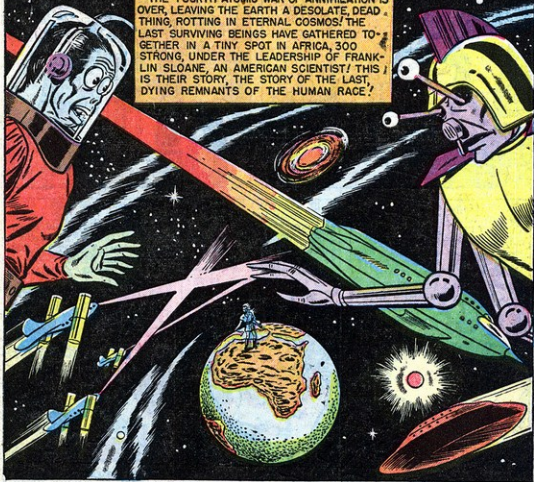


# THE END OF THE EARTH

THE FOURTH ATOMIC WAR OF ANNIHILATION IS OVER, LEAVING THE EARTH A DESOLATE, DEAD THING, ROTTING IN ETERNAL COSMOS! THE LAST SURVIVING BEINGS HAVE GATHERED TOGETHER IN A TINY SPOT IN AFRICA, 300 STRONG, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF FRANKLIN SLOANE, AN AMERICAN SCIENTIST! THIS IS THEIR STORY, THE STORY OF THE LAST, DYING REMNANTS OF THE HUMAN RACE!

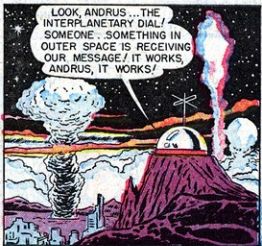


YOU'RE A FOOL TO THINK THAT INTERPLANETARY COMMUNICATION MACHINE WILL WORK! EVEN IF IT DOES, WHAT PROOF HAVE YOU THAT THERE ARE CREATURES ON MARS OR VENUS WHO WILL UNDERSTAND?

I KNOW THE MACHINE WORKS ANDRUS! WE MUST HAVE HELP IF WE ARE TO SURVIVE AND IT MUST COME FROM SOME OTHER PLANET. IT'S OUR ONLY HOPE!



LOOK, ANDRUS...THE INTERPLANETARY DIAL! SOMEONE... SOMETHING IN OUTER SPACE IS RECEIVING OUR MESSAGE! IT WORKS, ANDRUS, IT WORKS!





THE INTERPLANETARY COMMUNICATION BEAM ARCHES INTO SPACE TRAVELING MILLIONS OF LIGHT YEARS PER SECOND!



AND ON THE RED PLANET, MARS...

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT! INFORM PRESIDENT ULL THAT A BEAM ASKING FOR HELP IS COMING IN FROM THE FOURTH ZENITH PLANET, EARTH!



BUT PRESIDENT ULL, IT WAS DECIDED BY THE COUNCIL MANY CYCLES AGO THAT WE WOULD NOT COMMUNICATE WITH ANY OTHER PLANET!

A CALL FOR HELP CANNOT BE IGNORED BAK!



WHAT IS THE MESSAGE?

EARTH HAS GONE THROUGH ITS ATOMIC AGE. EVEN AS WE DID MANY MILLENIUMS AGO, AND LIKE US, THERE ARE ONLY A FEW HUNDRED EARTHLINGS LEFT ON A PLANET SOAKED IN ATOMIC DEATH RAYS! THEY HAVE NO SPACE SHIPS, AND ASK HELP IF THEIR RACE IS TO SURVIVE!



THIS MAY BE A RUSE BY A WAR-LIKE RACE WHO DO NOT HAVE SPACE SHIPS TO CAPTURE OURS WHEN WE LAND ON THEIR PLANET AND USE THESE SHIPS TO CONQUER US! AFTER OUR OWN AGE OF ATOMIC DESTRUCTION IT WAS DECIDED TO BUILD A WORLD OF PEACE AND LOVE AND NEVER HEED INTERPLANETARY COMMUNICATION! THIS WE HAVE DONE, AND...

YES, BUT CAN WE, A PEOPLE DEDICATED TO LOVE DISREGARD THIS DESPERATE PLEA FOR HELP FROM A SISTER PLANET?



ASK THEM TO GIVE US A DESCRIPTION OF AN EARTHLING! I HAVE A PLAN!

HERE IS THE DESCRIPTION, SIR! THEY REQUEST PHYSICISTS, PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES TO COMBAT DEADLY RAYS AND THE ATOMIC SICKNESS!



TELL THEM THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED THEIR MESSAGE AND ON THE 24TH ZENITH WE WILL SEND AN ARMADA OF MERCY SPACE SHIPS WITH CURES AND SCIENTISTS TO THEIR PLANET!

YES SIR!



NOW HERE IS MY PLAN! TONIGHT WE WILL SEND A SCOUT IN A SMALL SPACE PLANE TO EARTH! HE WILL BE FULLY ARMED AND WILL FIND OUT IF THE EARTHLINGS SPEAK THE TRUTH! HE WILL TAKE ALONG THE DESCRIPTIVE PICTURE OF AN EARTHLING AND IF HE RETURNS AND TELL US ALL IS WELL WE WILL PROCEED ON OUR ERRAND OF MERCY!





MEANWHILE THE RULERS OF VENUS HAVE ALSO RECEIVED EARTH'S INTERPLANETARY PLEA FOR HELP!

THIS PRESENTS A PROBLEM! YES WE HAVE SPACE SHIPS AND WE CAN SEND EARTH SUCCOR, BUT SINCE THE INTERPLANETARY WAR WITH THE PLANET LARBO, WE HAVE RULED THAT VENUS SHALL ISOLATE HERSELF FROM THE REST OF THE GALAXY!



THIS MAY BE A TRICK ON MIGHTY ONE, BY A RACE SUCH AS THE LABORITES TO CAPTURE OUR SPACE SHIPS AND USE THEM TO WAR UP-ON US!

THAT THOUGHT HAS OCCURRED TO ME! BUT THERE IS A SOLUTION! TELL THE EARTHLINGS WE WILL SEND A FLEET OF SHIPS TO THEM ON THE 24TH ZENITH WITH ALL THAT THEY REQUIRE!



MEANWHILE WE WILL LAUNCH A SURVEY SHIP BEARING ONE SCOUT TO THE EARTH TONIGHT! HE WILL REPORT AND IF ALL IS WELL, THEN ON THE 24TH ZENITH OUR SHIPS SHALL LAND ON EARTH TO HELP THOSE PEOPLE REBUILD THEIR WORLD!



ON EARTH FRANKLIN SLOANE AND HIS PEOPLE ARE IN A DELIRIUM OF THANKSGIVING!

ON THE 24TH ZENITH, THAT'S 6 WEEKS FROM NOW, THE SHIPS WILL COME FROM MARS. AND VENUS. THE 24TH ZENITH...THE DAY OF DELIVERANCE!

OH, FRANK IT'S ALMOST TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE!



IT PROBABLY IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE! WE ARE INVITING DISASTER BY HAVING THESE CREATURES COME THEY ARE PROBABLY MONSTERS WHO WILL DEVOUR US! WHY DON'T YOU FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THESE CREATURES?

I CAN'T, ANDRUS! THE ELECTRONIC REFLEX PLATE HAS CRACKED JUST AS I COMPLETED MY MESSAGE!



AND WHILE THE EARTHLINGS REJOICED, TWO SMALL VESSELS SHOT FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE PLANETS EACH UNAWARE OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE OTHER!



I AM APPROACHING EARTH! I SHALL SET THE SENSORY PRISM THAT WILL SEND YOU SHOCK PALPITATIONS! IF I AM ATTACKED! I HAVE ADJUSTED MY CRAILLE TUBE TO PROTECT ME AGAINST ATOMIC RAY SICKNESS! I AM ABOUT TO LAND! IN THE EVENT OF MY DEATH, THE DIS-INTERGRATING COIL WILL DEMOLISH THE SHIP AS ORDERED!



SILENT JETS COME INTO USE AND THE TWO CRAFTS FROM DIFFERENT PLANETS SILENTLY SETTLE TO EARTH WITHIN A HUNDRED YARDS OF EACH OTHER!



DARK! GOOD! THE LANDING TIME WAS PERFECT. NOW I MUST FIND AN EARTH CREATURE AND OBSERVE HIM!

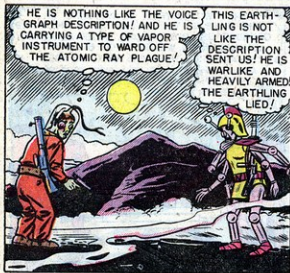


SOMETHING IS MOVING OUT THERE! IT MUST BE AN EARTHLING!



HE IS NOTHING LIKE THE VOICE GRAPH DESCRIPTION! AND HE IS CARRYING A TYPE OF VAPOR INSTRUMENT TO WARD OFF THE ATOMIC RAY PLAGUE!

THIS EARTHLING IS NOT LIKE THE DESCRIPTION SENT US! HE IS WARLIKE AND HEAVILY ARMED! THE EARTHLING LIED!



I MUST GET BACK TO MY SHIP AND WARN PRESIDENT ULL!

I MUST STOP HIM BEFORE HE CALLS OTHERS OF HIS KIND!



THEN BEGINS AN AWESOME BATTLE AS TWO CREATURES FROM DIFFERENT PLANETS USE ALL THE WEAPONS THAT THIRD MILLENNIUM SCIENTIFIC MINDS HAVE EVOLVED!





DIE, EARTHLING! I SEND YOU INTO NOTHINGNESS!



I MUST WARN THE ALL HIGH! THEN I CAN DIE!



THROUGH THE VAST GALACTIC SPHERE, THE MARTIAN'S SENSORY PRISM SENDS ITS MESSAGE OF BETRAYAL, ATTACK AND DEATH!

THE PRISM LINES DENOTE VICIOUS ATTACK AND THE SCOUT HAS BEEN KILLED SINCE THE DISINTEGRATOR COIL HAS DEMOLISHED THE SHIP!

SO THE EARTHINGS LIED! THEY ARE WAR-LIKE CREATURES! WHAT MOCKERY THAT THEY SHOULD ASK US FOR HELP! STOP ALL PREPARATION ON THE MERCY ARMADA! WE SHALL HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT LYING PLANET!

AND ON EARTH ANOTHER MESSAGE IS SENT UPON ITS LONG FLIGHT ACROSS THE BLIND AND MINDLESS ETERNITY OF SPACE....



EARTHINGS WARLIKE, HORRIBLE CREATURES, NOT AS DESCRIBED! AM DYING FROM ATTACK! SHALL DESTROY SHIP WITH NUCLEAR DENOTATORS!



THEY WOULD TRICK US, AND HAVE US SEND SHIPS SO THEY COULD SIEZE THEM AND CONQUER US! CUT OFF ALL INTER-PLANETARY COMMUNICATION, WE SHALL GO BACK TO THE ISOLATIONISM THAT HAS KEPT US FREE AND AT PEACE! WE WILL NOT SEND SHIPS TO EARTH! WHAT FOOLS THEY MUST THINK WE ARE!

THE DAY OF THE 24TH ZENITH ARRIVES AND EARTH'S LAST SURVIVORS CLIMB TO THE HIGHEST POINT THEY CAN FIND AND SEARCH THE SKY FOR SHIPS, FOR THIS IS THE DAY OF DELIVERANCE!



BUT THE SKY REMAINS BARE, AND SLOWLY THE SUN SINKS AWAY INTO THE ROTTING EARTH AND THE DAY OF DELIVERANCE HAS PASSED!



THEY DIDN'T COME!  
WE ARE LOST!  
NO, WE ARE NOT LOST! WE MEN OF THE EARTH WILL NOT LOOK FOR OUTSIDE HELP AGAIN!

THIS SHALL BE OUR DAY OF DELIVERANCE...DELIVERANCE FROM DOUBT AND FEAR! WE SHALL GO FORWARD AND FIND OUR OWN WAYS TO SURVIVE AND LICK ANYTHING THAT STANDS IN OUR WAY! WE SHALL BUILD A NEW WORLD AS OUR FOREFATHERS DID, WITH OUR BARE HANDS IF NEED BE! YES, THIS IS OUR DAY OF DELIVERANCE...THE END OF THE EARTH, AND THE BEGINNING OF A NEW AND BETTER WORLD!



NOT THE END - BUT, THE BEGINNING!