

Monsters and Me

by Daniel Rubenstein

Godzilla, Mothra, Kong, Rodan.

Most people know these Giant Monsters through the movies. What the majority of the population doesn't understand is, that these are monsters are real. Like the myths of ancient times, these movies are just a way that our culture is trying to explain our place in this world.

Not me. Not Kajima Kase. Like my Mother before me - and her Mother before her - I am a monstrologist. I know, I know, you've never heard of a monstrologist. That's because there are only a select few of us designated to defend Earth from this infestation. I have been trained from birth to detect and repel monster attacks.

Take for example the recent mud slides in Argentina. If one were to only watch the endless news media coverage, one would believe this to be Mother Nature fighting back against an ever encroaching Mankind. Not true. Absolutely not true. How can you have mudslides without rain or water? What really happened was a breach of Monrovia Mud Slugs. Fourteen of those buggers dropped in out of nowhere hoping to catch a monsoon to hide their entrance. Didn't work. I was on the first plane there.

The flight was long. Transfer at some fly-by-night airports, no better than a dirt road with a hanger at one end. But the trip gave me time to reflect.

It was Hurricane Katrina that brought me into the world of Monstrology and then shattered my reality. As a cover, I worked for the National Weather Service, monitoring the effects of extreme weather on native wildlife. We got the call to head out into the

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hurricane. There had been reports of large pods of whales in the path of the storm. We couldn't pass the opportunity to capture their behavior. We were all loaded into a Lockheed WP-3D Orion a specially equipped storm-prepped plane maintained by the US Navy. I'd never witnessed a hurricane this close before; at once frightening and awe inspiring.

The theme song from Gilligan's Island keep running through my head.

"The weather started getting rough... the tiny ship was tossed...."

The aircraft bounced, jerked, and I believe even twisted at one point as we rode towards the eye of the storm. Visibility was zero. Nothing but rain and clouds. Then suddenly sunlight. The bright light blinded me for a few seconds, then everything came into focus. Then the screaming started. We had flown in low, only a few hundred feet off the surface, directly in front of us could only be described as... monstrous. The leviathan, it's back towards us, turned its head to see what the sudden noise was. It paused for a split second, then roared. Windows on the plane shattered. And we started to dive.

"And on the Fifth Day God created the Leviathan He created both a male and female. He then killed and served the female for dinner, out of fear of reproduction."

As I sat, terrified, looking down at the ocean, rocketing to my doom, that was the first thought that popped in my head. "God created the Leviathan" why in the hell would that pop in my head.

"Damn you Mom!" I must of said out loud because the rest of plane turned around to look.

She made me learn the Monstronomicon inside and out. And now here I am, life flashing before my eyes, thinking of this crap like it

was my final prayer.

The plane jerked hard to the left. Evading the monster directly in front of us. Looking out the port windows, a second creature could be seen. Before our trajectory took away my view I could see it lunge for the first monster. It was biologically, physically, impossible for these creatures to exist. They looked like dinosaurs grown to the nth degree; to an unimaginable size.

I strained to see what was happening. I snapped loose my safety harness and crawled across the seats to the other side of the plane. Gripping the arms of the seats as I went. Again, reality swirled. And it had nothing to do with the motion of the plane. The second creature had bitten into the shoulder of the first. The monsters were now in a constant struggle with each other, swirling the ocean around even further.

Lightning was beginning to strike around the creatures. Erupting from within the walls of the hurricane. The commander yelled that we were on our way out and as fast as possible. We banked hard again. Granting me an unobstructed view of the monsters in their violent embrace. The first creature had dislodged the second. The second seemed stunned by the attack.

The Leviathan tossed its enormous head back and roared again. Again, the plane was shaken. The cloud bank was closing fast and I turned again for a better vantage point. As we raced into the clouds, I would swear I saw, fire, electricity, something shoot from the original monster's mouth. But then the storm was upon us again.

Co-Authored with Jeff Dillon

