

# *The Adventures of Brian the Bat*



*Bruce Wade*

# **The Adventures of Brian, the Blue Fruit Bat**

mostly by

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## The Adventures of Brian the Bat

Brian the blue fruit bat lives in the great rain forest of *Muhacha* bordered by the big smoky mountain in the north and the great river to the south. Brian together with his friends Max the wise monkey and Crystal the mystical cat go off on various adventures through the forest to explore and find ways to assist and help other animals make a better life for themselves through proven entrepreneurial development tools.

The adventures of Brian cover simulated adventures with life lessons, offering applicable solutions and models to apply into your own life and business.

Brian and his friends were co-created by Bruce Wade and various artificial intelligent applications for the purpose of education through entertainment with believable scenarios from everyday life as seen through the eyes of a friendly bat.

Bruce Wade is a strategic story engineer based in Cape Town. Through his various businesses and ventures he aims to better the lives of all people in Africa through applying the 7 principles of sustainable innovation.

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## Chapter 1 - Brian

Deep in the rain forests of Africa lies a place where no human has explored or even walked. This place is known to the animals as *Muhacha*, the 'place of rest'.

Here the animals are safe from the perils of the corrupt and destructive world of human greed and capitalism. The animals live in harmony with each other allowing for the give and take that exists within the natural circle of life.

The forest stretches for many miles hemmed in by the big smoky mountain to the north and the deep fast flowing river to the south. If one had to climb the highest tree in the forest and look towards the sunrise on a clear day you may catch a glimpse of the flat plains filled with herds of bigger game animals as they migrate to pastures of fresh green grass.

At the foot of the hills that lead towards the big smoky mountain, there are several caves and outcrops. These are home to bats. Many, many bats, some would estimate that there are more than a million bat families in this region alone. Just after sunset each day, the flutter of wings starts as they begin to awake from their slumber. Then suddenly as if expertly choreographed, the bats emerge in long streams of black smoke from the mouth of each cave. They fill the sky, darkening the

last of the day's shadows. They circle high above the trees, searching and zoning in on their chosen feasting places for the night. Then as suddenly as they appeared they descend and disappear into the trees below to begin their nightly banquet of fresh fruit and berries.

If you could slow down time and then zoom into the cloud of bats as they emerged from the caves, you may just notice that one bat is slightly different from the many others. His fur has a blue tinge. This, some say is because he fell into a pile of blueberries as a baby. You may also notice that he wears a blue leather sports jacket that he found under a pile of dead leaves whilst on one of his many adventures.

Brian, for that, is his name, is a blue fruit bat, but destined for greatness. He is and has always been different from his family, he has always been a bit more curious and friendly than his siblings. He has never just accepted life to be normal, but questions everything around him, all the time. Brian's favourite word is Why. Why am I a bat? Why are there so many other animals? Why do we only eat fruit? Why are trees big with so many leaves? Why, why, why? This constant questioning has driven his parents and siblings mad. They do not want to sleep near him or even play bat games with him anymore.

Brian also had a mortal enemy. Brian called him Brad. Brad was like a distant cousin of the family and seemed

to only exist to make Brian's life miserable. Brad was also blue and also had an inquiring mind, but only seemed to notice the negative things in life.

"Why is life so hard? Why do we have to work all night and sleep all day? Why does Brian always seem so happy, can't you hear the other bats talking behind your back?"

The constant negativity drove Brian mad at times. He just wanted to get away and explore new areas of the forest and find time to think alone. Then he hatched a plan.

## Chapter 2 – The Jacket

“It’s my birthday, it’s my birthday”, the voice in Brian’s head woke him from his deep slumber as he hung upside-down from a root in the cave roof. Brian opened one eye, then the other and looked around the cave. It was dark with the red glow of the sunset creeping in from outside, glistening off the wings of his family all still fast asleep.

Today was Brian’s birthday. A special day for bats, as they do not get to celebrate as many birthdays as humans, so they make a big deal out of the day for each bat that celebrates their day. Brian could not contain himself anymore, he stretched his wings, gave a few warm-up flaps and then let go with his legs. He always enjoyed this part, as he free-fell just a few feet before his wings caught the wind and he took to flight.

As per normal, he did a few circles, because that is what bats do, then he headed out towards the day’s fading light and the forest beyond what he knew would be a special day. As if triggered by his movements the whole colony awoke and took to flight. Brian led the thousands of bats out from the hole in the rocks, spiraling out into the warm evening sky. Many more colonies did the same until the forest was darkened by the huge cloud of swirling hungry bats.

Then just as fast as they had appeared, they all swooped down into the trees below to start their evening feast. Brian and his immediate family gathered as they always did on their allocated tree laden with fruit. Brian took his place together with 18 others who would be honoured today for their birthdays. With such a big family, bats got to celebrate many birthdays almost every day of the year and most days included upwards of twenty, sometimes thirty bats. But all that Brian was focused on today was himself. This was his day and he had plans.

Then on command from the great father bat, they all began to hum the bat birthday song. They hummed, because bats are not good singers at all, and it was decided long ago that humming was a far better option than trying to sing in tune and in so doing scaring off many other animals who lived in the forest. So, the colony hummed, it was beautiful and the sensation for the birthday bats was honouring and worthy of their day. They ended with a flutter of their wings and then on command again from the great father bat, the birthday bats got to take the first bites of the fruit of the evening. Brian had been watching a specific fruit hanging just out of sight behind some leaves. Each day for the past week, he had checked on it to see how the ripening process was going, and today it would be ready for him. He hopped over to the leaves, pulled back the



cover and sunk his small teeth into the ripe and juicy flesh.

Fresh fruit juice dripped down from his mouth, and he chewed and swallowed, and then all the other bats joined in for their feasting. Brian felt special and knew that this day was not yet over. Brian ate and ate until he was full, but not too heavy to limit his flight, he had learnt that lesson a while ago and had to be carried back up the tree by his family when he plummeted to the ground too heavy for his little wings.

He shuffled along the branch to the end where he could see out towards the north and the big smoke mountain for there lay his adventure.

He waited until the other bats around him were not looking and then just dropped off the branch, fell a few meters and then stretched out his wings. With just a few flaps, he had regained his balance and was soaring through the lower branches of the trees.

Bats have the almost unique ability to see without their eyes, their echolocation builds an image of their surroundings in their head to 'see' where they are going. Brian made full use of this ability to fly low and fast through the darkest part of the forest as he headed north towards his goal.

Soon Brian got the hang of this fast low swoop flying technique. He would fly up to gain a better view of the

next few hundred meters and then swoop down gaining speed to duck and weave around the trees and bushes. He had never flown this fast before and was pushing his little wings to the limit that he could flap at. But the joy of being a birthday bat and being free to do what he had wanted to do for ages gave him renewed energy and ambition to fly even faster.

The ground began to slope down into a valley and with it came a drop in temperature that Brian felt on his nose and eyes. Then there was a faint mist that began to flow out from the roots of the trees and engulf the leaves of the small bushes. This gave Brian added adventure as he flew through the mist creating small whirlwinds around him. He did circles just to watch the effect of his wings on the mist.

Brian smiled to himself, not just his mouth, his whole face smiled. He had not felt this happy before, he pushed on harder, ducking, weaving, darting through the mist around the bushes and branches.

Then he sensed it just before he saw it, a light, green, no blue through the mist. It was moving and changing colour. Brian slowed and gained some altitude to investigate. What was this strange thing in the forest? He had seen glow flies in the spring, but this was not the same, it felt different. Warm and inviting. He slowed to a hover, beating his wings in small circles to remain almost silent and in the same spot. Brian closed his eyes and

focused all his attention on his echo to build up the image beneath the mist and leaves. Nothing. He opened his eyes and the light had gone.

Brian flew round in small circles looking and looking but nothing was there. He had to go in for a closer look. Now, every bat knew that to land on the ground, unless it was an absolute emergency was a big no-no. A bat on the ground is easy prey for many animals who would just love a small snack. Brian summed up all his options and courage and decided that this was an absolute emergency, and he would land on the small piles of stones from where the light came. So, gently, he fluttered down, landing with the lightest of touches on the very top rock of the small pile.

He looked around and around again, but nothing. Strange things happen in the forest, but this one was way beyond Brian to explain. Then he heard a small bell tinkle. Just two short rings as if a small bell had been knocked by accident, then nothing. Brian hopped from rock to rock towards the sound determined to find the source. Then he saw it, felt it, a small glow from under a stone just above the dead leaves on the forest floor. Brian rubbed his eyes and looked again, then closed his eyes and looked again. His echo was getting nothing but rocks, his eyes saw a dull blue glow.

He swooped down and landed on the pile of stones. With his feet, he scratched at the loose stones to open

up a small hole. Blue light shone out almost blinding him, making him close his eyes in fright. Then he opened one eye, then the other and there at his feet was indeed a blue cloth that seemed to glow in the dark. Brian looked around again and again, hopping in small circles to make sure that no one and anything was close by that could pounce on him. All clear.

Carefully with his feet, he reached down and took hold of the cloth and pulled up. It shifted. Then came loose and rolled over in front of him. It was a small blue jacket with a gold trim. Brian had never seen anything so beautiful in his entire life. Even in his imagination.

He picked it up and felt the cloth, it was soft, softer than his fur but tough and slightly stretchy. It smelled clean and fresh like a waterfall after the rains. As he turned it over and over, looking smelling and feeling, the jacket suddenly as if by an invisible hand it was fitted over his back and buttoned up in front. His wings stretched out through perfectly positioned gaps on his shoulders.

At first, Brian fought to get it off and had horrid thoughts of being eaten by this blue monster, and then a calm feeling came over him, he relaxed, stretched, and then stood upright. The jacket felt good, it fitted him perfectly. He was warm, safe, and powerful all at the same time.

Brian took a short walk around in circles, feeling how it felt to wear this new outfit: it felt good. Then he tried a short series of short circle flights: it felt good.

Brian smoothed the blue material down around his round body, it was warm, soft and felt like it possessed a magical tingle to the touch. This is what Brian had been waiting for. Today was not a good day, it was a great day.

When Brian returned to the colony on the big fruit tree, most of the other bats, so busy eating, had not even missed him. He snuck back to his branch and continued to eat, as he was now hungrier than ever after all the exercise and excitement.

Then someone noticed his new jacket, at once a loud chatter started as other bats congregated around Brian to catch a glimpse of this new and different thing. Bats did not like change and anything new was often taken as bad and gossiped about for ages. But this was different from the normal different, this was a good different. The other bats reached out to touch the jacket and too felt its tingle of magic. They jumped back with excitement allowing others to come in close and get their touch. The chatter was enormous and began to attract the bats from other colonies in nearby trees. Soon the whole early morning forest was ablaze with conversations about Brian and his new magical jacket.

## The Adventures of Brian, the Blue Fruit Bat

As the sun began to peak over the horizons and sunbeams cut their way through the leaves, the bats settled and made their way back to their caves and overhangs for a well-deserved sleep. But the conversations continued throughout the day, passed on through the birds, squirrels and even the bigger insects. By noon that day the entire forest had heard the stories, no matter how exaggerated, about the blue bat and his magical jacket.

## Chapter 3 - Brad

Brian became a new-found hero in the colony and many other bats came to him for advice and to see his jacket. But Brad continued to hound Brian and was always there to second guess his decisions or whisper discouraging ideas in his ears.

Brad too had found a similar jacket, but Brian thought it looked silly on his thin body and seemed too big for him. Brian's jacket fitted him like a glove as if it were tailored just for him.

Brad was slightly smaller than Brian and had a pointed snout with sharp teeth and always seemed to have a frown on his face. This, with his bad attitude and always whispering negative ideas into Brian's ear. Most of the time Brian could just ignore Brad and he would go away, but it was when Brian was tired of being stressed that the voice in his ear seemed to be a shout and it would add to his frustration and anger. The pressure of wearing the jacket and having animals around him almost all the time began to build. They wanted to hear the story of the mystery lights and how he found it under the stones. Once he had told it for the hundredth time, they just wanted to hear it again. Brian was tired and needed a break from the animals, the bats and especially Brad.

After a few months of this, Brian had had enough and he moved further out of the cave and found a place where he could live and sleep alone, but still be in the protection of the cave away from any dangers that may lurk in the bright light of the day while they were all asleep.

But this then posed a new problem. His sleep was constantly interrupted by the loud noises echoing up from the forest and the rays of sunlight that shone into his eyes each morning and would keep him awake. Why? he asked. Why does the forest make so much noise when I want to sleep? Why does the sunlight shine in my eyes? Why can't I just be a normal bat?

But then he thought, "I am awake anyway, why not go outside during the day and then sleep at night?"

So, the very next day once all the other bats had snuggled down to sleep, Brian crawled across the ceiling of the cave, careful to not knock down any small stones or chunks of moss and wake his family. Then he was outside in the bright light.

His eyes felt like they were on fire making his head throb with pain. Quickly, he retreated into the shadows. Why? Why does it hurt so much? But then as his eyes got used to the light the pain subsided. He blinked and moved closer to the full light, then out into the warmth of the golden rays. His blue fur wafted in the slight breeze and



his small body was warmed, almost too hot for his jacket.

Then he stretched out his wings and took flight. At first, he flew around in small circles, for that is what bats like to do, but soon he stretched out and flew above the canopy into the blue sky. Brian had never seen the sky this colour before. It was normally red or black, never blue. He saw the smoky mountain to the north and the trees and rivers below. He felt free and brave and warm and then scared, so he dove back into the protection of the trees and landed on a branch filled with fruit. It was time to eat and regain his bravery.

Each day Brian would venture out a bit further, exploring new places that he was unable to find at night. He got to meet daytime animals, birds and even a family of stick insects. At first, they were afraid of the bat, but once they had done introductions, Brian seemed to have the ability to talk with almost any animal and make friends.

## Chapter 4 - Max

One day, whilst out on his adventures, Brian saw a different animal perched on the end of a branch eating his fruit. The animal was much bigger than himself. It had brown fur, no wings, a long tail and was eating more fruit in a single mouthful than a bat could eat in a whole night. Brian crawled along the branch to investigate.

“Hello, excuse me Sir” Brian said with hesitation as he approached the strange creature.

Nothing.

Then the creature slurped on a mouthful of fruit and swished its tail across the branch, knocking Brian’s legs from under him and spinning him into thin air.

“Aaaarg” Brian screamed, as he spread his wings trying to regain some balance before he plummeted into the hard ground below. Then he flew back up and landed, this time in front of the beast to see its face and to get away from the tail.

“Who are you?” he demanded, trying to make himself look as big as possible by spreading his wings and fluffing out his fur as far as it could go.

The strange animal looked up at the bat, fruit juice dripping from its mouth. Brian had never seen anything

like this. It was furry but had a friendly face, long arms and hands, legs with more hands than feet and that tail.

“Oh hello, little one,” it said, “My name is Max. Max the monkey.”

“Er, hello Max the monkey, I am Brian, Brian the blue fruit bat. How do you do?”

The fear in Brian had now turned to curiosity, he folded his wings and straightened his jacket and put on his best bat smile.

“So, Max, tell me two things, if you may. What is a monkey and why are you eating all my fruit?”

“Your fruit? Well, well, you do have a lot to learn don’t you little bat? But first, let me tell you about monkeys. We are a species of primates, very intelligent and well-loved by all animals. We live in troops and eat fruit, insects, and plants, but not bats. I am the wisest monkey in the forest. I have travelled to the far ends of the trees on all sides and even beyond to the east onto the plains to where the wildebeest and zebra roam.”

“Oh, monkey Max. It is good to meet you. Well, I am a fruit bat. I am blue because when I was a baby.... Never mind. I am just blue. But I too am wise. I am the wisest of all the bats I know. Maybe even wiser than a monkey?”

“Oh!” Max interrupted, “Wiser than a monkey maybe, but not as wise as Max. Come here little bat and share some of my fruit, you do look hungry.”

Brian moved closer, then he noticed that Max too had a jacket. Almost as fancy as his own but with zips and lots of pockets all bulging with odd-shaped items. This intrigued him, he just had to know what Max had collected on his travels. He took a big mouthful of fruit and began to chew. It was good and the juice dripped from his mouth onto the leaves below.

And that was the beginning of a long and very interesting relationship between a bat and a monkey. They met as often as they could and went on many travels and adventures. Along the way, they were confronted by Brad, the bad bat who tried his best to derail their plans wherever he could but seemed never to be too successful.

## Chapter 5 - Crystal

One autumn morning whilst Brian and Max were exploring the deep undergrowth close to where Brian had found his jacket, they were both startled by a sudden rustle in the leaves on the other side of the big tree roots. They both gave a little yelp and jumped. Max scuttled up the tree and Brian flew high up in small circles to get away from the potential danger.

Then the leaves began to glow with a dull yet distinctive blue light. Then the rustle came again, and the leaves moved as something ran under them. Brian flew higher, but Max seemed more curious than afraid and climbed slowly down to investigate.

“Careful Max”, Brian called from high in the leaves, “You never know what danger it may be”.

“Do not worry” called back Max, “I think I know who it is. Come down and meet a new friend”.

Brian was not having any of it and stayed as high as he could but was still in sight of the scene below him.

Max crawled carefully towards the light and as he approached closer, the leaves suddenly popped open and out sprung the strangest animal that Brian had ever seen. It looked like a monkey but smaller. It had a tail, but fluffier than a monkey. It had big eyes and a pointed

nose with ears like his but covered in fur. It was also dressed in the strangest outfit that Brian had ever seen. Not that he had much experience with outfits. But this one looked like magic, and indeed it was.

Max jumped down from the tree roots and landed next to the strange animal. They both looked at each other for a moment and then hugged whilst jumping in small circles.

“This is not a bad animal”, thought Brian and he flew down to join in on the festivities. He landed on the tree root next to Max and watched as they continued to hug and laugh. Then Max suddenly saw Brian’s confused face. He stopped the hugging and dancing and turned to Brian, “Brian, I want you to meet a very good friend of mine. This is Crystal. Crystal this is Brian, he is a fruit bat.”

“Brian, yes, we have met. Well, sort of. Not really. I met you but you have not yet met me. Hello Brian, it is good to finally meet you face to face. How are you enjoying your jacket?”

“Oh, yes, no. I mean I... when did we meet?”

Stammered Brian, then regaining his mind, “Good to meet you, Crystal. Who, what are you? I have never seen a...”

“I am Crystal the mystical Cat of the forest.” Crystal held out her paw for Brian to shake.

“I travel throughout the forest looking for areas of trouble before they begin and try to fix situations before they become dangerous. It is my job to maintain the balance between the animals and nature and to help resolve the conflict within the delicate balance on the forest ecosystems.”

“You said that we had met before, but I would remember you.”

“I said that I had met you, but you did not get to meet me. I was there when you found your jacket. Remember the blue light? That was me. Your eyes were not yet ready to see what you could not explain. It was I who selected you to wear the jacket and become destined to do great things in the forest and beyond.”

Max began to laugh, a real belly laugh, “You should see the look on your face little bat” and then they all laughed until tears ran down their faces.

Brian was happy to have found a new friend and one so mystical and magical as Crystal. But he was still confused by what she had said about his destiny.

“Time will tell”, he thought to himself and continued to laugh with the others.

Crystal the Wise One, as others called her, lived deep in the forest under the roots of the biggest tree Brian had ever seen. Crystal was part badger part cat and had lived

for thousands of years. Her wisdom was beyond anything Brian could imagine, but she often spoke in riddles that they would have to uncover and decipher before they made any sense.

Through all their adventures the whole team learnt a lot about problem solving and how to turn those problems into solutions.

With these solutions, they began to teach the other animals. Soon they were known across the forest as the wisest animals south of the smoky mountain. This is mostly because no one had ever ventured north of or even close to the mountain. Brian and Max called themselves B & M Solutions and so began their entrepreneurial journey together.

They wrote books and programs in a fun and easy-to-understand way, making them accessible to all the young bats and other animals in the community. They taught about market research, pricing strategies, and the importance of sustainability and collaboration.

Thanks to Brian's efforts, many of the young bats in his community were able to uplift themselves and their families and soon a flurry of small businesses were in operation around the forest region, generating income for their families. Over time, Brian became known as a role model and mentor to many young entrepreneurs in



his community and was awarded the Bat-of-Honour award.

Max was also recognised for his contributions to the forest and his teachings for sustainability and collaboration between the different animals. He was given a parade and the annual animal festival where he delivered a speech to almost two thousand other animals.

Today many animal species within and beyond the forest owe their livelihood and success to B & M Solutions and the many different books and courses they produced.

You too can access the books and programmes that were written originally for the animals in the rain forests of Africa, now adapted and enhanced for human application. But be aware that these may not lead you to any desired goal of the world of capitalism and environmental destruction that exists in big business. Here you will learn that any problem can be solved through a sustainable and collaborative approach without compromising on the values of the forest.

Problem-solving is another-centric, aimed at empowering those facing the problem, not enriching the solution designer.

You will also see how the principles of sustainable innovation, when applied will move you and your team

towards a common goal of success and wealth that will benefit more than just self-enrichment plans.

So, in the words of Brian, “Let’s get on the wing and do that thing, let the journey begin”.