

MASS MEETING!

THE 'URANIUM MINING COMPANY'S' MARTIAN REFINERIES LAY LIKE SOME PETRIFIED MONSTER OVER THE ARID RED-SAND WASTES! THEIR TOWERING STAINLESS-STEEL CHIMNEYS POINTED SKYWARD, GAPING AND SMOKELESS! A DEATHLY SILENCE HUNG OVER EVERYTHING! SOMEWHERE A FAINT BREEZE STIRRED, KICKING UP THE CURSED RED DUST AND DRIFTING IT AGAINST THE DESERTED REFINERY BUILDINGS! ON A RED ROCK CRIST OVERLOOKING THE SPRAWLING PLANTS, TWO MEN ARGUED...

I SAY WE **DISASSEMBLE** THE WHOLE BLASTED OPERATION AND SHIP IT **BACK TO EARTH!** THERE ISN'T ANOTHER OUNCE OF URANIUM ORE LEFT ON THIS BLASTED DESERT PLANET!

FOR WHAT? THERE ISN'T ANY URANIUM ORE ON EARTH TO REFINE EITHER! **NO!** THAT WOULDN'T SOLVE ANYTHING!

ANTHONY W. BRISBANE, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF 'URANIUM MINING COMPANY,' STROKED HIS CHIN THOUGHTFULLY...

YOU'RE RIGHT, FRED! WE'VE GOT TO FIND A **NEW SOURCE OF SUPPLY!** HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF ATOMIC ENGINES BACK ON EARTH WILL **STOP** AS SOON AS THE **STOCK-PILES** OF URANIUM ARE **GONE!**

WHAT ABOUT **VENUS,** TONY? WE **KNOW** THERE'S URANIUM ORE **THERE!**

Joe Orlando

HOW COULD WE POSSIBLY REFINE IT, FRED? AT LEAST ON MARS, THERE'S A BREATHABLE ATMOSPHERE! VENUS IS SURROUNDED WITH A LAYER OF FORMALDEHYDE GAS!

COULDN'T WE MINE IT AND SHIP IT HERE TO BE REFINED?



WE'D NEED TWO-HUNDRED THOUSAND TONS OF VENUS'S URANIUM ORE TO MAKE ONE OUNCE OF PURE FISSIONABLE U-235! DO YOU REALIZE HOW MANY SHIP-LOADS THAT WOULD BE? THAT'S OUT OF THE QUESTION!

WELL, WHY NOT REFIN IT THERE? BUILD A PLANT...



'FISSIONABLE PRODUCTS COMPANY' TRIED IT, FRED! TEN YEARS AGO! THE FOUNDATION OF THE PLANT IS STILL THERE! THEY HAD TO GIVE UP! THE FORMALDEHYDE ATMOSPHERE WAS TOO MUCH! A SHIP COULDN'T STAY THERE FOR MORE THAN ONE WEEK! THE WORKMEN COULDN'T REMAIN OUTSIDE THE SHIP FOR MORE THAN TWO HOURS!

FAILED, EH?

DISMAL FAILURE, FRED! AND EVEN IF THEY WOULD'VE BUILT THE PLANT, I DOUBT IF THEY'D HAVE GOTTEN PEOPLE TO WORK IT!

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT, TONY! IF ONLY THERE WERE A WAY TO TRANSPORT VENUS'S ORE HERE CHEAPLY!

FREDDY! YOU'VE GOT IT! YOU JUST HIT IT! NOT TRANSPORT!

TELEPORT!



TELEPORT! WHAT'S TELEPORT?

TELEPORTATION! IT'S A METHOD OF TRANSMITTING MATTER OVER GREAT DISTANCES BY MICRO-WAVE RADIO SIGNALS!

TRANSMITTING MATTER... BY RADIO! SAY! THIS MARTIAN HEAT MUST BE GETTING YOU! LET'S GET INDOORS!

IT'S A FACT, FREDDY! IT CAN BE DONE! CARL-WEISS, IN OUR EARTH LABORATORIES, IS PERFECTING THE MACHINES NOW! I SAW IT DEMONSTRATED! IT WORKS... ACTUALLY WORKS!



HOW? HOW DOES IT WORK?
ONE MACHINE BREAKS DOWN MATTER INTO ENERGY... CONVERTS THE ENERGY INTO MIGRO-WAVE IMPULSES... AND TRANSMITS THESE IMPULSES!



THE TELEPORTATION-RECEIVER REVERSES THE PROCESS... PICKING UP THESE IMPULSES... CONVERTING THEM BACK INTO ENERGY... AND CONVERTING THE ENERGY BACK INTO MATTER!



THEN YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY THAT...
WE CAN TELEPORT VENUS'S URANIUM ORE DIRECTLY TO EARTH...



THAT WOULD BE A MISTAKE, TONY! WHY NOT KEEP THIS IDEA A SECRET? TELEPORT VENUS'S URANIUM ORE HERE! WE'LL REFINES IT AND SEND THE U-235 TO EARTH AS WE HAVE BEEN DOING!



YOU'RE RIGHT, FRED! IN THAT WAY OUR COMPETITORS WILL THINK WE'RE STILL MINING THE STUFF HERE!

WE'LL TELL 'EM WE HIT A NEW VEIN... HEH, HEH... A RICH ONE!



NO ONE WILL BE THE WISER, AND WE'LL HAVE VENUS'S VAST URANIUM WEALTH FOR OURSELVES! C'MON! LET'S WORK THIS OUT!



AND SO, TONY BRISBANE PLACED ALL OF THE RESOURCES OF URANIUM MINING COMPANY BEHIND THE TELEPORTATION SCHEME! MEANWHILE, EARTH'S URANIUM STOCKPILE WAS DWINDLING TO AN ALARMING POINT...

ALL EFFORTS TO LOCATE NEW URANIUM ORE DEPOSITS HAVE FAILED! TINY AMOUNTS HAVE BEEN TRICKLING IN FROM VENUS WHERE HARDY MINERS HAVE VENTURED! BUT BECAUSE OF THE FORMALDEHYDE ATMOSPHERE, A LARGE SCALE OPERATION IS IMPOSSIBLE!



HEH, HEH! I HEAR HEAR IT, MR. THAT, BRISBANE! CARLWEISS?

WHAT'S THE LATEST REPORT ON THE TELEPORTATION MACHINES, CARLWEISS?



WE HAVE EIGHT HUNDRED PAIRS OF TRANSMITTERS AND RECEIVERS READY TO BE PUT INTO OPERATION, MR. BRISBANE!

FINALLY...

THE **RECEIVERS** HAVE BEEN SHIPPED TO OUR **MARTIAN REFINERY, SIR!** THE **TRANSMITTERS** ARE ABOARD THE **VENUS-BOUND SHIPS NOW!**

GOOD! **OPERATION TELEPORTATION** IS READY TO GO! GIVE THE SIGNAL!



A LIGHT AT U.M.C.'S ROCKET-PORT FLASHED ON! INSIDE THE VENUS-BOUND ROCKET-SHIPS, SWITCHES WERE THROWN! REAR-ROCKET-TUBES BEGAN TO FIRE...



... AND THE TRANSMITTER-PACKED SHIPS HURTLIED INTO SPACE ...



ONE MONTH LATER, ON VENUS...

THAT'S THE **LAST TRANSMITTER** BEING LOCATED NOW, MR. BRISBANE! THEY'VE ALL BEEN PLACED ABOUT THE PLANET IN AREAS RICH IN **URANIUM ORE!**

ALL RIGHT! HOP ABOARD! WE CAN'T STAY AROUND MUCH LONGER! THAT **FORMALDEHYDE** ATMOSPHERE IS **MURDER!**



TWO MONTHS LATER... ON MARS...

WELCOME BACK, SIR! WE'RE READY TO GO WHENEVER YOU GIVE THE WORD!

START THE **RECEIVERS!** THE **TRANSMITTERS** ON VENUS ARE ALL ON AND SENDING...



THE SWITCHES WERE THROWN, AND DEEP WITHIN A WELL-GUARDED AREA OF MARS, EIGHT HUNDRED TELEPORTATION RECEIVERS BEGAN CONVERTING THE MICROWAVE IMPULSES FROM VENUS BACK INTO ENERGY AND THENCE TO URANIUM ORE MATTER...

EACH MACHINE IS RECEIVING **FOURTEEN TONS A SECOND,** MR. BRISBANE!

PERFECT! LET'S GET THE ORE TO THE **REFINERY** AND START TURNING OUT THE U-235!



AND SO, ONCE AGAIN, SMOKE POURED FROM THE STAINLESS STEEL STACKS OF THE U.M.C.'S MARTIAN REFINERIES...

WE'RE BRINGING IN ABOUT **ONE BILLION TONS OF ORE A DAY, SIR!**

HMMM! THAT MEANS WE'RE TURNING OUT ABOUT **FIVE THOUSAND OUNCES OF U-235 PER DAY!** GOOD! THAT'S BETTER THAN WHEN WE MINED IT HERE!



AND SO, THE FLOW OF U-235 TO EARTH BEGAN ANEW... 'URANIUM MINING COMPANY'S' MARTIAN REFINERIES HAVE SOLVED THE TEMPORARY SHORTAGE OF U-235, FOLKS! WE'RE GETTING ABOUT FIVE THOUSAND OUNCES A DAY! ATOMIC ENGINE PRODUCERS ARE STARTING TO MANUFACTURE ONCE MORE! LOOKS LIKE U.M.C.'S NEW STRIKE IS A

BONANZA...



A YEAR WENT BY...

OVER 350 BILLION TONS OF ORE REFINED LAST YEAR, SIR! THE WASTE COVERS HALF THE PLANET! OUR COMPETITORS ARE BANKRUPT!

HEH, HEH! SOME IDEA, EH, FREDDY? ALMOST TWO MILLION OUNCES OF U-235... THE WHOLE OF EARTH HAS ABANDONED OLD FASHIONED POWER FOR ATOMIC ENGINES! AND WE ARE THE ONLY SUPPLIERS!



TWO YEARS... FIVE YEARS PASSED! ON MARS, A GIANTIC MAN-MADE MOUNTAIN CHAIN... THE WASTE OF BILLIONS UPON BILLIONS OF TONS OF URANIUM ORE... ENCIROLED THE U.M.C. REFINERIES...

WELL, AT LEAST IT'S BETTER THAN THAT DREARY, FLAT, RED LANDSCAPE WE ONCE KNEW!

I'LL SAY! LOOKS LIKE THE APPALACHIANS... BACK IN NORTH AMERICA, DOESN'T IT?



THEN... ON EARTH... SCIENTISTS COMPARED FINDINGS AND ANNOUNCED...

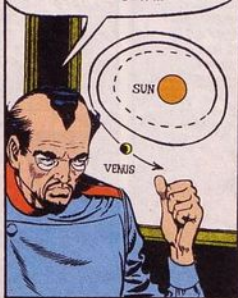
FOR SOME UNKNOWN REASON, THE ORBITS OF VENUS AND MARS ARE CHANGING... RADICALLY!



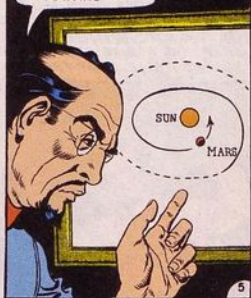
THE ORBITS OF THESE TWO PLANETS ARE NO LONGER ELLIPTICAL... BUT HAVE BECOME SPIRAL...



VENUS... FOLLOWING A SPIRAL PATH... IS SWINGING OUTWARD FROM THE SUN...



AND MARS... SPIRALING INWARD... IS SWINGING TOWARD IT...



THE NEWS OF THESE ALARMING OBSERVATIONS REACHED ANTHONY W. BRISBANE, PRESIDENT OF U.M.C., AND HE ROCKETED BACK TO EARTH...

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT MARS CRASHING INTO THE SUN, PROFESSOR?

THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN, MR. BRISBANE!



WHY? CAN'T WE STOP IT? I'VE GOT A TREMENDOUS INVESTMENT UP THERE!

I KNOW ABOUT YOUR URANIUM STRIKE UP THERE, MR. BRISBANE... BUT ALL I CAN SAY IS... GET WHAT YOU CAN WHILE YOU CAN! MARS AND VENUS ARE DOOMED!



IT IS MY THEORY THAT MARS'S MASS MUST BE INCREASING! YOU SEE, THE MASS OF A PLANET AND ITS ORBITAL SPEED ARE THE FACTORS THAT DETERMINE ITS PATH AROUND THE SUN...



LET ME DEMONSTRATE! I TIE THIS BALL TO A STRING AND BEGIN SWINGING IT... SO... IN A CIRCLE! MY HAND REPRESENTS THE SUN... THE BALL, MARS! THE STRING REPRESENTS THE GRAVITATIONAL ATTRACTION BETWEEN MARS AND THE SUN! THE CIRCLE IS THE ORBIT! HOW FAST I SWING IT... THE PLANET'S ORBITAL SPEED!



BUT... IF THE WEIGHT OF THE BALL WERE CHANGED... MADE HEAVIER... I WOULD HAVE TO SWING IT FASTER TO KEEP IT GOING! BUT MARS IS NOT GOING FASTER! AND I SAY ITS WEIGHT IS INCREASING! THEREFORE... PLOP... IT FALLS TOWARD MY HAND... THE SUN! ONE MIGHT SAY THAT THE SUN IS PULLING IT IN!



AS FOR VENUS... THE SITUATION IS REVERSED! ITS WEIGHT IS DIMINISHING! THE PULL... THE STRING BETWEEN VENUS AND THE SUN IS WEAKER! I SHOULD SWING IT SLOWER! BUT VENUS IS NOT SWINGING SLOWER! SO... SNAP... THE STRING BREAKS! VENUS HAS PULLED ITSELF AWAY FROM THE SUN!



PROFESSOR! DO YOU... ER... HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT CAUSED THESE CHANGES IN THE MASSES OR WEIGHTS OF VENUS AND MARS?

NO, I DO NOT! IF IT WERE NOT IMPOSSIBLE, I WOULD SAY THAT SOMEHOW, TREMENDOUS... ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE... AMOUNTS OF MATTER ARE LANDING ON MARS... AND CONVERSELY, OTHER HUGE AMOUNTS ARE BEING TORN AWAY FROM VENUS!



C-COULD... COULD ONE BILLION TONS OF...ER...MATTER PER DAY FOR FIVE YEARS DO IT?

OF COURSE! DO YOU REALIZE HOW CRITICAL THIS MASS-SPEED BALANCE IS?

I...I... DID YOU EVER HEAR OF TELEPORTATION, PROFESSOR? THE TRANSMITTING OF MATTER THROUGH SPACE VIA MICRO-WAVE RADIO?

WHY, YES! I...I... **GOOD LORD!** YOUR URANIUM STRIKE! IT'S **VENUSIAN ORE**, ISN'T IT?

WE'VE BEEN TELEPORTING IT TO MARS!

AND THE WASTE...THE LEFT-OVER! YOU DIDN'T TELEPORT IT BACK?

NO! WE DIDN'T THINK...

THERE'S YOUR ANSWER, MR. BRISBANE! AND IT'S TOO LATE NOW TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT!

WHY? COULDN'T WE...

IT WOULD TAKE FIVE YEARS, MR. BRISBANE!

WE COULD BUILD MORE MACHINES! WE COULD...

ON ITS WAY IN, MARS CROSSES EARTH'S ORBIT IN TWO MONTHS, MR. BRISBANE!

...AND VENUS?

ALSO...IN TWO MONTHS... ON ITS WAY OUT! WHAT WE HAVEN'T TOLD ANYONE... BECAUSE THERE AREN'T ENOUGH ROCKET-SHIPS TO GO AROUND!...IS...

...MARS AND VENUS WILL COLLIDE AT A POINT ON THE EARTH'S ORBIT...IN EXACTLY TWO MONTHS!



...AND THE EARTH WILL BE AT EXACTLY THAT POINT...IN TWO MONTHS!



SO, ANTHONY W. BRISBANE, AND 'URANIUM MINING CORPORATION' WERE RESPONSIBLE! WITHIN ONE MONTH, MARS LOOMED BRIGHTLY OVERHEAD... VISIBLE EVEN IN THE DAYTIME...A HUGE, ORANGE, CANAL-LINED SPHERE...



TIDAL WAVES SWEEPED OVER EARTH WHEN VENUS DREW CLOSE...



EARTHQUAKES, TORNADOES, AND HOLOCAUSTS KILLED MOST OF EARTH'S LIVING CREATURES.



...EVEN BEFORE THE TERRIBLE, THREE-PLANET COLLISION OCCURED...



...AND THAT IS WHY WE ONLY HAVE SIX PLANETS IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM CONFEDERACY, CHILDREN! WE MIGHT HAVE HAD NINE...BUT NOW, ALL THAT REMAINS OF EARTH, MARS AND VENUS* IS THE GIGANTIC ASTEROID BELT BETWEEN MERCURY AND OUR PLANET... JUPITER! CLASS, DISMISSED!



*NAMES OF PLANETS TRANSLATED, OF COURSE! — ED.