

by Edwin Balmer and Philip Wylie

SYNOPSIS

Under the leadership of Cole Henderson, United States scientist, over the years escape in two space ships before a cosmic collision that would engulf the earth and land on Bronson Beta. A smooth, straight road leads to the camp. As they went for a moment Tony's eyes lit on a feature of the landscape which was not natural and he suddenly exclaimed: "By George, Higgins, we should have followed that road! It went south a little inland from the coast, and there it is."

CHAPTER II—Continued

They collected samples of soil, then started back, side by side. They walked eagerly for a while, as they wished to hurry the work of their discovery to the camp. As they went for a moment Tony's eyes lit on a feature of the landscape which was not natural and he suddenly exclaimed: "By George, Higgins, we should have followed that road! It went south a little inland from the coast, and there it is."

There were a few bends, however, and upon rounding one of these, they came abruptly upon an object which made both of the men scramble from the road and stand and stare silently. The object was a machine—rather what was left of a machine. It was crushed against a plunsel of rock at the end of one of the rare curves in the road. The very manner in which it stood against the rock wall suggested how it had arrived there. It had been one of the vehicles which the creatures of the planet drove or rode, and rounding the curve at too high a speed it had shot off the highway and smashed head-on into the wall of stone.

The two men bent over it, then touched it. They exchanged glances without speaking. The thing still glittered in the sunlight—the metal which composed it being evidently rust-proof. An unidentifiable fragment lay on the ground beside it; and Tony, picking it up, found to his surprise that it was extremely light, lighter even than aluminum. The engine was twisted and mangled, as was the rest of the car. It was impossible to guess what the

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to the encampment, bringing their news. An hour later nearly every one from the Ark was gathered around the machine. Bates and Malby, who were perhaps the best engineers and mechanics among them, except Henderson, stepped out of the circle of fascinated onlookers. Behind them walked Jeremiah Post, the metallurgist of the company. These three men, together with Henderson, began palustrially and slowly to examine the wreck.

"Well, friends," he said simply, "until we have had time to take this apparatus back to camp and study it more thoroughly we will be unable to make a complete report on it. But we four are agreed on a good many things that will interest you. In the first place, judging from the area of space for passengers and the division of that area who ever occupied and operated this machine could not have been much larger or much smaller than ourselves. You will note—he walked over to the wreck and pointed—"that although the force of the crash has collapsed this portion of the vehicle, we may assume that its operator sat here."

"I say, because this is manifestly a seat. The vehicle steered with a wheel which has been broken off. This is it. Whether the creatures on Bronson Beta had hands and feet like ours cannot be said. However, that they had four limbs, or rather what was left of four limbs, and that their upper pair of limbs terminated in members which could be used precisely as fingers are used, is very illuminating. In fact, I won't say that the builders of this very interesting and brilliant vehicle were human beings; but I will say that if the vehicle were intact, it could be operated by a human being."

"As for the machine itself, it was made very largely of beryllium. Beryllium was a very common element on earth. It is, roughly speaking, about half as heavy as aluminum, and about twice as strong as what we called duralumin. It was rare and valuable in a pure state only because we had not as yet perfected a way of extracting beryllium cheaply."

"The principle upon which this vehicle was propelled is obvious in the sense that we are all agreed upon what was accomplished by its

ship. We have committed ourselves to life here. "The food we eat is monotonous. No dietitian could give us a better balanced diet; but on the other hand, none of us is able to gratify those daily trifling appetites which were unimportant on earth, but which upon here assume great proportions. Bread and beans and Johnny-cake, and oatmeal and bacon and lentil soup and sweet chocolate and rice, together with yeast, which we cultivate and eat to prevent pellagra, and other vitamins which we take in tablets, form a diet nourishing, beyond doubt, but tiresome in the extreme."

"One of the small atomic engines Henderson brought has been converted into the motor of a tractor-like machine which pulls a flat four-wheeler trailer back and forth to the river valley."

"Tony and twenty other men and women live in that river valley. They have used the tractor to plow and already they have several hundred acres under cultivation. They work frantically—not knowing how long the growing season will be—knowing only that our survival depends upon their success. None of us has yet adjusted himself to the length of the day, so that the hours of light seem interminable, and we reach darkness exhausted. I have seen workers on the Ark, and men and women on the farm, fall asleep at their jobs in the later afternoon. On the other hand, since we are accustomed to sleeping at the most nine or ten hours, we are apt to wake up long before dawn. We have ameliorated this problem somewhat by dividing the labor into eight-hour shifts, with eight more hours for recreation."

"The soil at the farm was judged excellent by the chemists. Bacteria have been sown in it. Ants have been loosed there. Our grasshoppers are fattening on the local flora; their buzzing is the only familiar living sound except our own and the occasional noises of the animals we tend."

"Shirley Cotton has fallen more or less in love with Tony. I would not enter this in a diary that is perhaps to be history, except for the fact that she announced it to every one the other day and said that she was going to move for a system of marriage codes by which she could compel him to become her mate as well as Eve Henderson. It must have saddened Eve, although she has said nothing about it and appears not to mind. But Shirley has pointed out what every one has often thought privately—there are thirteen more women than men. All the women but five are under forty years of age. Nearly half the men are more than fifty. Our other party, which appears lost, consisted more of the younger people

and bees that we have brought with us. We are now feeling the grinding despair that castaways must know, except that we cannot have the hope of rescue, and still worse, we have abandoned the hope of any other fellowship than our own. Solitude—loneliness!"

"The children—the little boy and girl, who, thank God, we brought—are the bright lights in our emotional gloom. Their eagerness, their amusing behavior, their constant loyalty and affection, point us more powerfully than anything else to an untiring hope."

"If there were more children—if babes were born among us, new members of our race, this awful feeling of the end might be lifted. But who would dare to bear children here? Eve? Shirley?"

Ellot James, on this despairing note, interrupted his record.

Two matters recommend themselves for comment at this point. One concerns Kyo, the quick-witted obedient Japanese, who had so honorably, as he would have said, followed his master's cause and was now one of the mysteries of Bronson Beta. Naturally, the little Jap was no longer Tony's servant. No one would have servants again. His handiness in the matter of preparation of meals had made him favorite to the commissariat in the first few days. But it began to appear at once that Kyo was more than a good cook."

On the third day, when Shirley Cotton had been instructed to inform Kyo of the matter of vitamins and balanced diets, she discovered that he knew fully as much about the subject as she. Indeed the eventual discoveries about Kyo surpassed even the wildest guesses of the colonists."

The other matter concerned Henderson. Others beside Ellot James had observed, and with concern, the change in the leader; and they began to discuss it."

Tony knew that he himself was talked of as a candidate for commander of the group—governor of the camp—if Henderson was to be replaced; so Tony was especially careful to refrain from criticism. In addition to his sincere loyalty and devotion to Henderson, there was the further fact that Eve became even more fanatically devoted to her father as his difficulties increased."

"Tony," she asked him, "what do they—the opposition—say about Father? They want another leader; isn't that it?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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The Man With the Dark Lantern

WHO killed John Hayes in the old inn between London and Oxford? The facts can be stated very briefly.

The gentleman in question was an English squire of great wealth. On his way from the capital to the old university town he stopped at a tavern kept by Jonathan Bradford.

There were two other guests at the place and Mr. Hayes struck up an acquaintance with them. They had supper together, and during the course of the meal the squire laughingly remarked that he had a large sum of money with him.

The two other guests—Brown and Harley—exchanged significant glances at this unexpected confidence.

Bradford, the landlord, was in the room at the time, and it was noticed he listened to this part of the conversation with eagerness, if not greediness.

Late that night each of the three guests was escorted to the room that had been assigned to him.

John Hayes was domiciled in a middle apartment on the second floor, and his valet was placed in a room on the same floor and in the rear of the house.

James Johnson, one of the permanent guests of the inn, sat up late that night reading.

He used a candle which stood in its socket on the table, and just when this began to sputter Johnson was aroused by sounds of a scuffle in the adjoining room.

This was the apartment to which John Hayes had been assigned. Sounding the alarm, Johnson rushed to this room and, opening the door, rushed in.

To his horror he saw a man in the bed, covered with blood. Standing over him, with a knife in his hand and a dark lantern fastened to his arm, was another man who averted his face.

Johnson was so petrified with astonishment that he was unable to speak.

Two other boarders came into the room, and they were so shocked that they were helpless.

In the meantime the man with the lantern slipped around the foot of the bed and out into the darkness of the night.

The police were summoned and they began the investigation to discover who killed John Hayes.

Suspicion pointed to the two men who had been the companions of the deceased at supper on the previous evening.

But when the inquest was held Mr. Johnson said that the man with the lantern and the knife who stood by the side of the bed was Jonathan Bradford, the keeper of the inn.

Days With Rogers

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — Well all I know is just what I read in the papers, or what I see here and there.

Back home here after a kind of hurried prowl back East, I started in here a week or so ago.

I was to go East at four o'clock on the regular plane, and my good friend Jimmy Doalittle had asked me about a week previously if I didn't want to ride East with him; that he was going to make a trip in a new plane, and so when I got to the field here was his plane. He was going to leave in one hour after our plane was. Well I did want to go with him; I knew he would really "Burn Oil," but I was headed for South Bend, Indiana, where I had promised to speak at Notre Dames annual Football Dinner, for my good friend the Coach, Elmer Layden, and Father O'Hara.

Jimmy told me he would after landing in New York fly me back to South Bend, but I figured that was kinder imposing on him, so I didn't do it. I sure wish I had been on that trip. His wife was with him. I think they had it pretty cold and rough too, and I would have perhaps messed the whole thing up, so maybe it's just as well I didn't go. Jimmy is a great pilot, and I wouldn't be afraid to go anywhere with him.

Well I went on and got to South Bend by regular air line, and they did have a great time, and a great dinner. I like that school. I always have. There is something mighty genuine about it. They turn out some great men.

We had about twelve hundred there in one of their big dining halls. Many an old boy in there that had played during his time under the Great Rockne. My, what a heritage and tradition that man left. I had been a friend of his for many years.

I think this Elmer Layden is going to be a great Coach for them. I tell you, he has the support of the whole school, and the whole Alumni. In his first year he lost two or three games, but they didn't do like lots of places, jump on him and yell for his scalp. They knew that he had made great progress, and were heart and soul to give him a chance, a real chance. He had an playing mighty smart ball when they played California out there last Fall.

Did you know that School has no automobiles, no campus full of cars. There is books there. Oh its an odd college! Had some great speeches at the dinner that night. You know these Priests are smart fellows and a lot of humor. One old boy from, (I think he had charge of the Charities in Cleveland, Ohio) well he was a knock out. And Father O'Hara is an excellent talker.

I had to leave rather early to catch my plane. I was headed from there to Washington to attend the dinner given by the Vice Pres, to the President. I was there last year and we had a lot of fun, and the President said he had a lot of fun, and this year was just as good.

This little fellow Garner is a great fellow, and smart. Say I would rather have his opinion than anybody's.

He dont say much, but he knows which way the wind is blowing every minute. They was all menced up over the gold, but seemed to think that no matter how the decision was rendered that they had some schemes to fix it so it would get by. There was only about 50 at the Dinner. All the Cabinet and their wives were there, none of the second string team were there that night, the ones they call the Brain Trusters. The Brain Trusters are not the Cabinet; they are the advisers to the Cabinet. Dont hear quite as much of that bunch as we used to, but they are still there and still cooking up medicine. This Supreme Court has kinder held them up. They had all kinder forgot about it, but now that they find that those nine old men with the Kimonos on are really alive, why its got all Washington excited.

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Ex-Service Man; Veteran The terms ex-service man, veteran, are often loosely used interchangeably. An ex-service man is one who has formerly been a soldier or sailor; he may be young or old, and may have served a few months or have grown old in the service. Nothing in the term indicates age or length of service. Properly speaking, however, the term veteran, when applied to one who is or who was a soldier or sailor, denotes a man "long trained," or who "has grown old in service"; hence, it does not properly apply to a young man or to a man with a short record of service. It is from the Latin veteranus, meaning "old," or, when used in a military sense, "an old tried soldier."—Literary Digest.

Safety First Village Grocer—What are you running for, sonny? Boy—I'm trying to keep two fellows from fightin'. Grocer—Who are the fellows? Boy—Jimmy Green and me.

Region of Barrenness

The Arctic may have heavy snows and bitter cold for eight or nine months of the year, but during the remainder of the twelve months flowers bloom, meadows appear, and even vegetables grow, writes James Montague in the Scientific American.

Flowers have been found growing within 400 miles of the North pole by investigators who traveled to the tip of Ellesmere Island, the last big Arctic island before reaching the pole. There these botanists found hundreds of varieties of flowers, mosses, lichens, and similar plants.

At the settlements, where the long Arctic day averages upward of eighteen hours daily during the summer months, it is possible to grow a large assortment of vegetables, including potatoes, cauliflower, cabbage, tomatoes, radishes, onions, carrots, beets, lettuce, and cucumbers. In a region where canned food, dried meat, and fish form the staples, these fresh vegetables prove an attraction on the menu. Even wheat has been grown, and experiments are now being carried on to find a faster-maturing wheat for that region.

Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets are the original little liver pills put up 60 years ago. They regulate liver and bowels.—Adv.

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