

The Adventures of Captain Adequate, the Discount Superhero

By Matthew Arnold Stern

DR. SLOAN, a scientist, is a prisoner of the evil DR. MORALLY CHALLENGED.

Dr. Morally Challenged: (Evil laugh) All right, Dr. Sloan, I know that you have the secret formula that cures the common cold, ends world hunger, and kills the germs that can cause bad breath. Now, give me that formula!

Dr. Sloan: No, Dr. Morally Challenged! I will never give into your evil scheme!

Dr. Morally Challenged: Then you leave me no choice. I will zap you with my zap ray until you are golden brown and crunchy!

Dr. Sloan: Please, Dr. Morally Challenged, don't hurt me! The stock prices in my 401(k) haven't recovered yet!

CAPTAIN ADEQUATE walks in slowly, reading a pink sheet of carbon paper.

Captain Adequate: Is this... (Reads sheet) Dr. Sloan?

Dr. Sloan: Yes! Did you come to save me?

Captain Adequate: (Reads sheet to himself) Billing code 4209, Rescue from Evil Genius' Lair. (To Dr. Sloan) Yeah, I guess so.

Dr. Morally Challenged: Who are you?

Captain Adequate: Me? I'm Captain Adequate of the Discount Superhero Bureau.

Dr. Sloan: Discount Superhero Bureau?

Captain Adequate: Yeah. You see, all the other superheroes are union, and your company can't afford someone good.

Dr. Sloan: But can you still save me?

Captain Adequate: Think so. I need one piece of superhero equipment.

Dr. Morally Challenged: And what might that be?

CAPTAIN ADEQUATE reaches into a bag and pulls out a thick book.

Captain Adequate: The *Discount Superhero User Guide*. (Opens book and reads it) "Congratulations on purchasing Joe's Discount Superhero Correspondence Course. You

have made a wise choice that will put you well on your way to a successful career as an international crime-fighting superhero...”

Dr. Sloan: Can't you hurry up? The evil Dr. Morally Challenged is going to zap us!

Captain Adequate: Hey, I'm only making twelve bucks an hour. What do you want, Kim Possible?

Dr. Morally Challenged: I've had enough. I will zap the both of you!

An HR REPRESENTATIVE enters, carrying a speaker phone.

HR Representative: Excuse me, Mr. Morally Challenged?

Dr. Morally Challenged: That's *Dr.* Morally Challenged...

HR Representative: Well, that's what I wanted to discuss with you. You see, Mr. Morally Challenged, I'm an HR representative from Take Over The World, Inc., a subsidiary of Microsoft Corporation. And, well, I hate to have to break this to you, but in order to streamline our operations and return to our core competencies, we decided to outsource the evil genius function to our center in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Dr. Morally Challenged: You mean...I'm being laid off?

HR Representative: Yes, but we are offering a good severance and job placement package and COBRA insurance.

Dr. Morally Challenged: But I'm in the middle of zapping a hostage and a superhero!

HR Representative: No need to worry. (Puts speaker phone on a nearby table and plugs it in.) We'll have one of our staff in Macedonia continue your evil scheme. Now, please come with me so we can box up your desk.

HR Representative turns on speaker phone and leaves with Dr. Morally Challenged.

Dr. Morally Challenged: (Offstage) Do I get to keep my nameplate?

HR Representative: (Offstage) No. We recycle those.

Dr. Sloan and Captain Adequate stare at the speaker phone. IVAN's voice comes through the speaker, but his voice is faint and hard to hear.

Ivan: Hello?

Captain Adequate and Dr. Sloan: Huh?

Ivan: Hello?

Captain Adequate and Dr. Sloan: Who is this?

Ivan: This is Ivan from the Evil Genius Development Team in Skopje, Macedonia. Hello?

Dr. Sloan: Captain Adequate, I know how we can escape!

Captain Adequate: Did you read the *Discount Superhero User Guide* too?

Dr. Sloan: No! But I know how we can escape! Unplug the speaker phone!

Ivan: Hello? I think I'm supposed to do something evil right now. Can you tell me what I'm supposed to do?

Dr. Sloan: Unplug the speaker phone, Captain Adequate! Do it now!

Ivan: Wait, let me look at my *Discount Evil Genius User Guide* for a moment. Hello? Hello?

Dr. Sloan: Unplug the phone! Please, Captain Adequate! Please!

Ivan: Let's see...It says, "Congratulations on purchasing Joe's Discount Evil Genius Correspondence Course. You have made a wise choice that will put you well on your way to a successful career as a world-conquering evil genius..."

Dr. Sloan: Please!

Captain Adequate: Well, OK.

Captain Adequate unplugs the phone and then frees Dr. Sloan.

Dr. Sloan: Thank you, Captain Adequate! You saved the day!

Captain Adequate: By the way, Dr. Sloan, do you really know how to cure the common cold, end world hunger, and kill the germs that can cause bad breath?

Dr. Sloan: Well, not really. I'm a contractor, and it's just my first day on the job.

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