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WHEN SPACE PIRATES STRIKE AT PEACEFUL INTERPLANETARY TRAVELERS, IT BECOMES A TASK FOR THE VALIANT SPACE CADETS... AND TOM CORBETT FACES MORTAL DANGER WITH HIS FELLOW CADETS AS THEY COME TO GRIP WITH...

THE OUTLAWS OF URANUS!

ABOARD A SPACESHIP, ENROUTE TO IO, A MOON SATELITE OF THE PLANET JUPITER... SEIZE HIM!
HE'S EDWARDSON, THE EARTHIAN BANKER, AND TAKE THE GIRL... THEY'LL PAY A HEAVY RANSOM FOR MARLA, THE VENUSIAN AMBASSADOR'S DAUGHTER!

A FEW MOMENTS, THE RAIDERS LEAVE, LADEN WITH VALUABLES AND TAKING WITH THEM THEIR TWO HOSTAGES--THE PRISONERS AND CAPTORS HEAD TOWARDS TWO SMALL SPACESHIPs, WHOSE DEADLY RAY GUNS MENACE THE HUGE INTER-TERRESTRIAL CRAFT--

A SHORT TIME LATER, CAPTIVES AND RAIDERS BLAST OFF IN THE DIRECTION OF DISTANT URANUS--

IT WAS THEM ALL--RIGHT... THE OUTLAWS OF URANUS! WHAT'll WE DO?
ONLY ONE THING TO DO, FRIEND. CONTACT THE SPACE GUARD-- AND HOPE THEY'LL BE ABLE TO ROUND UP THOSE CRIMINALS. ELSE IT WON'T BE SAFE FOR AN HONEST MAN TO MOVE FROM ONE PLANET TO ANOTHER.
AND THAT SAME DAY, AT HEADQUARTERS, SPACE ACADEMY, COMMANDER ARKWRIGHT RECEIVES CAPTAIN STRONG, POLARIS SQUAD, SPACE SQUADRON IN HIS OFFICE.

CAPTAIN STRONG AND POLARIS SQUAD REPORT TO COMMANDER ARKWRIGHT AS DIRECTED.

AT EASE, GENTLEMEN.

AS YOU KNOW, GENTLEMEN, WE HAVE BEEN PLAGUED BY AN OUTBREAK OF PIRACTICAL ACTS ALONG THE ROUTE TO JUPITER. WE KNOW THESE RAIDS ARE THE WORK OF A GANG LED BY THE NOTORIOUS OUTLAW, NORBEK. OUR TASK IS TO STOP THESE CRIMINALS AND CAPTURE THEM.

THE RAIDERS ARE OPERATING FROM URANUS. WE DON'T KNOW THE LOCATION OF THEIR BASE. THAT'S WHY I SENT FOR YOU AND YOUR MEN, STRONG. I HAVE A PLAN --

CADETS CORBETT AND ASTRO WILL TAKE PASSAGE ON THE SPACE LINER FOR IO. THEY WILL WEAR CIVILIAN CLOTHES AND PRETEND TO BE WEALTHY YOUNG MEN ON VACATION. BY FLASING LOTS OF MONEY, WE HOPE THEY WILL ATTRACT THE ATTENTION OF THE RAIDER'S SPIES, AND PROVOKING AN ATTACK ON THEIR LINER -- AN ATTACK, SIR?

EXACTLY, IT IS OUR HOPE THAT CORBETT AND ASTRO WILL BE CAPTURED, HELD FOR HOSTAGE AND BROUGHT TO THE GANG'S HIDEOUT. BUT, SIR, I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT GOOD WILL THAT DO?

BOTH CADETS WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH THE NEW, POWERFUL LAPEL TRANSITOR ELECTRO RADIO SENDER. CADET THISTLE WILL BE AT A LISTENING POST ON ASTROID DELTA. WHEN HE GETS WORD FROM THEM, OUR TASK FORCE UNDER YOUR COMMAND WILL MAKE A SURPRISE SWEET ATTACK.

I SEE, SIR. THIS IS A DANGEROUS MISSION -- AND NO CADET CAN BE FORCED TO TAKE AN ASSIGNMENT AGAINST HIS WILL. MY CADETS WILL HAVE TO SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.

I'M WITH YOU, SIR! THAT GOES FOR ME, TOO, SIR! SAME HERE, SIR!

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT YOUR ANSWER WOULD BE. YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR QUARTERS. COMMANDER ARKWRIGHT AND I WILL WORK OUT THE DETAILS. DISMISSED!
BACK IN THEIR QUARTERS, TOM AND ASTRO GIVE WAY TO THEIR JUBLIATION, WHILE THISTLE SITS GLUMLY.

FLAMING ROCKETS! ISN'T THIS SOMETHING, ASTRO? YAHOO! YAHOO! URANUS--HERE WE COME!

THIS IS TERRIFIC! HOW ABOUT IT, T.J.? YOUR CHIN IS HANGING DOWN TO YOUR KNEES!

YEAH, IT'S GREAT.

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU, T.J.? LEAPING COSMIC DUST, TOM, HOW DO YOU EXPECT ME TO FEEL HERE, YOU GUYS ARE DOING OFF TO URANUS WHERE ALL THE EXCITEMENT IS, AND I'LL BE SITTING ON THAT LUMP OF SPACE JUNK-ASTEROID DELTA!

DON'T LET IT THROW YOU T.J. YOUR PART OF THE JOB IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN OURS, IF YOU DON'T PICK UP OUR MESSAGE--ASTRO AND I WILL BE SUNK!

I GUESS SO!

CADETS CORBETT, ASTRO AND THISTLE REPORT TO THE ORDERLY ROOM FOR FINAL BRIEFING AND TO DRAW EQUIPMENT.

YES, SIR!

PROCEEDING ACCORDING TO THEIR PREARRANGED PLAN, TOM AND ASTRO ARRIVE AT THE TRANS-STEMAR SPACE STATION ON DEMOS, WHERE....

COME ON ASTRO, LET'S GET RID OF SOME OF THIS MONEY. I'LL BUY YOU A SPACE DRINK AT THE LOUNGE.

SURE, PAL, THERE'S STILL TIME AND WHEN WE GET TO DO WE'LL REALLY HAVE A TIME FOR OURSELVES.

AS TOM AND ASTRO WALK OFF TWO PAIRS OF EYES LOOK AFTER THEM...

LYDOR, THOSE ARE THE ONES--NORBEN WILL BE PLEASED. LET'S BUY OUR TICKETS. WHEN WE'RE IN SPACE, I'LL SIGNAL NORBEN WHEN WE'RE IN SPACE.
AT THE SCHEDULED HOUR, THE JUPITER BOUND PASSENGER CRAFT BLASTS OFF, WITH TOM AND ASTRO ABOARD...

DON'T LOOK NOW, ASTRO—but I recognized one of those men behind us. He's Androk Garo—I recognized him from his picture in the space guard fugitive file. I have a hunch he's the contact man for Norbek. Sit tight and be ready for anything.

CHECK I WONDER HOW HE'LL GET IN TOUCH WITH THE RAIDERS IF HE'S THE MAN?

Perhaps astro could have satisfied his curiosity if he had seen Androk some hours later...

HE WOULD HAVE SEEN ANDROK PROCEED TO THE WASTE CHUTE WHERE HE DROPPED A SMALL CYLINDER INTO SPACE....

AS THE CYLINDER TUMBLED OUT IN THE WAKE OF THE SPEEDING SHIP, IT BURST INTO BRILLIANT FLAME, MARKING THE FLIGHT OF THE STAR LINER...

AND IN A SPEEDY SPACESHIP SOME MILES AWAY, THE SIGNAL LIGHT IS PICKED UP BY NORBEK, WHO HAS BEEN SCANNING THE VAST AND LIMITLESS REACHES OF SPACE THROUGH HIS ASTROTHERMO-INFRA-TELE-SCREEN...

AH, THERE'S ANDROK'S SIGNAL. THAT MEANS IT WILL BE WORTH OUR WHILE TO TAKE THE IO-EUROPA—JUPITER EXPRESS—TELL THE CONTROL DECK TO CLOSE IN. HAVE THE GUN CREWS AT THEIR STATIONS. SALPHO! CONTACT THE OTHER SHIP, SIR!

YES, SIR!
SOON IN THE CONTROL ROOM OF THE PASSENGER SHIP

ZOOMING ROCKETS! LOOK THERE! WHAT ARE THOSE FOOLS TRYING TO DO? THEY'RE CUTTING US OFF--ARE THEY CRAZY?

I'LL CALL THEM...X-4135 TO UNKNOWNS. VEER OFF. YOU'RE HEADING IN OUR WAY. VEER OFF!

PULL UP, X-4135. PREPARE TO RECEIVE A BOARDING PARTY. OR OUR NEXT SHOT WILL BLAST YOU OUT OF THE SKY!

FORCED TO OBEY THE RAIDERS, THE PILOT OF THE INTERPLANETARY PASSENGER CRAFT BREAKS TO A DEAD STOP, AS SPACE-SUITED OUTLAWS MOVE TOWARDS THE LINER.

MOMENTS LATER... TAKE THOSE TWO. THEY'RE CARRYING A LOT OF MONEY. SOMEONE WILL PAY HEAVY RANSOM FOR THEM!

AFTER WRECKING THE PASSENGER SHIPS' TRANSMITTER, THE RAIDERS ROB THE TRAVELERS AND ORDER THE BIG CRAFT TO BLAST OFF AS THEY TRANSFER THEIR PRISONERS THROUGH SPACE TO THEIR OWN SHIPS.

IN A SHORT TIME, TOM AND ASTRO ARE BROUGHT TO URANUS TO THE OUTLAW HIDEOUT IN THE CAVERNS OF THE REMOTE MOUNTAIN AREA OF THE DISTANT PLANET.--NORBEEK HIMSELF INTERVIEWS THEM.

THEN YOU’LL NOT GIVE ME ANY INFORMATION? VERY WELL, WE HAVE JUST THE TREATMENT FOR OUR STUBBORN GUESTS--GUARDS! TAKE THEM DOWN TO THE MINES. A LITTLE WORK WILL SOON MAKE THEM CHANGE THEIR MINDS ABOUT TALKING.

ASTRO--I TOOK A FIX OF OUR POSITION. I’LL SEND THE MESSAGE TO T.J.!

GOOD--I’VE GOT THE POSITION TOO, IT WON'T BE LONG NOW!
THE GUARDS LEAD THE TWO CADETS DOWN INTO THE BOWELS OF THE PLANET'S SURFACE WHERE OTHER PRISONERS ARE TOILING IN THE DEEP PIT OF A NINE, DIGGING OUT PRECIOUS GEMS AND OTHER MINERALS...

MISS, I KNOW YOU FROM YOUR PICTURES, YOU ARE MARLA, THE VENUSIAN AMBASSADOR'S DAUGHTER!

YES, BUT DON'T LET THEM KNOW. I WOULDN'T GIVE MY NAME. OH, IF YOU CAN HELP US PLEASE--WE'LL ALL DIE...

I'M GOING TO DO MY BEST. HERE WORK CLOSE TO ME, I'M GOING TO TRY AND SEND A MESSAGE.

MUFFLING HIS VOICE, TOM SETS THE TINY, BUTTON SIZE TRANSMITTER INTO OPERATION.

DOGWOOD, THIS IS CAPTIVE, POSITION VECTOR TWELVE-OH-NINE-FOUR--EIGHT-OH-EIGHT--REPEAT-VECTOR TWELVE-OH-NINE-FOUR--EIGHT-OH-EIGHT AXIUM NINETY-FIVE, GRID MINUS ELEVEN.

AND MILES AWAY, IN THE LISTENING OUT-POST ON ASTEROID DELTA, THISTLE KEEPS HIS LONELY VIGIL.

JUMPING COSMIC DUST. THIS IS THE MOST BORING JOB I'VE EVER DONE. THERE WOBBEN'T BE ANY MESSAGES TODAY. I THINK I'LL STROLL OVER TO THE CANTEEN, THERE'S A PRETTY GOOD ASTRAL-TELE SHOW COMING ON IN A FEW MINUTES.

MOMENTS LATER, THE LONG MUTE RECEIVER COMES ALIVE AND TOM'S INSISTANT MESSAGE IS RECEIVED, BUT NO ONE IS THERE TO HEAR IT.

DOGWOD, THIS IS CAPTIVE, POSITION VECTOR TWELVE-OH-NINE-FOUR--EIGHT-OH-EIGHT--REPORT VECTOR TWELVE-OH-NINE-FOUR--EIGHT-OH-EIGHT--AXIUM NINETY-FIVE, GRID MINUS ELEVEN.

AND ON URANNUS, AS TOM FINISHES HIS URGENT MESSAGE, AN ALERT GUARD NOTICES THAT HE IS NOT WORKING, AND--

SEIZE THAT MAN!

ASTRO! GET OUT OF HERE. KEEP BROADCASTING. HIDE IN THE OLD MINE TUNNEL WE PASSED, I'LL PUT UP A FIGHT TO COVER YOU.

TOM FIGHTS BOLDLY AND GAIMELY UNTIL--

GIVE UP OR I'LL KILL THE GIRL!

ALL RIGHT--I SURRENDER!
IN THERE, INTO SOLITARY. NORBEK WILL DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH YOU IN THE MORNING.

AND WE'VE GOT A PRETTY GOOD IDEA WHAT HE'LL DO. HE DOESN'T LIKE TROUBLE-MAKERS. YOU'D BETTER SAY YOUR PRAYERS, PAL. YOU'RE GOING TO NEED THEM.

I'VE GOT TO THINK OF SOMETHING. THEY'LL KILL ME SURE. I KNOW...

OH... OH... GUARD! I'M SICK!

I'M SICK!

ALL RIGHT... ALL RIGHT WAIT A MINUTE...

NOW, WHAT... UHHH!

ALL OF A SUDDEN... I FEEL MUCH BETTER...

MEANWHILE, ASTRO FEVERISHLY REPEATS HIS MESSAGE OVER AND OVER AGAIN...

HEAR ME... IF NOT... WE'RE SUNK.

THEY'VE GOT TO HELP THE COMRADES... DOGWOOD, THIS IS CAPTIVE. POSITION VECTOR TWELVE-OH-NINE-FOUR...

BUT IN THE LISTENING POST...

POSITION VECTOR TWELVE-OH-NINE-FOUR...

EIGHT-OH-EIGHT...
Suddenly... There's the other one. I had a hunch he might be hiding in here. Come on out with your hands up, you... or I'll blast you!

Don't shoot. I know when I'm licked.

As the guards lead Astro to the cell block a blast from a paralyzer gun stops them in their tracks...

Huh?

Tom! How did you? No time for that now. Grab their guns and let's go. We have to work fast.

The space cadets approach the slave mine pit, and Tom unfolds his plan...

Apparently Norbek and his boys are having a big shindig in the main cave. I scouted them out now... We'll knock out the guards with the paralyzer rays, free the prisoners... and bust up Norbek's party. How's that? If you say it's okay, Tom, that's good enough for me.

Make every shot count. Give 'em a half charge. That'll stun them for a few hours. At my signal, open fire...

I'm set!

FIRE!

The space cadets fire finds its mark and each of the guards is frozen in place...
ALL RIGHT YOU PRISONERS... COME ON! WE'RE SPACE CAPTIVES! FOLLOW US!
AT LAST! FREEDOM!

WE CAN SURPRISE NORBEK AND HIS BUNCH. IF YOU FOLLOW MY ORDERS, ALL
WEAPONS AT HALF CHARGE. WE DON'T WANT ANY KILLING.
DON'T FIRE UNTIL I GIVE THE SIGNAL. ANY QUESTIONS?
NO!

MEANWHILE, THE UNSUSPECTING NORBEK AND HIS OUTLAWS ARE HAVING A GALA TIME
ONE DAY SOON, BOYS, WE'LL RULE THE ROOST! YOU WON'T REGRET STICKING
WITH ME!

SUDDENLY...

FIRE!

THEY'LL BE LIKE THIS FOR A WHILE, ASTRO... SEE IF YOU CAN GET
THROUGH TO T.J.

CHECK!

AND AT THE LISTENING POST...

POSITION VECTOR S THAT WAS TWELVE-OH-NINE-FOUR. I WILL...
REPEAT... THE MESSAGE IS COMING IN!

HAVING RECEIVED THE MESSAGE THISTLE CONTACTS CAPTAIN
STRONG AND IN RESPONSE TO THISTLE'S ALERT, TASK FORCE
STRONG TAKES OFF FOR URANUS.

IN A SHORT TIME, NORBEK AND HIS MEN ARE ROUNDED UP... THE PRISONERS ARE RETURNED
TO THEIR HOMES AND THE MISSION IS AC-
COMPLISHED... BACK AT SPACE ACADEMY...

I AM MENTIONING EACH OF YOU IN MY RE-
PORT TO COMMANDER ARKRIGHT. THISTLE, BECAUSE YOU DID SO WELL ON ASTEROID
DELTA, WE ARE SETTING UP A PERMANENT
LISTENING STATION THERE AND YOU WILL
BE IN CHARGE OF IT AS A REWARD FOR YOUR
EXCELLENT WORK ON YOUR ASSIGNMENT.

THANK YOU, SIR.

ASTEROID DELTA... WHY DOES EVERYTHING
HAPPEN TO ME?
SPACE ACADEMY TEST

HOW GOOD A SPACE CADET ARE YOU?

IS TOM CORBETT RIGHT OR WRONG...

OUR EARTH SPINS AROUND AND AROUND, AND IN ADDITION, IT IS FLYING THROUGH SPACE AT A SPEED OF 1,600,000 MILES EACH DAY.

THE STAR, SIRIUS, IS SO HEAVY THAT A PIECE OF IT THIS SIZE—JUST ONE CUBIC INCH—WEIGHS A WHOLE TON.

THAT'S A LOT OF SPACE GAS! YOU MEAN I COULDN'T PICK UP A LITTLE PIECE LIKE THIS?

GALILEO WAS THE FIRST MAN TO EXPLORE SPACE WITH A TELESCOPE... AND THE FIRST TO MAKE IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES.

WITH MODERN CHEMISTRY WE CAN MAKE NYLON STOCKINGS... PAINT... PERFUME... EVEN CANDY FROM COAL!

ALL ANSWERS ARE RIGHT
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PUTS YOU "IN THE MONEY" AND FAST! Your savings pile up PLENTY FAST—and with this marvelous new Television Bank! None of your friends, relatives or chance visitors can resist depositing enough to see the complete show! And with SIX wonderful pictures to see—you bank REAL MONEY just for letting them look!

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BE THE FIRST IN YOUR CROWD TO HAVE THIS WONDERFUL NEW TELEVISION BANK!
SEND NO MONEY! ORDER YOURS TODAY!

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Deep in space a silver needle cruising toward Earth after a routine patrol. The Polaris rocket tubes him a song of power. All is well then, suddenly—trouble. Bad trouble.

No use, sir, they're closing. Not if fast, they'll open fire again in a second. Turn their little calling card with interest. Power deck and navigation—stand by, battle procedure.

Range—mark! Bearing—mark! Like the precision machine they are the Polaris crew jockey her into position and—on target!
TOO HEAVILY FOR US. AN EARTH BATTLE-WAGON MIGHT BE ABLE TO STOP THAT SHIP, BUT WE CAN'T.

POWER DECK TO CONTROL. WHICH MEANS WE'LL BE SITTING DUCK BEFORE LONG, TOM! WHEN I SAY WE'RE LOSING THRUST, ALL SHE'LL TAKE NOW!

WHEN I SAY THE WORD GIVE HER HARD RIGHT. IN SECONDS, THE POLARIS IS SPACE-MILES AWAY, AND THE ALIEN IS LEFT FAR BEHIND, BUT THE EARTH SHIP IS LOSING THRUST FAST.

SIR—LOOK! WE'RE OFF THE REGULAR SPACE LINES AND I CAN'T BE SURE— BUT I'LL BET THAT'S A PLANET DOWN THERE. IF THERE IS, IT WILL BE TINY— AND UNCHARTED— BUT REGARS CAN'T BE CHOOSERS. OKAY, TOM, TAKE HER DOWN.

THE ROCKET KNIVES DOWNWARD, REVERSES FOR LANDING— AND FOR LONG MOMENTS ALL IS SILENT. BLIND-LANDING A ROCKET CAN BE FATAL. ALITUDE THIRTY THOUSAND—TWENTY-NINE—TWENTY-EIGHT— WE'RE THROUGH THE CLOUD BANK!

AT TWENTY-EIGHT-THOUSAND FEET THE WHITENESS IS IMPENETRABLE, BUT AT TWENTY-SEVEN— THE CLOUDS— VANISH. THE REST IS EASY. GENTLY, THE POLARIS MAKES PLANET FALL.

I WISH I KNEW ASTRO, BUT WE'LL DISCUSS THAT LATER. RIGHT NOW WE'VE GOT WORK TO DO.

EARTH-TYPE PLANETOID IN EARLY STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT. GRAVITY NORMAL, SIR. ATMOSPHERE BREATHABLE, WON'T NEED YOUR SPACE UNIFORMS AND HELMETS HERE.

NORMAL, THE MAN SAYS. JUMPING JETS! SIR, LOOK OUT THERE. IT'S LIKE THE TROPICS AND THIS IS FEBRUARY.

STRONG! WHAT HAPPENED? WHERE DID THAT SHIP COME FROM?
A simple natural phenomenon. Astro, the atmosphere absorbs solar heat and the thick cloud bank prevents it from escaping.

Let's skip the statistics for now. Thistle, we've got to get those damaged tubes replaced and turn in a report on those killers.

Killers, sir? It seemed to me from the angle of their fire that they meant only to disable us.

Sure! And I'm the queen of the May. Let's get to work before our little playmates catch up to us again.

They already have! Look!

They sat down behind that ridge, sir—do you suppose they spotted us?

I doubt it, Tom. They probably landed for repairs, just as we did. But now—maybe we'll get a few answers.

Quickly, the little group splits up. Astro and T.J. remain with the ship—and Tom and Captain Strong plunge into the lush undergrowth.

There they are! That one just below us is setting up some sort of trap. I wonder why.

The waiting is not long. One of the planetoids' rabbit-like creatures approaches the trap soon after and the trap snaps shut.

He's taking it into the ship. And the others have finished their repairs. If they all go inside maybe we'll get a chance to get closer.

And—the others do go inside. There are no hostile eyes to see when two figures race to the side of the alien ship.

Sir—I don't get it. What are they doing? That's some sort of electronic setup but what is it for? We are ready.
CAPTAIN! I HEARD THAT ONE SPEAK, AND I UNDERSTOOD HIM!! NO, HIS LIPS NEVER MOVED. THEY MUST BE TELEREAPTHIC. AMONG THEMSELVES, ANYWAY, THEY CAN'T PICK UP OUR THOUGHTS OR THEY'D BE OUT HERE.

TOM! THERE'S A SECOND RABBIT FORMING— AROUND THAT PILE OF COGS? A DUPLICATE— OF THE LIVING ONE.

GOOD, THE DAMAGE DONE US BY THE EARTH-SHIP DID NOT HARM THE RE-PRODUCER. A PITY IT IS NOT AN EARTH MAN THERE ON THE TABLE, EH, MANX?

AYE, BUT WE SHALL KNOW SOON ENOUGH WHAT EARTH-MEN LOOK LIKE. WE HAVE ONLY TO FIND OTHER SPECIMENS, DUPLICATE THEM, AND LET THEM PAVE THE WAY FOR OUR CONQUEST.

TRUE, WE SHALL REST HERE, THEN— ON TO EARTH.

THE MINUTES TICK OFF— AND OUTSIDE, TWO HUMAN BEINGS LISTEN, AND BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND, WHEN THEY SEE THEIR COMPANIONS THEY ARE WHITE, SHAKEN.

ROBOTS? YOU MEAN THEY CAN DUPLICATE ANYTHING? ANYONE? THEN T.J. WAS RIGHT. THEY DIDN'T WANT TO KILL US, THEY WANTED SPECIMENS.

EXACTLY, US! THEY'RE PLANNING AN INVASION OF EARTH! THEIR ROBOTS WILL PASS AS MEN, MEN WHO CAN DESTROY... SABOTAGE!

THAT SHIP IS JUST AN ADVANCE SCOUT? AFTER THE ROBOTS MAKE EARTH HELPLESS, THEY'LL ATTACK! THEIR WHOLE FLEET WILL COME, AND WE DON'T DARE BLAST OFF TO WARN EARTH.

BUT EARTH MUST BE WARNED! IF IT ISN'T, THEY'LL JUST FIND OTHER HUMANS TO DUPLICATE SIR, I'VE GOT AN IDEA.

TOM SPEAKS RAPIDLY, EXPLAINING HIS IDEA IS RASH, DARING— BUT THERE IS NO CHOICE.

IT'S WORTH A TRY, ANYWAY. ASTRO? T.J.? HOW ABOUT IT?

NEED YOU ASK, SIR? HE'LL SHOW THE BLIGHTERS— IF WE'RE LUCKY. IF NOT— WELL, NOT ALL OF US CAN LIVE OUT OUR ALLOTTED THREE SCORE AND TEN, CAN WE, SIR?
SO—it is decided. The plan is a long shot, a deadly gamble. But when the cadets leave the Polaris, later, it is as if they are headed for a frolic—not danger.

All right, let’s go. Make plenty of noise. And when the aliens come—watch yourselves.

Whee! Three cheers for our side! Hooray!

It takes only moments. The aliens are not far off...

So this is what Earth men are like!

The telepathic “vote” is cold, impersonal. It crackles orders: Add the cadets to the alien ship. There are no preliminaries, no discussions.

Captain! Hang on, T.J. Whatever they’re doing it doesn’t seem to be harming us. Don’t let it throw you.

But it—it’s like a nightmare! Those things are us!

Only outwardly. Take it easy, T.J. Don’t panic. It wouldn’t do any good, and it might do a lot of harm.

The duplication takes only moments. Then the robots are taken away—and the cadets are removed to a tiny metal cell.

The Polaris! They must have repaired her. She’s taking off with those robots at her controls and after our telling the aliens that were from space academy, that’s where they’ll head. All we can do now is hope.

Heartsick, the cadets watch their beloved Polaris climb and vanish. Then, the long hours drag by. A day crawls by. Two...
On the third day the aliens blast off, and there are no shock couches in the cell. The acceleration squeezes the cadets against the floor, blacks them out...

Captain! We—we must have blacked out.

And we've been out quite a while. That's Earth out there.

Boys! Look! Rocket exhausts!

Then—our trick worked! It must have! Those must be Solar Guard ships!

We're hit! Grab something and hang on! From here on in those aliens are going to get a lesson in space combat.

The alien ship rocks under the trihammer blows. The blasts are aimed at her controls and tubes, but the damage is enormous. Seemingly, before it has begun, the attack is almost over.

Solar Guard to invader! This is Arkwright of Space Academy. You have thirty seconds. Surrender, or face the consequences.

No! This... this cannot be happening! It is impossible. Maxy—how could they have known about us? They were waiting!

Half a dozen aliens race to the cell. Where the cadets are held, then—A familiar grin leaps across space.

Strong! Every—everything under control?

They've surrendered to me and the boys, I guess—You got our message. If you'll escort us down, we'll be much obliged.

Planet fall is uneventful. The fleet sits down on Earth. Then, after the greetings, after the cadets have donned proper uniform, the aliens are brought in.

Ah, now—we'll get down to business.

Business? I do not understand the word, but there is no need for talk. We have failed. But we shall die bravely. We are ready.
DIE? IT IS EASY TO DIE, MANX, BUT A MAN WHO WISHES TO SERVE HIS RACE CAN SERVE FAR BETTER ALIVE THAN DEAD. WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF EXECUTING YOU.

TRUE, BUT EARTH WANTS ONLY PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP WITH ALL PLANETS. IF I OFFERED FRIENDSHIP—WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE, MANX? TO BE OUR LIVING FRIENDS OR YOUR DEAD ENEMIES?

QUIETLY COMMANDER ARKWRIGHT EXTENDS THE HAND OF PEACE, AND THE ALIENS HAVE LEARNED A BITTER LESSON. AFTER THAT MEETING THERE ARE OTHERS, AND AT LAST...

WELL, THERE THEY GO, BOYS. I'M GLAD THEY CHOSE FRIENDSHIP, MANX IS A HIGH OFFICIAL ON HIS PLANET. I DON'T THINK WE HAVE TO FEAR ANOTHER ATTACK.

FRANKLY, SIR, I HOPE NOT. THOSE ROBOTS ARE BAD MEDICINE, AND SPEAKING OF ROBOTS—WHEN DID YOU GUESS THE TRUTH, SIR?

ABOUT THE ROBOTS? AS SOON AS THEY LANDED, YOU SEE, THE SPACEPOST GUARDS ATTEMPTED TO ARREST THEM. THANKS TO YOUR SCHEME, ONE OF THE ROBOTS WAS DAMAGED UNDER ITS SYNTHETIC SKIN—THERE WAS A METAL.

AS SOON AS I SAW THAT, I HAD OUR TECHS CHECK THE ROBOTS MIND—TAPE THEIR ORDERS. OUR PART WAS SIMPLE BUT—HOW DID YOU EVER GET THE IDEA FOR YOUR PLAN, TOM?

FROM MANX, SIR, WHEN I HEARD HIM “SAY” THAT HE'V NEVER SEEN AN EARTH MAN, IT STOOD TO REASON THAT IF THEY COPIED US THEY'D COPY US EXACTLY. SO WE ALL WENT FOR A SWIM.

AND THAT WAS IT, SIR. I WONDER WHAT MANX WOULD THINK IF HE KNEW WHAT REALLY HAPPENED WHEN THOSE ROBOTS LANDED THE POLARIS ON EARTH?

SO DO I, SIR? IT MUST HAVE BEEN QUITE A SIGHT. NO WONDER THE GUARDS TRIED TO ARREST THE ROBOTS.

I CAN JUST PICTURE IT. A CAPTAIN OF THE SOLAR GUARD AND THREE SPACE CADETS LANDING A SHIP AND STEPPING OUT INTO THE ROBOT FIELD IN THE MIDDLE OF FEBRUARY IN SWIMMING SHORTS AND NOTHING ELSE!
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SPACE NEWS

No One Will Starve

Every now and then some pseudo-scientist, seeking to get his name in the headlines, warns all and sundry that at the rate the earth’s population is increasing, there won’t be enough fertile land to feed all the folks. Highly important, of course, if true, but real scientists know and tell us it just isn’t so. That feeding the earth people is the least of the problems that confronts modern man.

Radioactive Dust

If mankind behaves itself and uses even a modicum of sense in this atomic age, it may escape the dire dangers from radioactive bomb fallout, according to Dr. Alfred H. Sturtevant, geneticist of the California Institute of Technology.

Most of us know what happened to the Japanese fishermen after recent atomic tests in the Pacific. But Dr. Sturtevant declares that if no new tests are added, the radioactive dust will be sufficiently thinned out to prevent man from breeding a progeny of freaks in the near future.

Attention, Tourist

The man in the moon is undressing slowly but surely. According to Dr. H. Percy Wilkins, member of the British Interplanetary Society, there is no present danger that any portion of his wardrobe will come flying through space and collide with Earth.

Dr. Wilkins has been peering at the moon for over 44 years. According to him, the man in the moon started his act as far back as 1891. At any rate that was the first time that telescopes discovered what was going on.

But lately the act has been getting wilder. Huge chunks of moon surface from 50 feet to one mile thick and at least 200 yards wide are now appearing. Dr. Wilkins thinks all this is due to the fact that Luna is exceedingly moody. And who wouldn’t be when the moon runs through a 300 degree variation in temperature, first freezing and then roasting from noon until midnight? This is causing the moon’s surface to split.

But be that as it may, Dr. Wilkins cautions that rocket spaceships will have to be equipped to change direction as they approach the moon so that they can land on a smooth strip of epidermis. A useful thing to know on a 249,000 mile trip.
CAPTAIN QUICK and the SPACE SCOUTS!

Across the treacherous waste of Mars, Captain Quick leads his Space Scouts, Bob and Paul, on an exploring expedition. Seeking clues to the history of the great canals of Mars, they find instead the deadly trap of a giant and vicious 'Canal Frog!'

We'll make camp here, Space Scouts! Paul, gather brush for a fire! Bob, get some water from the canal! We'll cook us an old-fashioned meal tonight!

Captain Quick! Paul! Look what I found! A flower made of crystals!

We're coming, Bob!

I've heard legends of the Jewel Flowers, but I never believed they really existed!

I've read about that, Captain Quick! Aren't they supposed to bring death to anyone who finds them?

There's a lot of superstition written about these Jewel Flowers... but there may be some truth about the danger they bring. We don't know much about them... how they grow and...

Look! There's a trap door in the side of the cliff! Something is coming out!

A Giant Frog! Why—it looks just like the one we have on Earth!

But not this size! And frogs have voracious appetites! Get your guns out!
CAPTAIN QUICK—SHOULDN'T WE RUN FOR THE SHIP? IT WOULD OVER-LEAP AND DEVOUR US IN A FLASH! HE'S GETTING SET TO JUMP US!

BLAST AWAY, SPACE SCOUTS. MAYBE WE CAN SCARE HIM BACK TO HIS CAVE.

IT WORKED, CAPTAIN! HE'S GOING BACK! YES BUT FOR HOW LONG? I SUGGEST WE MAKE A BEE-LINE BACK TO THE SHIP!

BUT FIRST I'LL TAKE ONE OF THESE CRYSTAL FLOWERS WITH US!

ALL CLEAR NOW! LOOK, THE FROG IS COMING OUT AGAIN! I GUESS HE'S TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET US!

WHAT A BEAUTY! NO WONDER THERE ARE LEGENDS ABOUT THESE JEWEL FLOWERS! SAY, WE OUGHT TO GET A SPACE MERIT BADGE FOR THIS DISCOVERY! I WONDER WHY NO ONE HAS EVER BROUGHT IN ONE OF THESE FLOWERS BEFORE?

PROBABLY BECAUSE ONE OF THOSE GIANT FROGS LIVES BESIDE THIS KIND OF FLOWER... AND HAS MADE A MEAL OUT OF ANYONE WHO CAME TO PICK IT!

LOOK! THE FLOWER CHANGED INTO SAND... PLAIN, ORDINARY SAND! AND THAT'S THE REASON WHY SUCH A FLOWER HAS NEVER BEEN BROUGHT IN! ONCE IT IS PICKED... IT CHANGES AS IT DIES INTO SAND!

Say, I wonder why no one has ever brought in one of these flowers before?
**Space News**

**Age Of Life On Earth**

**Bombardment**

Although the sun is 93 million miles away from Earth, it bombards us not only with light and heat, but with invisible dust from its own combustion. These ashes, so to speak, can't be seen or felt, but they have terrific effects on the Earth's atmosphere.

Every now and then the sun must come upon some portion of its own innards that is more easily combustible than the rest. Then it is that we get a flare-up, such as is manifested in the trick lighting of the aurora borealis, so beautiful to watch.

Science has come to look for violent magnetic storms a few days after a large sunspot crosses the center of the sun. Dust storms sometimes put in their appearance.

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**Absolutely Nothing**

About 2000 years ago when Aristotle said "Nature abhors a vacuum," he wasn't talking about human nature. For ever since, men of science have been trying to make one. At the end of last year, a man of science succeeded in making a perfect vacuum and won a $1000 prize from the American Association for the Advancement of Science for his triumph over nature.

The man is Dr. Daniel Alpert, a Westinghouse physicist. By spraying heated mercury past the opening of a tube to be emptied, the mercury molecules drag the air molecules in the tube to a point where a mechanical pump kicks them out of the tube into the air. So far so good. But helium atoms pour through solid glass at the terrific rate of a billion molecules in every cubic inch per hour. Dr. Alpert meets this invading helium by painting a metal coat on the glass tube. This could mean that radio and TV tubes will last longer.

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**Cure For Skin Disease**

Tufts Medical School scientists have proven that Cortisone and adrenal hormone or Acth, the pituitary hormone that stimulates the adrenals, have cured many skin diseases. But, in some cases, there have been unfortunate side effects in the use of these hormones.

Now, however, the Tufts Medical School scientists have discovered that by transplanting the adrenal glands from infants who perished after premature birth they have cured several types of skin ailments without any of the serious side effects sometimes found when using Cortisone or Acth.
COLLISION ORBIT! AUTOMATIC INSTRUMENTS SHRIEK THE ALARM AND SUDDENLY TOM CORBETT AND THE SPACE CADETS FIND THEMSELVES HEADING FOR A WEIRD ADVENTURE ON...

WOLF PLANET!

CAPTAIN STRONG! METEOR SWARM COMING FAST!

THE METEORS APPEAR SUDDENLY AS IF SHOT FROM SOME COSMIC CANNON. EACH JAGGED CHUNK OF MINERAL IS SUDDEN, HURTING DEATH, AND THE SWARM IS DENSE. THIS TIME, EXPERT SPACECRAFT IS NOT ENOUGH...

WE CAUGHT ONE! SEAL OFF THIS COMPARTMENT! IF WE LOSE OUR OXYGEN WE'RE DONE.

AYE. AYE, SIR!

WHOU! THAT WAS CLOSE. DO YOU THINK WE'RE BADLY DAMAGED, CAPTAIN?

WELL, SOON SEE. ASTRO, WE SEEM TO BE THROUGH THE SWARM ANYWAY. BREAK OUT THE SPACE GEAR, WE'LL HAVE A LOOK AND KEEP YOUR FINGERS CROSSED.
Clumsily, the space-suited figures crawl back through a hatch. Then, there is a council of war. Magna III, we can reach it in twenty-four hours.

It had better be ready for Magna's never been explored. But where's the vegetation that showed it? It must be game food. If there isn't—well, we're in a bad spot.

So you'd better get busy. I'll chart us a course to Magna and fast. I'm getting hungry already.

But the charting is not taken too long. An hour later, the Polaris jet is back into life, and a day after that:

So this is Magna III. Looks pretty peaceful to me, sir. Maybe it is, and maybe not. We'll play safe. You stay here, Astro. Get some water aboard. We'll scout around.

Magna III is a green paradise, but it is a paradise empty of life, or at least, it seems to be—for a while...

Do we go on after this breather, sir? It's beginning to look as if the only life form on this planet is vegetable.

Vegetable, my eye! If those things down there are vegetables, I'm giving up salads as of right now.

Great Scott! It's a village, but—sir, what are they? Those, those things they look like wolves!

They are wolves—or something very like a wolf! Look at the furred hides, the fangs...
They - they're heading this way! Look at the way they're sniffing the air. They've caught our scent.

Steady! They may be friendly...

Friendly! They'll tear us to bits!

Thistle! No!

That did it! Back to the ship.

The chase is a nightmare howling. The wolf men come on, but the cadets have a long head start.

Captain Strong! What happened?

Leaping Lina! What are those things?

No shooting — gasp. That's what started this. Get — gasp — the hatch closed.

The hatch slams shut. Then, for hours, the things outside crawl over it, howling, seeking an entrance... They're still trying to get at us, and it's all my fault, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have fired, I lost my head.

Forget it, Thistle. It's done! They can't get in. Our problem now is to find a way to repair the Polaris, and blast out of here!

But there is no way. Eventually, the wolf men retreat, but they do not go far.

I know. I hoped they'd leave, but we can't wait any longer. A few more days without food and we won't have the strength to repair the Polaris. We'll just have to risk going out.

We're still out there, Captain. This is the third day!
IN THE END, THERE IS NO CHOICE. MEN CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT FOOD. THAT NIGHT TWO SHADOWY FIGURES CLIMB NOISELESSLY FROM THE POLARIS SLIP INTO DARKNESS.

NO USE! WITH THAT KEEN SCENT OF THEIRS WE HAVEN'T GOT A CHANCE! THEY'VE SPOTTED US! LET'S GO!

ASTRO AND T.J. ARE FIRING IN FRONT OF THE THINGS—THAT WILL DISCOURAGE THEM.

TOM IS RIGHT. HE AND STRONG MAKE THE SHIP SAFELY, BUT NOW THE OLD POLARIS IS A PRISON, A DEATH TRAP.

THEY'VE GONE, WHICH LEAVES US JUST WHERE WE WERE BEFORE. A FINE MESS I GOT US INTO.

NO PRACTICAL JOKES. T.J.? NO SMART CRACKS? WHAT DO YOU KNOW, I'M ALMOST WILLING TO STARVE, NOW THAT I'VE SEEN THIS!

SKIP IT. ASTRO. YOU QUIT BLAMING YOURSELF. T.J.! OKAY, SO YOU MADE A MISTAKE. WE'LL STILL GET OUT OF THIS SOMEHOW!

SOMEHOW—BUT HOW? ANOTHER DAY GOES BY, ANOTHER NIGHT AND ABOARD THE POLARIS, HUNGER IS A GRISLY GUEST.

A FEW MORE DAYS WILL MEAN THE END, BUT THERE IS ONE MEMBER OF THE POLARIS CREW WHO DOES NOT INTEND TO LET THAT HAPPEN, NO MATTER WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES TO HIMSELF.

CAPTAIN STRONG? GONE? NO! I CAN'T FIND T.J., HE'S NOT ABOARD, HE'S GONE! FOOLISH ENOUGH TO LEAVE THE POLARIS.
I'm afraid he has, sir. He felt pretty rotten about the mess we're in. He thought it was his fault. What do we do now?

Thistle probably went out to try to find food. I know what I'm going to do. But I'll leave what you do—

That's easy! If that little space monkey can be found, we'll find him coming, Astro?

You bet. I am. Life wouldn't be the same without T.J. and his gags, I'm right behind you.

I might have known how you'd react. But easy, we'll go down one at a time. With the others cover us.

Only, there is no need for caution. Not any longer.

Why—they're gone. All of them. Why?

Why—They're gone. All of them. Why?

I'm afraid that's not too hard to figure out, Tom. Thistle! They must have captured him. They probably took him to their village.

Primitive races run pretty much to pattern. Heathen rites, sacrifice if Thistle is still alive—

He'll be the star-attraction at whatever those wolf men are planning? What are we waiting for?

This time, there is no danger along the trail. There is no one, nothing...

Looks like we guessed right! The village is deserted, except for that big central building. That's probably where they got Thistle. Let's go!

Not even a guard bars the way as the cadets race down the slope, through the village.

He's in there, but I can hardly see him. He's surrounded by the wolf men. There are hundreds of them. I can't see what they're doing.

We don't have to see. We're going in.
Tensely, nerves quivering, three avenging angels charge but suddenly, the charge is halted. Suddenly, three pairs of eyes widen in amazement...

Hi, guys! Come on in and meet my friends.

Well, I'll be a Martian mouse! Why, they're waiting on him, as though he were their Lord and Master!

I am in a way, anyway. Come on in, fellers. It's safe.

Safe? Maybe, but as far as I can see these wolf men are still just the—wolves! And wolves are dangerous on your feet, thistle. We're taking you out of here!

But T.J. does not move. Instead, he grins—places a hand on the head of one of the wolf men.

Great—jumping jets! That thing actually seems delicious with pleasure because he's touching it! I don't get it!

Don't you, Astro? It's simple! We made a little mistake. That's all. My pal here never wanted to hurt us. They wanted to be friendly with human beings.

Far from it. They're still wolves, or descended from wolves. Since when have wolves wanted to be friendly with human beings?

These do, sir. They want it real bad. To tell you, we made a little mistake! T.J. pauses, dramatically, but then his grin breaks out again. And this time the others have to grin also. Even if their grins are a little sheepish.

You see, sir, they are descended from animals. Evolution plays all kinds of funny tricks, but it wasn't wolves they evolved from! It was—dog!

The end.
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