

MANHUNT ON MARS!

IT WAS IN 1993 WHEN I, ANTON VOLOCHKEK, WAS ARRESTED FOR PREACHING THAT MAN HAS CERTAIN BASIC RIGHTS WHICH MUST NOT BE TAKEN AWAY BY THE STATE... IN MY COMMUNIST COUNTRY, IDEAS SUCH AS PERSONAL FREEDOM AND LIBERTY WERE CONSIDERED TREASONOUS, AND SO...

DO YOU ADMIT THAT YOU WERE CAUGHT SPREADING TREASONOUS NOTIONS ABOUT "THE DIGNITY OF MAN"? ... THAT YOU WERE TELLING CITIZENS THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO BE FREE?

YES... I ADMIT IT!

WILL YOU FOOLS NEVER LEARN THAT THE INDIVIDUAL HAS NO RIGHTS; THE INDIVIDUAL IS NOTHING; THE STATE IS EVERYTHING! FOR YOUR TREASON, YOU ARE HERE BY SENTENCE TO DEATH!



I WAS TAKEN TO MY CELL... AND ON THE WAY I SAW IT-- A ONE-IN-A-MILLION ACCIDENT HAD HAPPENED!

THAT DOOR-- SOMEONE FORGOT TO CLOSE IT... I HAVE A CHANCE TO ESCAPE...



I BOLTED FROM MY GUARDS AND RAN THRU THE DOOR, SHUTTING IT BEHIND ME... I MADE FOR A TRUCK THAT WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE THE COURTYARD...



SORRY, COMRADE-- BUT I NEED THIS MORE THAN YOU!

HEY... WHAT'S GOIN' ON--





THE SHIP CONTAINED A SPACE SUIT, SO I REMAINED... AND WHEN MORNING CAME...

...WHEN THIS SPACE-SHIP RETURNS FROM MARS TOMORROW, WE WILL ONCE AGAIN HAVE SHOWN THE WORLD THAT OUR JOYOUS TOTALITARIAN WAY OF LIFE IS FAR SUPERIOR TO DECADENT DEMOCRACY!



FENSELBY, I WAITED THRU SEVERAL MORE SICKENING ORATIONS... THEN IT WAS TIME-- THE SHIP BLASTED OFF...



TRAVELING AT INCREDIBLY FAST SPEED, IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE...



THE SHIP LANDED SMOOTHLY AND I GOT OUT—EASIER TO EXPERIENCE WHAT NO EARTHWAN HAD EVER BEFORE EXPERIENCED...

IT'S ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE—I'M THE FIRST HUMAN TO STAND ON THE ALIEN SURFACE OF MARS!



I STARTED TO LOOK AROUND—I WANTED TO SEE IF THERE WERE ANY LIFE FORMS—MAYBE EVEN CREATURES OF INTELLIGENCE? THEN SUDDENLY—

THE GROUND! IT'S—
OPENING UP!



FOR SEVERAL SECONDS I JUST STOOD THERE, TRANS FIXED BY THE MOST IMPRESSIVE SIGHT I'D EVER BEEN...

A MARTIAN CITY—BENEATH THE SURFACE—
AND IT'S MORE MODERN THAN ANYTHING
ON EARTH!



NOT IMAGINING ANY NEED FOR CAUTION, I AT ONCE GREETED THE MARTIANS...THEIR COMMUNICATION WAS TELEPATHIC—THEIR REPLY DEARLY!

HELLO, THERE!
I AM FROM
THE PLANET
EARTH... I
CAME IN
PEACE...

AN ALIEN CREATURE!
KILL HIM—QUICK!



I TURNED AND RAN AS A BLAST OF ELECTRIC POWER WHIZZED PAST ME...

THEY MUSTN'T FIND THE SHIP... I'VE GOT TO LEAD THEM AWAY TILL TAKE-OFF TIME!

HE'S GETTING AWAY! SUMMON THE GUARDS!

GUARDS! GUARDS! COME QUICK! THERE'S AN ALIEN ON OUR PLANET!



BY THE TIME THE GUN STARTED TO SET, THE MARTIAN GUARDS HAD COVERED A GOOD STRETCH OF GROUND IN PURSUIT OF ME! RELENTLESSLY, THEY PRESSED ON-- DETERMINED TO FIND AND KILL ME!

WE'RE BOUND TO CATCH UP WITH THAT ALIEN SOON... HE CAN'T HAVE GONE MUCH FARTHER...



WHEREVER POSSIBLE, I TRAVELED BY WATER-- HOPING THE MARTIANS' ANIMALS WOULD LOSE MY SCENT...

(PUFF PUFF!) GOTTA -- KEEP GOING -- CAN'T LET MYSELF GET CAUGHT--OR IT'LL BE-- (PUFF)--THE END OF ME!



NIGHT CAME... AND WITH IT, A CHANCE TO REST -- TO REST ON THE COLD SURFACE OF A RAW AND HOSTILE PLANET...

MY HANDS FEEL ALMOST FROZEN-- BUT I'M GLAD I DISCARDED MY GLOVES! IF FINDING THEM THROWS THE MARTIANS OFF THE RIGHT TRACK, IT'LL BE WORTH IT!



DAWN BROKE... AND I GRATEFULLY DRANK IN THE SUN'S WARMTH AS I RAN BACK TO MY ROCKET-SHIP -- THE ROCKET-SHIP THAT WAS SOON DUE TO TAKE OFF FOR EARTH!

BACK ON EARTH-- MAYBE I CAN ESCAPE... BUT HERE, THERE'S NO CHANCE TO AVOID DESTRUCTION!

BAH-- IT'S ONLY HIS GLOVES!

LOOK! THERE HE IS! HEADING FOR THAT ROCKET-SHIP!



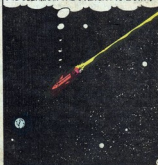
I MADE IT JUST IN TIME! SECONDS AFTER I ENTERED THE SHIP IT BLASTED OFF -- BOUND FOR EARTH!

HE GOT AWAY!

WELL, NEXT TIME WE'LL BE WAITING... IF ANY MORE ALIENS COME, THEY HAVEN'T ESCAPED DEATH!



I'VE GOT TO THINK OF A PLAN... SOME WAY FOR THE FREE WORLD TO BENEFIT BY WHAT I'VE SEEN... BEFORE I RETURN TO EARTH!



WHEN I GOT BACK TO EARTH--BACK TO MY OWN COUNTRY, I WAS GREETED AS A HERO...

THIS JOURNEY TO MARS HAS GIVEN THE COMMUNIST WORLD ENORMOUS PRESTIGE--AND YOU WERE A PART OF IT! WE HAVE GENEROUSLY DECIDED TO FORGIVE YOUR PAST ACTS OF TREASON!

WE ARE ANXIOUS FOR YOU TO COME TO HEADQUARTERS AND REPORT WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED ABOUT THE PLANET MARS!



I MADE MY REPORT TO THE STATE OFFICIALS, THEN CAUTIOUSLY, BUT SWIFTLY, I HEADED FOR THE FREE WORLD...

THEY TRUST ME NOW...AT LAST I HAVE A CHANCE--TO ESCAPE--FOREVER!



I HASTENED TO THE CAPITAL OF THE FREE NATIONS...WHERE I TOLD OF MY EXPERIENCE ON MARS...

...AND THERE YOU HAVE A COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF MY EXPERIENCE ON MARS! I TELL IT BECAUSE I KNOW THAT YOU HAVE THE MEANS OF GETTING TO MARS! AFTER ALL, IT WAS FROM YOU THAT MY GOVERNMENT STOLE THE PLANS FOR THE ROCKET-SHIP!

MR. VOLOCHER, WE APPRECIATE YOUR COMING AND **WARNING** US ABOUT HOW **HOSTILE** THE MARTIANS ARE! THANK YOU!



GENTLEMEN--WOULD YOU ALL PLEASE COME TO THE VIDEO-IMAGE ROOM IMMEDIATELY!



WHEN WE GOT INTO THE ROOM, WE SAW AN IMPRESSIVE PICTURE...THE LEADERS OF THE COMMUNIST DICTATOR-SHIPS WERE EAGERLY BOARDING A MARS-BOUND ROCKET-SHIP! THEY WERE CARRYING PAPERS AND CONTRACTS AND TREATIES...

I FIGURED THAT WOULD BE HAPPENING JUST ABOUT NOW!

BUT...DIDN'T YOU TELL THEM HOW HOSTILE THE MARTIANS ARE--HOW DANGEROUS IT IS TO GO THERE???



NOT! I TOLD THEM THE MARTIANS WERE EXTREMELY FRIENDLY--THAT THEY WOULD WELCOME ANY ALIEN VISITORS WITH OPEN ARMS; AND THAT THERE WAS NO NEED TO BRING WEAPONS, AS THERE WAS NO DANGER! AND NOW THEY'RE HEADED FOR MARS--AND AT LAST MY PEOPLE WILL BE FREE OF THOSE POWER-HAD TYRANTS! AT LAST WE WILL HAVE A CHANCE TO KNOW REAL FREEDOM--THANKS TO THOSE WHO ARE WAITING FOR THE ROCKET'S RETURN--ON THE RED PLANET MARS!



THE
END