

COLLIDE

by Edwin Balmer and Philip Wylie

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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS

Under the leadership of Cole Hendron, noted American scientist, over 100 persons escape in two Space Ships just before a cosmic collision that wipes out the earth, and land on Bronson Beta. Soon after their arrival thousands of giant meteors hurtle through the sky, but no one is hurt. The meteors are fragments of the destroyed moon. A river bottom green with vegetation is discovered and great forests of dead trees, preserved by the absolute cold of space. The appearance at night of what looks like an airplane, and which disappears almost immediately without making an attempt to communicate with the refugees, leaves a feeling of alarm. They realize they are not alone on the new planet, and that their visitors may be enemies. Tony Drake and Elliot James, on an exploration airplane flight, come upon a wondrous city, enclosed under what seems like half an inch of glass bubble six miles wide and half a mile high at its center.

CHAPTER IV—Continued

Inside, under the mighty glass dome, they were confronted by a stupendous spectacle. Straight through the heart of the circular city ran a highway along the edge of which were two rails, so that by leading over they ascertained a moment later that underneath this top street were other thoroughfares at lower levels. On both sides of the street, which was wider than the main avenue of any of the earth's cities, towered colossal buildings. The tallest of them, in the center of the city, must have been more than half a mile in height, and they were made of materials which took brilliant colors, which gave back in the sunlight myriad glittering hues. Exquisitely suspended bridges connected these buildings, which rose at intervals of approximately a quarter of a mile. From their airplanes the city had looked like a speckled toy town, but from its own streets, it looked like the royal city of Titans. There was no sound in it, not a murmur, not a throb, not a tinkle of a pulsation—just silence. Nothing moved.

"Where are they, Tony?" Elliot James whispered. He meant not, "Where are living beings?" For he knew the people who built this city must be dead; but he expected, at least, their bodies. Tony, too, had failed to drive away such expectation. If not living, where were the dead? He could not help expecting the streets to be, somehow, like those of Pompeii after the debris and ash of Vesuvius was cleared away; he could not help expecting to see bones of the Betings, fallen in flight from their city.

But conditions here had been the opposite of those in Pompeii. There it was sudden destruction by fiery blasts and burial from volcanic ash, that had overwhelmed the people and caught and buried them. Here, instead of sudden, consuming heat, had come slow, creeping cold—cold and darkness of the coming of which they had been warned for generations. Such a death could have caught no one unprepared on the streets of the city.

"Where are they, Tony?" Elliot James whispered again, as his senses reminded him of the situation. "Where did they go to die? Did they stay in their homes, do you think? Will we find them in these buildings?"

"I don't think so," Tony tried to say steadily, improving his tone above a whisper. "Where will we find them, then? We won't find them—any of them here, I think," Tony said.

"Why? What did they do?" "What would such people do?" Tony returned. "Such people as could build this city? What would they do against annihilation which they could see coming for a century?"

"They eliminated themselves, of course; they ceased to reproduce themselves; they ceased to have children."

"That," said Tony, "seems certainly the logical thing to do; and these people appear to have been logical. But there must have been some group who were the last. They could scarcely have buried themselves after they died. Somewhere we will find—somebody."

"It's marvelous," said Elliot James, "how they left this city. Shall we move on?" "All right," agreed Tony, and ended their paralysis of amazement. "This street," he said, "might have been swept yesterday."

"They swept it before they left—or died in here," Elliot replied. "They draw their gates and shut out the wind. After they left—or died—what else could disturb it? But, my G—d, they were neat. No rubbish, no litter."

"And everything locked," Tony said, having halted to try a door. "The order of everything, and the utter stillness was getting his nerves again. Elliot James had run ahead. "Tony!" he cried. "Tables and chairs! There was a restaurant!" His nose was pressed against the

They stopped as if they were struck; and their breath left them. Breath of Relief, and Wonder. They Looked at the Likeness of a Woman! She Was a Young Woman, Strange and Fascinating.

Elliot James jumped and pointed; and Tony stiffened as he stared. Something fluttered a hundred yards overhead and farther down the street; something light, like a cloth or a paper. One way, now another, it fluttered as it fell on the still air of that strange sealed city. It reached to the street and lay there.

"We'll go see what that is," Tony said to Elliot James, wetting his dry lips so he could speak. But before they gained the object they forgot it. A window, evidently the vitrine of a gallery of art, confronted them; within the glass was a portrait.

Simultaneously, Tony and Elliot saw it. They stopped as if they were struck; and their breath left them. Breath of relief, and wonder! They looked at the likeness of a woman!

She was a young woman, strange and fascinating. She was not fair; nor was she dark of skin. Her hair and brows were black—hair arranged with an air that might be individual but which, these discoverers of her felt, was racial.

And of what race? Not the Caucasian, not the Mongolian; not the Ethiopian, surely; not the Indian. She was of no race upon earth; but she was human.

"So," said Elliot James, who first succeeded in speaking, "so they were human! By G—d you feel you'd like to know her."

Tony relaxed his hands, which had clenched. "Where did she live, do you suppose, Elliot? Did she live up behind one of these windows? Let's go on."

"Why go on?" demanded Elliot James. "We've got to get into one of these windows somewhere. We might as well begin here."

So together they attacked the glass, and Tony swiftly joined him. Within stood rows of metal tables and what were, unquestionably, chairs of metal. All bare, and all, of course, empty.

The places looked immaculate, as if put in order an hour ago—and then deserted. "Where are they?" Elliot James appealed again. "Oh, Tony, where did they go?"

"What were they?" Tony countered. "That's what I want to know. Were they huge ants? Were they human-brained reptiles? Were they—?"

"They sat in chairs," said Elliot James. "They ate at tables. They ran a car that steered by pedals and a wheel. Their equipment would fit us; their floors and steps are on our scale. Let's break in here."

He tried the door, which was fitted with a handle; but this did not turn or budge, however pulled or pressed. There was no keyhole; no locking device was anywhere apparent; but the door was to be moved no more than those that they had tried before.

Tony looked about. A shudder convulsed him. A thousand windows looked down on this stretch of the silent street; a thousand pairs of eyes once had looked down. It seemed to Tony that they must— they must do it again. Eyes of what? Huge, sentient, intelligent, insect? Reptiles of some strange, semi-human sort?

What lay dead by the tens of thousands in those silent rooms overhead? Tony was pulling at his pistol. Somehow, it reassured him to hold it in his hand. He reversed it, and beat the butt on the great glass pane behind which stood the strange metal tables and chairs.

The glass did not give way. It twanged, not like glass but like sheet metal—metal utterly transparent. Tony caught the butt in his palm and pulled the trigger. The shot roared, and re-echoed. But the metal pane was not pierced. The bullet had had free lay at Tony's feet. Hysterically he emptied his pistol.

With the last shot, he jerked about again and stared up at the rows of windows. Did something up there stir? Elliot James jumped and pointed; and Tony stiffened as he stared.

Something fluttered a hundred yards overhead and farther down the street; something light, like a cloth or a paper. One way, now another, it fluttered as it fell on the still air of that strange sealed city. It reached to the street and lay there.

Prints Gay With Color Now Arrive

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



of colorful materials that are just as practical as they are good looking.

The three frocks shown here illustrate but a fraction of the perfectly beautiful washable prints that are in good taste now for wear under a coat and for later on when no coat is necessary.

For campus or office wear or for resort wear with light accessories, the tailored frock to the left, of print in a spaced conventional dot design with its ascot type scarf and cuffs of self-fabric, is both smart and practical. There are no fussy details or tricky places that your iron cannot reach in a hurry, and they launder particularly easily.

The frock with the two-tone tie will carry you through a day that includes shopping, luncheon, matinee and tea. The lines are becomingly simple, the better to accentuate the beauty of the design of colorful leaves against a dark background. It is easy even for the amateur to work with this crepe, it stays so accurately in place as you cut out the pattern, with no frayed or curled up edges as you baste it together.

The print that fashions the dress on the seated figure is stunning. Solid black dots together with white dots that are cross-lined with fine red and black lines stand out boldly against a bright red background. The button fastening and the touch of knife pleating are important style details. As you see from the smart models pictured, you do not have to sacrifice any style points this spring when you look for washable dresses.

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TAFFETA TUNIC

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



Taffeta silk for tunic, for blouse, for the frock entire, for trimming touches in the great hue and cry for spring. The knee-length tunic-blouse pictured is of printed taffeta in exotic coloring. The skirt is black crepe and the accessories are black, introducing white stitching on shoes and bag. The hat is a very modish sailor of shiny black straw.

NEW STYLES SHOW GREEK INFLUENCE

The Greek influence on current styles has spread so that now it is to be seen in furniture and clothes as well as in the lines of the feminine figure. The popularity of the flat Greek rear profile has made the figure ideal of the Greeks an established vogue.

The influence of this Greek ideal is to be seen in Mainbocher's recent introduction of a gown modeled on the robes worn by ancient Greek dancers. This filmy, graceful garment heralds a turn from the "important" gown, with its stiff formality, to the softness of net and tulle. Its straight skirt is short in front and to the ground in back. There is a garland of fruit or flowers around the waist. Very authentically Greek. And very revealing of the state of one's figure. Hips must be slender, small breasts up-lifted in youthful silhouette. The flat Greek rear profile was never more important than to this new and slimly molded style.

To complete the picture, a great vogue for classical Greek furniture is predicted for this spring.

Patou Uses Moderate Slit in His New Dress Designs

Patou has surpassed himself with the simplicity and elegance of his "little season" collection. He probably never before has designed such completely lovely things.

The lines which were felt to be a bit over-severe in his August collection have been modified into the most graceful of curves and angles, and the slits have become shorter for daytime and smartly modified for evening.

Knee-Length Shorts

Knee length is prescribed for some of the smartest shorts of the season. These are rather narrow and look exactly like cut-off slacks.

Housewife's Idea Box



To Remove Scorch Marks From Linen

It is almost impossible to remove scorch stains from linen or woolen materials. However, the following method often works on linen: Rub the spot with a freshly cut onion. Later soak the material in a solution of cold water and a little peroxide. Then wash the garment in the usual way.

THE HOUSEWIFE.

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Dr. Pierce's Pellets are best for liver, bowels and stomach.

One little Pellet for a laxative—three for a cathartic.—Ad.

World's War Record

World history tells us that during the last 3,421 years, war has been going on continuously on some part of the globe except for 270 years. During this period, 8,000 peace treaties have been written and signed that lasted an average of two years each. During the same period, 25 combinations of nations of one kind or another have been formed and continued for a time, comparable to the present League of Nations.—Capper's Weekly.

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- losing weight
- nervous
- pale
- tired

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EXPECTANT MOTHERS

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