

Tida smiled bravely while making encouraging and innocent remarks to her young squire. But he thought she was teasing him. Instead of buoying his spirits, it fed his inferiority complex. It was then he made his decision to give up and go home to bed.

A vision of the debonaire chap he had dreamed of being this night faded. The predetermined strategy and tactics for the night were defeated. For days prior to the dance he had been preoccupied with thoughts of Tida. In his own mind he had rehearsed how he would approach her for a dance; the formula to be used to win her consent to walk her home; the arrangement of another meeting. It had all seemed so simple, but now it did not look simple at all, in fact, he thought it was impossible.

The music stopped. The set was over. A stammered "Thank You" and Lalu disappeared through the door into the darkness. At least he would stand by his most recent decision.

—ERNEST LARKIN '55.

REPORT NO. 317-J

Year, 2500

Report No. 1, submitted by Jan Kral, Spacemaster first class.

Submitted to Earth Security Council at 0300 lunas.

On my third muni in space, the ship was gliding in the state of free fall. I was carrying out my mission, 11Lk-o, tracking the course of the stray meteor swarm Arcon-X, which was threatening to invade the space lanes. Then all at once the ship's telemagnetio counter reacted violently, the dial swung to -32 on the counter, indicating the presence of a large mass of plutridium, an element used long ago in the plating of space ships. Immediately I fixed the ship's course, set it on the robot pilot and arranged the controls so that they would guide the ship to the mass of plutridium. Presently in about three centos I arrived at the source of the disturbance. I switched on the ship's televiewer to outer space and I must admit I was flabbergasted at what I saw. There in front of my eyes on the ship's televiewer I saw a derelict space ship rather needle-shaped in comparison to our disks. At once I surrounded the ships by a force field to prevent stray meteors from crashing into

either ship. I suited myself in outer space garb including a rocket belt and a pair of magnetic boots. Fully dressed for outer space I entered my ship's air lock and depressurized myself before I jetted into space. The air lock opened and I glided to the other ship. Entering the ship presented no problem for there was a large hole in the canopy apparently made by a large meteor. From my immediate surroundings I guessed that I was in the driving shed or the cockpit. By the glow of my space lantern I could make out a form on what I guessed to be a g-restrainer couch. I made my way through debris to the form. I was surprised to note that the shape was humanoid. The body was clasping in its hand a large book, apparently the ship's log. At the immediate time I could discern no more by the feeble glow of my space lantern I placed both the body and the book in a pneumatic chute and towing them, I returned to my ship. On arriving at my ship I erected a crude space tow by means of a force ray with which to pull the other ship. During the return trip I started to read the log. At the time the only strange thing that I recognized about the log was that the pages were very stiff and cold. I shall only find time in my brief report to relate a few of the interesting facts it contained.

The last entry was made thus: "It is my third year, fourth month and tenth day in space. Today at 1400 hours ship time I noticed by my instruments that the gyroscopic drive broke down and I can no longer steer the ship on a natural course. A few hours later the ship was attracted by the gravitational pull of a meteor swarm. Any second I expect the hull to be cracked by a stray meteor. By instruments I have learned that outside the ship there is quite a gravitational pull caused by the meteors and that the temperature is approximately complete zero. Wait, there is a loud crash, the ship is growing cold this is the . . ."

I finished reading the log and then decided to search the body for personal effects. When I leaned over the body and started to search, I noticed my goggles were clouding up. I reacted very fast, dashed to the space helmet and put it over his head. In fourteen centos all body processes had returned to normal. In five more centos the person had completely revived. At this point I confess that I felt a little weak for you see the last date on the log was 1973, the man had been in the same state for over five hundred years. When he had completely revived I spent the entire return trip trying to tell him what had happened to him,

and I must admit we formed a true friendship with each other. As far as I could reason, when his body was subjected to the absolute zero temperature, he was held in the state of suspended animation. When I returned to Earth I turned him over to the Security council.

END OF REPORT

Museum Of Natural History,
328 Space Lane, Gotham,

Dear Jan,

Muni, Five.

The reason why I am writing this letter is that you are the only man who I can regard as a friend. Everyone else thinks of me as a freak, as no doubt, I am. As far as the Security Council is concerned I am merely experiment rehabilitation. You can never know the anguish that I suffered. Space was in my blood, but I could never return to the space lanes for I could never hope to fathom the mystery of the drive units. So I am forever bound to Earth by a strange quirk of fate.

I was, as the Council soon found out, unfit for any job in your modern society. Through sheer boredom I was almost driven to suicide. In one muni I was tried at nine positions in none of which did I have the technical knowledge. I was put on the list of State dependents. I was a ward of the state, completely dependent upon it for my support, when one murini I was touring the city, and arrived at the Museum Of Natural History. I wandered into a section, completely dedicated to my era in time. The conversations of the visitors showed that none of them knew what any of the devices or appliances were used for. The section was as large as a fair-sized city. Then an idea struck me—I would conduct a sight seeing tour through the city, explaining what the various things were used for. When I questioned the museum authorities they liked the idea greatly. They put me on a salary of three hundred capruni per murini. A very large salary for a misfit, eh?

I no longer think of space, now that I am again a useful citizen of society. I thought you would be interested to know how I was adapting myself. Now my good friend, I must say good-bye.

—JOHN KELLY, (Gr. XII).