

CASE RED MANGO

Background: the in vitro fertilization (IVF) industry makes a lot of money (17 billion USD in 2018; potentially 37 billion USD by 2026), and markets its services to a great number of people with money, status, or both. Naturally, the industry is a prime target for a broad range of arcane, occult, esoteric, conspiratological, or simply *deranged* conspiracies. And not the reasonable sorts of plotters and schemers, either. Whether they're trying to fast-forward the human or evolutionary process or just trying to clone a new batch of Hitlers, there's just *something* about assisted reproduction technology which attracts the alarmingly keen sort of cultist.

Mostly they cancel out each other, honestly. And literally: nine times out of ten, an IVF lab or medical technology company vulnerable to mystic interference will attract two or more competing conspiracies, who will then proceed to fight amongst themselves to have the right to entangle said company in *their* insidious web. Invariably the mini-conspiracies wreck themselves and their rivals in the process, too; the only time the larger, saner conspiracies step in is when the original innocent company is in danger of being wrecked. Which absolutely means that a

mini-conspiracy that can acquire its own IVF facility is generally left be, assuming that the mini-conspiracy isn't one of the ones that can make a credible stab at ending the world or something. The Secret Masters aren't here to judge.

Why is all of this important? Well, several different mini-conspiracies have noticed this forbearance shown by the larger conspiracies, and realized that it would be mutually beneficial for them to combine forces and create a conglomerate. The groups involved don't have contradictory goals, at least in terms of their mission statements and primary objectives; working together, they could easily muscle into new opportunities to suborn the facilities that they need without significant loss of resources. Truly, it is a wonder why nobody has done this before.

...The answer is, by the way, that somebody *has*. Often. Conglomeration is one of the traditional ways that a mini-conspiracy can join the ranks of the Secret Masters; whether it's the *best* way is hotly debated, but the Illuminati are utilitarian when it comes to results. If this nascent group (which will be called RED MANGO, for convenience) can survive, thrive, and presumably take over the IVF industry, so be it. Let *RED MANGO* worry

about rogue transhumanist gene-ripper cabals and the Esoteric Order of Dagon; if they want the territory so badly, then they can deal with the headaches.

But first RED MANGO will have to prove that they can survive the conglomeration process. That's where your team comes in. You are going to... test them. It's not exactly 'test to destruction,' but we're not talking love-taps, either. RED MANGO will need to have the joins on their alliance whacked on pretty hard, because it'll happen eventually anyway. Besides, there's nothing more risky for *everyone* than an industry-wide conspiracy which breaks up at the first sign of trouble.

Resources? Sure. Within reason. Protection from the consequences of your actions? Again, yes. Within reason. And what does 'within reason' mean? ...Well, I suppose that would be *your* test. If this was going to be an easy job, a group of interns would be doing it.

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