

WORLDS COLLIDE

by Edwin Balmer and Philip Wylie

SYNOPSIS

Under the leadership of Cole Hendron, noted American scientist, some 300 persons escape in a Space Ship just before a cosmic collision that wipes out the earth, and land on Bronson Beta. A river bottom green, with vegetation discovered and great forests of dead trees, preserved by the absolute cold of space. The appearance of what looks like an airplane, and with disappears without making an attempt to communicate with the witnesses, 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, air-wide and half a mile high at its center. Among their finds, when they make an entry into the city, is an edible grain—millions of bushels. On their way back they stumble upon the camp of more than 300 persons who left the earth when they did, in a second Space Ship piloted by Dave Ransdell. Ransdell goes to Hendron's camp with Tony, and the latter tells the people of the wondrous city.

CHAPTER VI—Continued

"It is too big for all the rats on earth."
Tony stared at the little man and said in a curious tone, "Funny."
There was a silence between them.
"I have more to say," Kyoto picked up a chip and opened a pocket knife. He began to whittle as expertly as any country store porch loafer.
"More?"
"You know that other ships for the trip to this planet were being prepared?"
"Sure. But none of them."
Kyto shrugged. "Did you know that in what had been Manchuria the most fanatical Japanese, the Russians, and certain Germans combined to build such a ship?"
"No."
"They were mostly extreme communists. But owing to their need of scientific experts, they took into their group many non-communists."
"So?"
"Great men. They were as likely to succeed as you."
Tony stared at his companion. "And you believe they did? You think they are the people who have been flying here?"
"I know." Kyto drew an object from his pocket—a tightly folded piece of paper. On it were drawn Japanese characters.
"I found this a few hours ago," said Kyoto. "I had been walking from camp. It was blowing along to the wind. It was not mine."
"What is it?" Tony asked.
"A prayer—a written prayer. They are in common use in Japan."
"It might have come on the Ark."
"Yes. But it might not. There is no such thing in the catalogue."
"Anybody who had traveled in Japan might have had one—in a pocketbook—and lost it."
"Again, yes. But I know intuitively."
"If they were Russians and Germans and Japanese—why didn't they land, then?"
"My point in telling this! They do not want company here. They came to set up a Soviet. I have the information in detail. They were sworn, if they reached here, to set up their own government—to wipe out all opposed to them. It is not even a government like that of Russia. It is ruthless, inhuman—a travesty of socialism, a sort of scientific fanaticism. Most of those men and women believe in nothingness of the individual. They believe that love is really only breeding."
Tony shook his head unbelievably. "Why didn't they wipe us out, then?"
"Your ray-projectors were good protection. They may find a means of making them powerless. They are manifestly ahead of us here in studying the civilization of the Other People—they use their ships already."
"I mean, the first time. Why didn't they annihilate us that first night? It would have been easy. A bomb or two—"
"I have wondered. There must have been a reason—for they are wholly ruthless. And I can find only one explanation: They wish to found a new state—to be alone on the planet—to make it theirs. To found a state takes people; and for people, one needs women. The more the better—the quicker. They will not strike until they can be selective in their killing—so they wipe out all who may oppose them, but preserve all whom they may convert—especially the women."
"Good G—d!" Tony stood up. "You mean to tell me you think there is a gang of men or people on Bronson Beta planning that?"
"It is—its crazy!"
Kyto shook his head. "Conquest was like that, only two thousand years ago—a short time. And there is no more world. Is there anything that can be said to be crazy now—anything we cannot expect?"
"Then why didn't you tell us sooner?"

Tony took it. "So long," he said. "Good luck."
Tony opened the throttle regulating the supply of minute quantities of fuel to the atomic blast of his plane. The increase of speed as he fled southward took some of the strain from his nerves.
Tony had lost his hope of being leader. He had lost Eva. Ransdell came first in the hearts of his companions. Tony wondered how other men in the camp would adjust their philosophies to this double catastrophe. Duquesne would shrug: "C'est la vie." Vanderbilt would have an epigram. Elliot James would tell him to hope and to wait and to be courageous.
A few minutes later he was at the cantonment, and the radio was being carried from the plane.
James was at his side. "Lord, you look tired! I've got a bunk for you."
"Thanks."
Questions were being asked. "Got to sleep," Tony said, trying to smile. "Tell you later. Every one's all right—Hendron's somewhat ill—Ransdell's commanding you there. See you after I have a nap." They let him go.
He stretched out under one of the shelters. James, after a private question or two, thoughtfully left him. He could not sleep, however. He did not even want to be alone. Then—he was being shaken. James stood beside him.
"Tony! Wake up!"
He sat up, shook himself.
"We got the radio working. Were talking to Hendron's camp. Suddenly the man at the other end coughed and yelled 'Help'—and now we can't raise anyone."
Tony was up again—outdoors—running toward the plane. James was running behind him.
"Give me Vanderbilt and Taylor. We'll go."
"What else can we do?"
As Tony descended upon Hendron's encampment, three men peered tensely through the glass windows of the ship: Taylor, Vanderbilt, and Tony himself. Nothing seemed disturbed; the buildings were intact.
Tony cut the motors so that their descent became a soft whistle.
Then they saw clearly.
Far below were human figures, the people of the cantonment and all of them lay on the ground, oddly collapsed, utterly motionless.
They looked as if they were dead; and Tony thought they were dead. So did Jack Taylor at his side; and Peter Vanderbilt, his saturnine face pressed against the quartz windows of the plane, believed he was witnessing catastrophe to Hendron's attempt to preserve humanity.
Tony cut the propulsive stream and slid down the air in sudden quiet. He lost altitude and turned on power as he reached the edge of the landing field. The plane bumped to a stop and rested in silence.
No one appeared from the direction of the camp. Nothing in sight there stirred.
Tony put his hand on the lever that opened the hood of the cockpit. "I'll yank it open and jump out. Looks like gas. Slam it after I go, and see what happens to me."
Either of his companions would have undertaken that terrifying assignment—would have insisted upon undertaking it; but Tony put his words into execution before they could speak. The hatch grated open. Tony leaped out on the fuselage; there was a clang, and almost none of the outer air had entered the airplane.
Taylor's knuckles on the hatch-handle were white.
Vanderbilt peered through the glass at Tony, his face unmoving. But he whispered, "Guts!" as if to himself.

CHAPTER VII

TONY slipped from the fuselage to the ground. Vanderbilt and Taylor, watching, expected at any moment to see him stagger or shudder or fall writhingly to the earth.

Common Sense

By JOHN BLAKE
3301 Broadway—WNU Service

Never was there any very good reason for ignorance.
Today there is less than ever.
Around the World You can go down the street, or if you are rich enough, sit in your living room and look at a religious procession in Russia, a bull fight in Spain, or a tiger hunt in India.
You can hear the voices and the words of great men and women in almost every nation in the world.
When Shakespeare wrote: "Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits, he could not foresee a time when home-keeping youth, and adults for that matter, could sharpen their wits by looking at the world by means of tiny sparks that may be carried from one end of it to another.
But although these opportunities are here, they will prove of scant value if people do not make use of them.
And comparatively few people do.
I think that the speakies are excellent, many of them.
Even if their stories are too often florid, their settings enable one to get and keep a wider understanding of people all around the world than they could ever gain by mere reading and using their imaginations.
The imagination has to have something to imagine, or it is not very useful.
There is little doubt that within a comparatively few years we shall have sight with our sound.
That means that we can look across the sea and witness events in foreign countries while they are actually happening.
We shall be able to look out on the ocean, and see friends and acquaintances walking decks that are a thousand miles away from us. And they will be able to look at us, if they like us enough to do it, and to hear what we are saying to them.
I am not convinced that another war will come immediately. I am not persuaded that it will come at all.
But to prevent it, and at the same time to avail ourselves of all the possibilities for happiness which have been created by thinking and studying men, we have got to get rid of international disputes and hatreds, and with the endless endeavor to gain new territory which nations would not know how to use if they captured it.
What blessings men may have a hundred years from now we do not know, and it will not make much difference to us.
"Let dogs delight to bark and bite," says the old poem.
Growls and Snarls Some of those old poems contain considerable hard sense.
The growling and biting will go on in the kennels, but one would imagine by this time that it ought to be eliminated from the living room and the business office.
Tempers are not easy to keep. But when you realize that the minute you lose your mental balance you stop thinking clearly, perhaps you will put a stronger curb on your utterances.
I have worked in many offices, under many men. Never have I known a growler or a snarler who wouldn't have got more and better work out of those under him if he had been a little more tolerant of mistakes, and a little more sparing of hard words.
In the prize ring the man who loses his temper loses the fight.
The man who beats his boy because he has been impertinent, the woman who slaps her baby because it gets into some mischief it knew no better than to get into, are storing up trouble.
It is just as sensible to "get mad" at a root which trips you up while you are walking through the woods, or a door which slammed in the wind and hurt one of your toes.
John Fiske said that George Washington, on one occasion when one of the men under him had done something foolish, threw his hat on the floor and stamped on it, or did something of the same irritated kind.
But Washington did not lose any profanity when battles were going on, and neither did Grant or Lee or any other great general.
I have heard that anger really breeds poisons in the system.
Certainly it breeds poisons in the soul, poisons that are likely to prove very harmful.
Learn, if you can, to accept misfortunes, even failures, with philosophy.
Learn to forget hard words that are said to you, or the mistakes that people who are working with or for you or over you may make.
Happiness is one of our heritages. It makes life pleasant, and it is likely to make it more successful.
If, as you are advancing in years, you get grouchy, be careful.
So cheer up. It can't hurt you. And it will probably do you no end of good.

Gibraltar the Key Gibraltar, commonly called the Key to the Mediterranean, is a British colony strongly fortified. It has a population of about 20,000 and depends for its prosperity on the trade provided by the local population and the services stationed there.
Oldest School in Western World In Warwick parish, Bermuda, is the oldest school in the western world, Warwick academy, which once paid its schoolmasters 285 pounds of tobacco a year as salary. According to the records, it is more than three hundred years old.
1,600-Acre "Classroom" Used One classroom at Montana university, Missoula, Mont., covers 1,600 acres. It's the forestry school's laboratory in Pette canyon—a stand of virgin yellow pine, five times the size of the campus.
Roquefort Cheese Roquefort cheese originated nearly 2,000 years ago in Roquefort, France, where there are caves sufficiently cool and moist to grow the mold which gives this cheese its characteristic flavor.
Water Freezes Downward When water freezes (that is, solidifies or congeals) it does so from the top downward. A thin film first forms on the surface and grows thicker with the addition of ice from beneath.
Says Cardui Soon Helped "My mother was such a believer in Cardui that she gave it to me," writes Mrs. Sam Ferrara, of Hammond, La. "I was suffering with my back and side. I would get so dizzy I could hardly stand and then have a weak feeling in my back. This made me very nervous and I did not rest well at night. I felt better after my first bottle of Cardui. I took two bottles and felt a great deal better. It certainly is a fine medicine."
Thousands of women testify Cardui benefited them. If it does not benefit YOU, consult a physician.

CALL FOR ANY OTHERS
Motrist—Of course you have references.
Applicant—Yes, sir; from the Widow Van Lush, the Widow Van Mush, the Widow Van Slush and Widow Van Kush—I drove for their husbands.—Detroit News.
Our Own Friends Happiness grows at our own firesides, and is not to be picked up in strangers' gardens.—Douglas Jerrold.

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Hi Ho is Amused "My manner of deep humility serves to amuse me," said Hi Ho, the sage of Chinatown, "since it encourages my friend, Hi Hat, to grow more ridiculous as he continues to strut."
The Tuft-Hunter The term tuft-hunter is applied to a person who tries to curry favor with the wealthy and great for the sake of feeding on the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table.
Life of Wild Game Wild game thrives better, says a naturalist, if they are permitted to remain primitive than if they are provided with artificial feeding grounds.
Wrote About "Smoke in Eyes" In prehistoric America, the Aztec poet-king Netzahualcoyotl, living near the City of Mexico, wrote a verse about "smoke in your eyes."

Firestone

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