

# The Five Tasks

By Rhys Judd

## Chapter 1: World leader's conference

The world leader's conference is held every year on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August. This meeting was when all the leaders of the main dominating countries joined together to discuss the earth's current situation. This year Venice had received the great honour of being able to host the Conference. Each year the world leaders invited exactly 100 guests. For some strange unknown reason this year they had decided to invite children. I mean come on, children, to one of the most boring conferences of all time. What seemed even stranger was that they had invited me. A normal brown haired, blue eyed, 15 year old, average achieving schoolboy. There was nothing special about me that I could think of. At first when I received the letter I automatically decided that I wasn't going. But after a lot of smooth talking and bribing my mother made me go. She said it would be good for me to be informed of the earth's problems. So here I am now standing outside a massive hall in the middle of Venice with ninety nine other children. I seemed like the only one who was not interested in this meeting, all the rest of the children were buzzing around with excitement, chatting to each other with great enthusiasm.

The huge wooden doors opened and we walk into what looked like a theatre except instead of a screen there was a table with 11 or so seats. We were all asked to sit down and as the leaders entered everybody hushed down. The meeting had begun. The President of America stood up and began.

"Youth are our future; they will inherit the earth, the destiny of our world lies in their hands....." I was already bored, I wonder if they have a candy bar or some thing. I was just about to doze off when the guy next to me accidentally hit me in the arm. I jumped up startled, he whispered at me "Sorry".

The American President was still talking "...from the one hundred of you here today I have chosen one of you to perform five tasks to save the world. Completion of these tasks will prove to my fellow colleagues that youth are ready to take on the responsibility of our Earth's future. The person who has been chosen is ..... (Everybody was sitting on the edge of their seats, waiting in anticipation) Fredrick Jennison." What?! That is me!!!

"Can he please come up to the front"? Slowly and nervously I walked to the front of the hall. He stared at me. I could feel everyone in the hall staring at me like a million beams of fire. I began to heat up, I felt myself turning red. The American President said "You sir, have been chosen to represent all the children of the world by performing five tasks to save the world. Do you except this challenge?" There were too many people staring at me to turn it down, so I just went with the flow.

"Yes Sir" I just managed to mumble.

"Good, I will brief you tomorrow, here at twelve o'clock, meeting dismissed". He handed me a piece of paper, all the other kids sadly began to leave.

What had I got myself into? I knew I shouldn't have come. I still couldn't believe that I had been chosen. It couldn't be true. Well, maybe the tasks were easy, like cleaning my room or something. I opened the piece of paper, it read:

Your Five tasks:

1. Find and destroy the plan to turn everything green ... Pink! (Which is believed to be in the hands of Fiona Gambola )
2. Kill the beast-eating man
3. Slay the evil Four headed hydra plant
4. Find and disable Roberto Nucleus's nuclear bomb.
- 5 Kill off the dangerous fire ant colony

These tasks were impossible, how am I supposed to complete these? I turned around but everyone had left except for one small boy who was standing in the corner, as if he was waiting for me. I walked down the stairs, off the stage towards the door as I did the kid ran over towards me and blurted out this huge string of words "help...adventure....you...hurt".

"Slow down," I said.

He said, "Can I help you? I've always wanted to go on an adventure. This sounds fun, please please PLEASE".

I figured I needed as much help as I could get so I said "Sure mate". He was so overexcited he nearly fainted.

"What's your name?" I asked.

"Robert Smith."

"Great. I guess you already know my name, anyway, ask your mum if it's okay if you come for dinner, you can help me explain to my mum what we have got to do."

"Okay let's go" he said excitedly.

"It will only be a little while" I said. At first my mum couldn't believe what I had just told her and she was going to say I couldn't go. But when I told her the President of America asked me to, she changed her mind. We had dinner and Robert went home.

"Meet you outside the hall at eleven forty five" I shouted at him from my bedroom window

"Yip" he shouted back "See ya." To my surprise I managed to get lots of sleep that night.

"Its eleven fifty six, where is he?" I asked impatiently.

"Don't worry" my mum said "it doesn't start until twelve". As if on cue Robert arrived in a black Mercedes, jumped out of the car and ran over to me.

"Let's go" he said puffing. We walked into the theatre hall but this time we were escorted by a man in a blue uniform to a room off to the side where all the world leaders were waiting. The President of America said "Welcome, now please take a seat." We sat down and were offered water by another man in a blue uniform. "I believe you have read the page with the tasks on it". I nodded. "So as you can see the tasks are quite difficult, but I believe you can do them. For each task you will be flown to the location, once you have finished the task contact us. I will give you a contact number and we will pick you up straight away and escort you to the location of the next task and so on and so on. Any questions?"

"Can Robert help me?" I asked, pointing at my new friend.

"Sure, anyone can help you as long as they are a child. Any more questions? No? Good, you'll start right away, here is the contact number, don't lose it."

“Thanks” I mumbled. The president of Russia whistled and a Russian pilot came in.  
“Goodbye and good luck, we believe in you”.

## **Chapter 2: Task one; the reckoning**

The noise of the helicopter died down as we arrived in England. The pilot spoke into our headsets “Her house is number forty nine Russell St, all out” we jumped out and instantly the helicopter took off again. I took out my list.

“Okay Robert, we have got to find the plan to turn everything green, pink from Fiona Gambola and destroy it”.

“Let’s go “he said. It took us a while but after asking a few people for directions we managed to find her house. It was a normal two story house painted in different tones of white.

“Okay here’s the plan” I said “You go in and act all nice and hopefully get let into the house, I’ll sneak in a few minutes later and begin the search for the plan, got it?”

“Got it” said Robert.

DING DONG! “I’m coming” Fiona called out and a few seconds later she opened the door. Instantly Robert was thrown into a huge pool of pink light. No wonder she wanted to turn everything green, pink. Her whole house was pink; she seemed obsessed with the colour. Fiona herself was an oldish lady about sixty, wrinkly and nice looking, like all grannies and of course dressed in a pink dress complete with pink hair and finger-nails. “How can I help you young man?” Although Robert was about sixteen, he was perfect at acting cute and childish.

“My mummy left me on the street and I’m cold and hungry”.

“Aww come in young man, I’ll make you some biscuits” and Robert and Fiona disappeared into the house. I noticed Robert made sure the door was left unlocked.

Two or so minutes later I snuck up to the house and quietly as possible opened the door and stepped inside. Where to look, I thought, I know I’ll check her bedroom first. The house was like normal granny homes, antiques everywhere, spotless and surprisingly warm. I reached the bedroom which was predictably bright pink and there, sitting on the bedside table in an envelope, was the plan. That was easy, I thought. I turned around and the carpet began to move and started barking. Oh no! I’d woken up her dog. I ran for the nearest hiding place.

“There you g....” BARK BARK.

“What was that?” Robert tried to sound surprised but he knew that Fred must have woken her dog.

“There’s an intruder or some thing in the bedroom” said Fiona and she rushed out of the room. Robert tried to look for a distraction, he saw a box of matches on the kitchen counter; it was risky but it was probably the only way. He grabbed a match, lit it and chucked it into the corner of the room before running off towards the bedroom. When he arrived Fiona and two other men were standing in the bedroom. She wasn’t so innocent after all if she had guards in the house. One of the men was holding Fred by his neck

“What are you doing in here?” the guard asked in a deep voice.

“Look what he’s got in his hand” said the other guard. “It’s your secret plan Mrs Gambola”. By now smoke was pouring out of the kitchen.

“What? Fire? You two go sort it out, I’ll handle this little rascal.” The guards ran out of the room towards the kitchen. Fiona was stronger than she looked, she was holding Fred pinned to the bed. Robert walked in and picked up the closest thing to him, the desk chair and smashed it over Fiona’s head, instantly she crumpled to the ground. Fred leapt up and said “Let’s go.”

We ran out of the house and onto the front lawn, by now half the house was on fire and couldn’t be stopped “What are we supposed to do with the plan?” Robert asked nervously.

“Destroy it” I replied and with that I threw it into the blazing house. It immediately caught alight. Robert pulled his cell phone out of his pocket and rang the contact number “We will have a helicopter in the air ASAP” answered an American voice over the phone.

Ten minutes later the helicopter landed on the front lawn and we tumbled in the open doors. As the helicopter flew away I looked down and saw the ash remnants of the house. Fiona and everything relating to her was gone and lost forever.

### **Chapter 3: Close call**

“You did well and cleanly finished the task, but this next task will be a lot harder” said the American President

“Yeah” butted in the Australian Prime Minister “he has caused havoc all through China and has scared children to death; we need you to eliminate the beast-eating man.”

“Don’t you mean the Man eating beast?” asked Robert

“No, the beast-eating man” said the Australian Prime Minister “He turned crazy when his family were killed in a bombing incident and ever since he has been roaming around the countryside of China killing and disgustingly eating all the Chinese livestock.

The reason he is so dangerous is that he is spreading disease between livestock and humans.”

“Ok” said Robert in a disbelieving voice.

“So when do we start and do I get some weapons to help me” I asked.

“You’ll start now, and I am not allowed to legally give you weapons because you’re underage and don’t have a gun licence, but I will give each of you one of these”. He handed us both knives. The Russian president whistled again and as before the pilot came in and we got geared up and set off again, this time towards the countryside of China.

The house was a small cottage, at least a mile from any town or city. It was a small, single story house with brick walls and a corrugated iron roof, hardly any windows and a honey coloured door. It wasn’t the prettiest of houses but it seemed to do the job. The people inside it on the other hand Jin Lee and his wife Xiodan were some of the nicest people I had ever met, “Are you sure you don’t want anything to drink or eat, honey?” said Xiodan.

“No I’m fine,” I said for the third time. Robert on the other hand was pigging out on half of their pantry.

“Anyway” started Jin Lee “lets discuss the matter of the beast-eating man, what do you know about it?”

“He’s a disgusting, scary, ugly, homeless man who eats animals and spreads disease” said Robert with his mouth full of food. Jin Lee looked at me inquiringly

“Get rid of the ugly and homeless and it’s true” I replied.

“I should probably tell you the whole story then” said Jin Lee.

“I’ll try and be as quick as possible; about ten years ago the Special Forces were going to test a bomb by destroying a drug dealer. They bombed the wrong house, I think the owner’s name was Mark, and destroyed his home and family. Mark, on the other hand, was out and when he arrived home everything was gone. He complained to the Government and they, of course, denied all knowledge. He got angry and from then on he lost his mind and now he attacks animals and is spreading this dangerous disease.”

“He lives up in the mountains and won’t be hard to find because you’ll smell him first” said Xiodan

“He’s pretty strong, and don’t get bitten either because he’ll infect you, which will basically kill you”.

“Thanks for the info” said Robert nervously.

“Yeah thanks, we should probably get going” I said

“That’s a good idea, goodbye, good luck and be careful” said Xiodan

“Thanks for the food” said Robert

“Bye” I said and we set off towards the Mountains.

The mountain looked small when it first came into view but as we slowly got closer it appeared bigger and bigger until it was massive, it was so big it had even snow on top.

“Let’s hope he lives near the bottom” said Robert looking up.

“Yeah” I said, “remember he’s only human like us and won’t be able to live very high without mountain gear”. As Xiodan had warned us, as we started to climb the mountain our noses picked up the scent of him.

“Pooh” Robert scoffed and hid his nose in his t-shirt.

“Oh that’s disgusting!” I said and followed Robert’s example by sticking my nose in my t-shirt. It smelt like a million dead animals, mixed with sweat and mud. We climbed over a ledge of rock and lying there fast asleep was the ugliest thing I had ever seen. Human, yet scarily thin, hardly clothed, except by rags and covered in animal blood and flesh.

“Eek” Robert screamed. “I mean AAH” he said in deeply embarrassed voice. “He’s ugly as, I think I’m going to vomit”

“Well let’s get this over and done with” I said and pulled the knife out of my backpack and slowly crept up to him.

I looked down at him, he seemed peaceful but I wanted to get this over with. I looked at Robert, he nodded, I lifted the knife, closed my eyes and SNAP. I looked down; he had woken up at the last second and had grabbed my knife and snapped it in half. He stood up and tossed the broken knife across the ground then took one look at me, picked me up and threw me at least ten metres. As I flew through the air I heard Robert shout but as I landed I instantly blacked out.

Robert saw Fred land and shouted out “You monster,” he pulled out his own knife and charged at the beast-eating man and stabbed randomly at him but he was too fast and Robert couldn’t hit him. He tried to bite him but Robert was ready and stabbed the knife into his knee, he howled and leapt on Robert, brandishing his teeth. At this point I woke up surprised that I had managed to survive the fall with only a few bruises and cuts. I saw the beast crouched over Robert, teeth bared, leaning down to bite his neck. I did the only thing I could, I jumped up, grabbed the handle of the broken knife with a bit of the blade left in it and chucked.....

It flew through the air and it hit the beast straight in the jaw. I heard a crunch and he sprung a mile into the air and howled again. Robert rolled out of the way and stood up. The beast landed and looked at us with blood red eyes. Robert whispered something into my ear. The beast pulled the knife out of his knee and leapt at us. Robert whispered, "Three, two, one and go." Right at the last second we both dropped to the ground. The beast saw his doom right in front of him, as he went over the edge of the mountain he dropped the knife and managed to grab the edge of the ledge. He hung there, looking for foot holds, but couldn't find any. I picked up Robert's knife and stabbed it into his left hand, he screamed and let go with his right. I then pulled the knife out and he fell, never to return again. We sat on the mountain looking out at the view "That was close" said Robert "two down, three to go". "I'll ring this time" I said.

## **Chapter 4: Green Problems**

"Simple" said the American president as we entered "my colleagues are actually starting to believe me that you guys are going to complete these seemingly impossible tasks." It was easy to tell that he was in a good mood. "Anyway" he continued "third task, kill the four headed hydra plant".

"The four headed hydra plant was the accidental mistake of Dr. Maxwell Edwards trying to speed up the process of growing hydra plants, which take years to grow. But although the potion did speed up the growth, it also mutated the plant, giving it a mind of its own and causing the seed heads to transform into venomous biting heads. The reason it's so dangerous is that it's growing rapidly. Dr. Maxwell managed to trap it in his greenhouse but once it busts out of the green house we believe that it could mutate other plants too".

"That sounds easy" said Robert sarcastically

"Well it should be for you" said the American president happily "now off you go. Hope you like Brazil" and for the third time the Russian whistled and we set off.

As soon as we landed I felt the heat hit me like a tidal wave. The warmth was so nice but I already felt thirsty. We were lead over and greeted by an excited man in a long, white scientist's coat. He had a round face, brown hair and brown eyes and a strange scar across his left cheek. At this point our pilot left us and we heard the helicopter take off again. The scientist spoke "Hey, I'm Dr. Maxwell Edwards and you guys must be the kids in charge of dealing with my well, um, accident"

"Yeah" I said "I'm Fred and this is Robert"

"Pleased to meet you" he said, while shaking our hands. "Let's go I'll tell you more when we arrive home." So we walked over and hopped in a Range Rover. The journey was basically silent except for Dr. Maxwell asking us a few questions about ourselves every now and then.

"Aah, here we are" he said, as we arrived at a gravel driveway. We hopped out of the car, walked into his house and sat down. He offered us tea which we both turned down.

"So I guess you've heard the story" he said. We both nodded. "Good, that will save us some time. Now the plant's venom is highly dangerous, so one bite and you're dead. I've created a poison which will kill the monster"

"Then why haven't you done it yourself?" I asked.

“Well, the problem is that you need to spray the poison on the plant’s trunk and I tried myself but look what happened” and he pointed at the scar on his cheek. “Oh and don’t try to kill the heads because for every one you kill, two take its place. Good luck and I hope you survive” and he chucked a small canister in our direction. “Thanks for all your help Doctor” said Robert.

We walked over to the greenhouse. It seemed pretty normal from the outside, but as we got close to the entrance we realized there was something wrong. The walls of the greenhouse were really dirty and there were cracks forming all over it. Our plan was that Robert would be bait and, while the plant was distracted, I would go in for the kill and spray the poison on the plant’s trunk. We slowly sneaked up to the greenhouse door, I was scared, I could feel sweat dripping down my face. I turned and looked at Robert, he was really pale and it was easy to tell he was scared as well. Robert put his hand on the door handle and we looked at each other, we nodded and Robert pulled the handle. The door swung open and we walked in. The plant was massive, its roots swarming over the ground, the stalk the size of a tree trunk and the heads, there were four of them, were trashing around above our heads like the heads of a Venus flytrap but four times bigger and alive, biting and chomping around in the air.

Instantly, as we walked into the greenhouse, a head saw us and bit down at me. I dropped to the ground and rolled out of the way. All the other heads became alert and started biting at us too. Robert shouted out “Fred I need some help” “Sorry” I shouted back “I’ve got a few problems of my own”, we both had two heads each. I jumped out of the way, a head’s tooth missing me by millimetres, but with that I tripped up on one of the roots and landed face first on the ground. I caught a glimpse of Robert trapped in the corner unable to move. This was the end, we should never have agreed to this, how could anyone believe a few children our age could accomplish something so difficult, but as I turned around I had an idea. It was crazy, but it just may work.

I rolled across the ground and hid under a root. At that moment a head bit down and its teeth clasped on the root. It pulled back and ripped the root in half and I noticed as soon as the root was ripped the heads became less powerful and the plant began to lose its balance. I shouted to Robert “Robert get the heads to destroy their own roots. We may not be able to kill the heads, but the roots are giving nutrients to them, so if we destroy enough we may be able kill the heads or at least slow them down.” “You’re a genius” I heard him shout back from beneath a root. I was proud of myself but was instantly whipped back into reality as one of the heads nearly bit my arm off. This time I hid under a bigger root and as before the head bit down and ripped the root in half. One of the heads began to brown and all of them were immensely slower. Robert and I continued until all but three roots were left and all the heads had wilted and died. We stood up panting and smiled at each other.

All of a sudden Robert jumped at me and pushed me out of the way. We went flying into the wall. I looked around and saw one of the heads fall over and smash through one of the walls of the greenhouse in an explosion of glass. “Thanks” I said “let’s kill this plant and get out of here before it kills us from beyond the grave”. I pulled the canister of poison out of my pocket, screwed the lid off and poured it all over the plant. Instantaneously the rest of the plant wilted and died. We ran out the door, just as we left the greenhouse

collapsed because the plant had been supporting it. As soon as the plant died the greenhouse became unstable and collapsed. The doctor ran out of house and stared at us in amazement.

“Sorry about your greenhouse” Robert said.

## **Chapter 5: Roberto Nucleus**

The plane trip seemed a lot shorter this time and we were in Australia in no time at all. We were dropped a mile or so away from the house so that we didn't raise any suspicion. “Now the President told me to give you this” said the pilot as we hopped out. He chucked me a small circular device. “Just stick it to the nuclear bomb and it will disable it, therefore destroying the threat of it exploding accidentally, good luck and watch out for guards”.

We walked off south towards the house and we knew which one it was instantly as it came into view. It was a massive six or so story mansion with a beautiful garden and three really expensive cars sitting in the driveway in front of the house.

“No wonder this guy can afford a nuclear bomb” Robert said. We had decided that if the house was enormous, and it was, we would split up so that we could cover the house quicker. There were a few open windows on the ground floor and so we decided to climb in them and continue from there. When we found the bomb we would signal with bird calls. I had the device to disable it.

I entered through a window on the west end of the house and Robert on the east, I could only hope that Robert would be okay. The room I entered into seemed to be a bedroom, probably one of many I thought. I walked out into the corridor and saw a shadow appear on the wall. I jumped into the nearest closet. Through a crack in the door I could see an armoured man with a gun strapped over his shoulder walk past, just great, I thought. I waited until he walked into the bedroom then I snuck out and crept down the corridor looking for a room that may hold a nuclear bomb. I was in a dining room when I heard footsteps, not another guard I thought, and hid under the table. A man walked around the corner, he was tall, dark haired, wearing a very expensive dressing gown and looked over-pampered. That must be Roberto I thought. He walked out of the room. I crept behind him, staying in the shadows. I saw him walk down a set of stairs and meet with a guy in a white, stained lab coat. “How's it going” I heard Roberto say.

“It's all under control, it will be ready for use anytime” the guy in the lab coat said.

“Great, I'm planning to use it tomorrow, so get it ready” said Roberto

“Yes sir!” he replied and scuttled off. Roberto walked back up the stairs and didn't notice me hiding underneath the staircase. Once he had left I crept off in the direction the scientist had gone.

I soon caught up with the scientist. He was typing a code into a panel on the wall, the door opened and he walked in. I ran through after him and just managed to get through as the door softly closed behind me with a hiss. I was now in a giant, hanger-like room with technicians running all over the place and shouting commands. There, in the centre of the room, was the nuclear bomb. There was no way I was going to get anywhere near the bomb with all those technicians around it, I needed a distraction.

I saw it on the other side of the hanger, the fire alarm. I ran from my hiding place, the technicians were too busy to notice me. I took my shoe off, smashed through the glass, flicked the switch and hid behind a giant gas tank. All of a sudden a huge screeching noise erupted from sirens all around the house and the technicians dropped everything and ran out of the room and up the stairs. I waited until the whole room was empty then I jumped out and ran up to the nuclear bomb. Now, where do I stick this I thought, looking at the small device. It was metallic, so I stuck it to the body of the bomb and flicked the switch. I heard the device spring into action.

I ran out of the room and through the door which was now open. The fire alarm had been set off and that set it to stay open, to save time getting out of the building. I ran up the stairs and decided to exit out the window I had come in through and therefore hopefully avoid the assembly point. I noticed something strange, the alarm had stopped. They must have figured out it was fake.

“FREEZE, put your hands in the air.” I spun around and saw a guard standing there with his gun pointing at me. I slowly and feebly raised my hands in the air. “What are you doing here” he barked.

“I-ah-like was invited here” I said

“We would have been told if the master had invited anyone”

“Well-um”

“Shut up” he shouted, I saw him raise his gun. I closed my eyes and saw my life flash before me. “Get off me you runt, get off”.

I opened my eyes and saw Robert clinging to the guard’s head. I ran down the hallway, grabbed the fire extinguisher off the wall and slammed it into the guard’s stomach. He doubled over and blacked out.

“Good work mate, I have disabled the bomb, let’s get out of here.”

Robert didn’t reply. “Robert, Robert what’s wrong?” He fell forwards and landed in a pool of his blood. I saw a guard standing behind him, gun raised. I felt anger boil inside me, he loaded another bullet. I jumped over the unconscious guard grabbing his gun and fired it. My shot hit him right in the forehead and he fell to the ground. I picked up Robert and slung him over my shoulder. I no longer cared if I got seen. I jumped out the window and didn’t stop running until I was at least a mile from the house. I lay Robert down in the grass and looked down at his pale face.

## **Chapter 6: The Beginning Of The End**

“How is he?” I asked the American President anxiously. As soon as we arrived last night Robert had been taken off in an ambulance and gone into the emergency department of the hospital. I had been sent home and told not to worry. I couldn’t sleep and got up as early as possible to see what was happening. I was sitting in the waiting room when the American president came in. There was no emotion on his face and it was impossible to tell what he was thinking. “We were lucky, the bullet missed all of his main organs and Robert is alive”

“Oh thank god” I said relieved.

“But” the President began.

“But what” I asked nervously

“Well although he survived, he is in critical condition and will be hospitalized for two months, at the least, so I’m sorry to say you will have to complete this last task by

yourself. I'm sure you will manage it on your own. Now, off you go, your helicopter is waiting.

The fifth and final task, destroy the dangerous fire ant colony. Another nearly impossible task and this time I didn't have Robert to help me, just great. I walked into a temple-like building and was greeted by an Indian priest. "Greetings young child, it's nice to have you here. I believe you are the child in charge of destroying the nasty little fire ants."

"That would be correct" I said.

"Good, well we'll get you to work straight away, while you're trying to save us you should watch out for yourself. Don't get bitten or your body temperature will quickly rise and you will dehydrate and slowly die"

"Cool" I said sarcastically.

I was escorted by four other Indian priests into what seemed like the middle of nowhere. We stopped and one of them turned around and said "here we are in fire ant territory the nest should be somewhere close. Good luck and take this", he pulled what looked like a weed sprayer backpack off his back, "it's full of water, just pump it and spray. We've got to go, good luck".

"See ya" I said and they rushed off in the direction we came from.

Now which way to go? I set off in the opposite direction to the priests. I had been walking for a while and already wished I had brought a water bottle of some type. I looked down at the ground and saw a large red ant crawling across the ground. "Eek" I exclaimed in panic. I pumped the weed sprayer and sprayed it at the ant. It instantly shrivelled up and died.

This was going to be easy I thought, but as I looked down I saw that the dead ant had been replaced by two live ones. I pumped the sprayer again and sprayed and hit both ants with one shot. Now there was a whole trail of them and for the next five minutes or so I pumped and sprayed and pumped and sprayed until there were at least fifty ants dead, but they just kept coming. There were four coming on my left and four on my right. I pumped the gun and sprayed. Only a small hiss of water came out. "Damn" I swore out loud. I was out of water. They started climbing up my shoes. I tried to squish them but there were too many of them. I jumped in the air and began to run.

I kept running and easily left the ants behind, but when I thought I had seen the last of them I saw a small mountain shaped rock. As I got closer I could see that it was a giant mound of dirt, sun-baked mud and rock making up the fire ant nest. There were at least a thousand ants crawling all over it and going in and out. There was no way I could kill them all on my own, especially without any water! I managed to sneak around them and kept running, hopefully back to the temple to refill on water. However, after I had been running for another ten or so minutes, I found myself helplessly lost. I slowed down and sat on the ground, it was hopeless, I was lost, had no water, was thirsty and I had hardly damaged the fire ants. I was about to give up when I heard the sound of running water. I stood up and from the top of the hill I could see what looked like a mountain stream. I scrambled my way to its edge and instantly began drinking from it. That was when it hit me, an idea and it might just work! Four hours later it was ready.

Now, all I've got to do is..... SPLASH! The tree fell into the stream blocking the main flow of water which left it only one way to go, down my homemade trench. It began as a trickle but worked its way up to a mini stream and since the stream was on the top of a

hill it quickly picked up pace, ripping the walls of my trench and making it wider. The ant colony below didn't notice the huge torrent of water from above slowly advancing on them. The water rushed out of the bottom of my trench and began to spread everywhere. It killed all the ants in the surrounding area on contact but the nest was untouched. The nest was too strong, but the water kept flowing and I noticed the hardened mud begin to soften and the rocks fall out of place. Suddenly the whole structure collapsed and was carried away with the water. The water began to slow as the log that was blocking the stream fell out of place and the stream began to flow normally again. I sat down and looked out at the sunset, the golden colours spreading through the sky. I had done it. I had finished all the tasks I had been set. I pulled the piece of paper out of my pocket and ripped it up. I felt a great sense of pride and joy. I had completed five tasks that would have seemed impossible a week ago. I couldn't have done it with out the help of Robert who because of me had got shot. Until now I hadn't noticed how exhausted my body was and I lay in the grass and felt the warm sun across my back and fell asleep. I didn't notice the single fire ant crawling across my leg.

**The End**