats.

- The carpet on the floor was a blend of half-phase Rayonite Wool® twisted with nylon in the shade of Stalwart Declarations (a muted and quite creamy pastel gold), which caught the light just so and was a favorite of the First Family because the ancestral stock portfolio held a notably large position in DOW, which had formulated the polymer. Which was strange, because both the Chief Of Staff and the Chief Of Staff Of The First Lady’s Office meanwhile went out of their way to publicly extol the virtues of this “Do-

nated One-Of-A-Kind Carpet Featuring Uniquely Appalachian Free Range Jumbuck Wool Raised In The Rural Heartland” by an Australian sheep rancher named Jim Bean, whose teeth glitters like wet tiles in the publicity photos when he holds Independence Day Campaign Tithing BBQs on his (adjacent) 776-acre soy farm in Tennessee with the smoking and grill pits arranged on two of the estate’s four heli-drone pads and the fireworks launch zone set atop once-wetlands filled with sand trucked up from the New Gulf Coast, and who donates quite heavily to the terrorist wing of the Cracker Barrel each financial quarter and instructs his accountants to double the figure and enter that amount into QuickBooks SuperPlatinum® as “community development charity,” which is tax deductible at a 200 percent rate with the proper receipts because the non-terrorist wing of the Cracker Barrel is very diligent about that sort of thing in his registered state of fiduciary residence.

(I imagine you’ve heard all that before, but I was eager to remind you, because some of it I was only just able to learn myself, forgive me.)

- The occasion was a mandatory informal session of putting ethanol into mouth holes following a Cabinet meeting, and since it was the current Know Nothing fashion, the eight men comprising this Cabinet were engaged in a series of escalating re-tellings of combat drone footage they’d seen in person during idle afternoons and sweaty late-night sessions in the Situation Room.

- It was the Secretary Of Education’s turn, who had a learned man’s way with words and was wittily using his mouth hole to describe the precise cowardly characteristics of the arc taken by a fleeing bread merchant’s dismembered and airborne leg following a 5-mile 0.75-inch sniping effort in the Coalition Zone last October, eliciting an explosion of laughter in the room, which is why Stan the bacteria man tripped while standing up from behind the long couch upholstered in Rayonite Silk® in the shade Plains of Fortitude (a muted and quite creamy pastel gold).

After the Cabinet had (mostly) stopped screaming out of their mouth holes, Stan the bacteria man said, “Could somebody be a dear and fetch me one of those slightly misshapen and curiously textured fig bars wrapped in household plastic film that are sitting on the counter near the cash register in the deli over on 15<sup>th</sup> and H? Or one of those slightly misshapen and curiously textured fig bars wrapped in household plastic film that are sitting on the counter near the cash register in the deli over on 14<sup>th</sup> and K? I have a bet to settle, but I don’t trust these legs yet. Thanks ever so much.”

Then 92 well-aimed 0.50-inch rounds from 15 separate service weapons entered Stan the bacteria man’s body, which quickly melted into a puddle on the carpet with a surprised sigh.

(Don’t worry, its Rayonite® fibers are imbued with a completely reliable molecular stain shield that’s impervious to liquid—though the nylon does need to fend for itself and may ruin everything in the end.)

## *Chapter Two*

**STAN THE BACTERIA MAN** appeared in the Oval Office on a sunny Wednesday morning.

Stan the bacteria man had a very bacteria plan, that man.

Then 127 well-aimed 0.50-inch rounds from 33 separate service weapons entered Stan the bacteria man's body, which quickly melted into a puddle on the carpet with a querulous groan.

## *Chapter Three*

**STAN THE BACTERIA MAN** appeared in the Oval Office on a wind-swept Monday evening.

Stan the bacteria man had a very bact

“You need to stop coming here.”

Stan blinked in surprise. “Have I been here before?”

Then five well-aimed 0.50-inch rounds from one separate service weapon entered Stan the bacteria man’s body, which quickly melted into a puddle on the carpet with an introspective “Hm.”

(The nylon was stained beyond cleaning and the Rayonite Wool® product was replaced with polyester utility turf until further notice.)

## *Chapter Four*

**STAN THE BACTERIA MAN** watched the windows of the Oval Office from a pedestrian bridge 2.5 miles away, through a pair of plastic high-focus binocular spectacles, on a hazy moonlit Thursday morning shortly after midnight, putting a slightly misshapen and curiously textured fig bar which was half-unwrapped from a flowering bouquet of household plastic film into his mouth hole.

(It was curious. But as expected, they don't contain coconut, and the bet is concluded.)

"It's strange that they'd sell these at a 7-Eleven," said Stan the bacteria man to nobody in particular. "Or maybe it's strange that plastic children's high-focus binocular spectacles work so well."

(Or maybe it's strange that he'd never used binoculars at all before, so really *any* pair of spectacles would have been the best-working example he'd ever known.)

"Yes, that's true," said Stan the bacteria man's body, which gradually melted into a puddle on the cement with a contented sigh.

# *Chapter Five*

**STAN THE BACTERIA MAN** appeared in the Oval Office on a combustible Saturday morning.

Stan the bacteria man had a very bacteria plan, that man.

“Tell us what you want,” said a heavily-biceped and quite sweaty member of the Secret Service.

Stan blinked in confusion. “I think ... just to talk?”

Then Stan the bacteria man sneezed his first ever sneeze.

It was incredible.

(It was probably the polyester fumes.)

(Or the swamp fires.)

Then the Secret Service man screamed through a wide open mouth hole “**GET ON THE GROUND!**” with bright white eyeballs and 70 well-aimed 0.50-inch rounds from two separate service weapons entered Stan the bacteria man’s body, which quickly melted into a puddle on the turf with an unsurprised nod.

(Each gun was reloaded three times.)





# *Chapter Six*

**VEYLET THE HUMAN PERSON** entered the living room on a stormy Monday night.

Veylet the human person had a very human plan, that person.

They swept a pile of mail chits off the coffee table with one foot, then kicked the table forward 12 inches with the other foot and arranged six small square plates holding six small square appetizers from the homeland sushi restaurant down on the corner of 23<sup>rd</sup> and Wyodaho (where it loops off Floribama Ave.) and sat down in the floor space between the sofa and table with their legs crossed.

They sighed happily, and looked carefully at the plate on the left-most side for nearly 60 seconds, but did not eat from it.

They pulled a portfolio from their Celluline® briefcase and removed a rivet-bound report with three inches of paper between its tagboard covers which were stamped “ULTRA CLASSIFIED TF2-1.”

They flipped through the front matter and preface and stopped at the page titled “Section 1: Known Intelligence.”

They read carefully.

Their reading concluded one page-flip later.

Their right eyebrow raised slightly and their head tilted, but they shrugged and leaned forward (I believe eagerly) to look closely at the small square plate on the left, then put its contents into their mouth hole, then moan happily, then sit back.

They repositioned the report in their lap of crossed legs and flipped the page to resume reading, but then immediately snorted in surprise, then flipped another page, then a few more still, then many more in rapid succession, until they reached the opposite tagboard and slammed it (very quietly) shut before saying, “WHAT THE *FUCK* STUART?”

Then they vigorously flipped the report back to the front and began again at “Section 1: Known Intelligence.” (Would you like to see?)

Here, have some now:

- The BOUO is capable of presenting in at least several different physical forms. During its first appearance on Tuesday August 23 it presented as a dark gray slimy mass in an approximate humanoid form of approximately 7-feet-2-inches in height, with unidentified fluid dripping thickly from every surface, which splattered and made contact with the Secretary Of Defense when the BOUO appeared to stumble upon rising from the floor. The Secretary completed two weeks of quarantine observation in undisclosed facilities with no apparent effects but will be attended in all localities by round-clock clinicians until further notice.

- During its second appearance on Wednesday August 24 it presented in much the same manner, but at approximately 5-feet-6-inches in height. Additionally, the BOUO “feet” consisted of what appeared to be perfectly formed brown patent leather lace-up loafers of unknown branding, which reverted to dark gray slimy mass upon departure.

- During its fourth appearance on September 3 it presented as an apparently normal naked human adult male for the first time, but was terminated by security personnel following an aggressive vocal outburst which impinged on the officers’ ability to conduct their duty, before further contact could be made. The figure’s legs appeared to be in the process of forming some sort of textile on the surface at moment of termination.

- All sampling analysis of post-termination materials continues to yield nothing but a random variety of apparently normal microflora, much of it native to the Douglass Commonwealth and surrounding regions when the species has previously been worth taxonomizing at all, bound by a thick interstitial fluid of unknown biological origin but which is chemically most similar to homeland honeybee mucoid tissue.

- (Section 1 was the only Section of the report, because the other 2.999878 inches of it consisted of memos from 344 separate working groups, reporting managers, Cracker Barrel political operatives, congressional lapdogs, Cabinet aides, Know Nothing cheerleaders, and etc., who wished it to be officially recorded that their office was privileged with the clearance necessary to read the report, and so they had done so.)

Veylet the human person slammed the back cover (very quietly) shut again and exhaled loudly through their nose holes.

Their right hand darted up and scratched at their left cheekbone.

They said quietly, “What the fuck, Stuart. ‘All I need to know.’ Little prick.”

Then they stared very intently at the second-from-the-left plate on the coffee table and dropped the report on the floor with a shrug before putting it inside their mouth hole.