

MY WORLD

THIS IS MY WORLD. THIS IS THE WORLD I LOVE. IT IS A STEAMING TROPICAL SWAMP, DAMP AND STINKING AND ALIVE WITH SCREAMING BIRDS AND SLITHERING LIZARDS AND HUMMING INSECTS AND GIANT DINOSAURS THAT SPLASH THROUGH ITS STAGNANT POOLS AND SLOSH THROUGH ITS SUCKING BOGS IN SEARCH OF FOOD TO FILL THEIR CAVERNOUS BELLIES.



IT IS AN ANGRY ROCKET SHIP, LEAPING UPWARD AT THE STARS... SPITTING FLAME AND SMOKE AND ROARING SO LOUD IT SEEMS TO SHAKE DOWN THE VERY HEAVENS IT IS ATTEMPTING TO CONQUER...



IT IS A GLEAMING CITY, RISING FROM THE ROLLING COUNTRYSIDE AND REACHING TOWARD THE SUN, EMBRACING WITHIN ITS GLASS-WALLED BUILDINGS ITS DWELLERS, WHO COME AND GO IN SHINING BEETLE-CARS OR HUMMING AERO-CABS OR STAND CONTENTEDLY ON SLOWLY MOVING SIDEWALKS...



THIS IS MY WORLD. IT IS A WORLD OF GRIM-FACED MEN SITTING BEFORE BATTERIES OF GAUGES AND DIALS AND LEVERS AND BUTTONS, GUIDING THEIR METAL MONSTER ACROSS A HAIRSBREADTH OF THE VAST BLACK GULF OF UNENDING SPACE...



THIS IS THE WORLD I LOVE. IT IS THE MOMENT WHEN THE ROCKET-SHIP BREAKS FREE OF EARTH'S GRAVITY AND STREAKS THROUGH THE VOID IN FREE FALL... WHEN ITS CREWMEN ARE SUDDENLY WEIGHTLESS AND FLOAT LIKE CHILDREN'S BALLOONS AT THE CIRCUS...



IT IS A WORLD OF EXPLORATION INTO THE UNKNOWN... THE SUDDEN THRILL OF GAZING UPON AN ALIEN LANDSCAPE THAT NO HUMAN BEING HAS EVER GAZED UPON BEFORE...



...THE SUDDEN VIOLENT ATTACK OF SHRIEKING ALIEN MONSTERS...



...THE MONSTERS' EQUALLY SUDDEN DESTRUCTION... BLASTED TO SMITHEREENS BY POWERFUL WEAPONS OF MY WORLD...



THE OTHER ALIEN CREATURES...HARMLESS...CURIOUS...CUTE...



THE SUCKING GULPING MOUNTAIN OF SHIMMERING PROTOPLASMIC LIFE, SLITHERING FROM ONE OF THE RUINED BUILDINGS...



THIS IS MY WORLD. IT IS A WORLD OF LONELY WOMEN WHO TURN THEIR EYES TO THE HEAVENS AND WATCH FOR THE MOVING FLAME AMONG THE STARS THAT SIGNIFIES THE RETURN OF THEIR SPACE-MEN...



THE RUINS OF A ONCE PROUD CITY...NOW FALLING TO DUST... BUILT BY AN ANCIENT CIVILIZATION, WHOSE MEMBERS, TOO, HAVE LONG SINCE FALLEN TO DUST...



...ABSORBING ALL ORGANIC MATERIAL IN ITS PATH...ENGULFING TOM OR DICK OR HARRY WHILE I LISTEN TO HIS BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAMS ON MY INTERCOM...



... AND THE MEN WHO NEVER COME BACK...THE MEN WHO ARE FLUNG INTO THE VOID BY THE VIOLENT EXPLOSION OF THEIR HOMEWARD-BOUND ROCKET...



MY WORLD IS A WORLD OF VIOLENT EMOTION... OF ANGER AND HATE BUILDING UP THROUGH THE DRAGGING MONTHS OF TRAVELING THROUGH SPACE. THE SUDDEN FLARE-UP... THE VOLCANIC ERUPTION OF SUPPRESSED ENERGY...



... THE STRUGGLE OF MUSCLE PITTED AGAINST MUSCLE... BONE AGAINST BONE... SINEW AND TENDON...



... THE FINAL VICTORY OF ONE OVER THE OTHER. THE SICKENING THUD OF THE METAL WRENCH CRUSHING SKULL... SPATTERING BRAINS... SPILLING BLOOD...



MY WORLD IS A WORLD WHERE BEAUTIFUL ALIEN CREATURES SIT BESIDE A STILL POOL AND CARESS A WEARY SPACE-MAN, STROKING HIS HAIR AND KISSING HIS CHEEKS AND MAKING HIM FORGET ABOUT EARTH AND EVER RETURNING...



MY WORLD IS A WORLD WHERE ATOMIC WARS RAGE...



... WHERE WHOLE CITIES ARE LEVELED BY ONE MISSIVE OF DESTRUCTION. WHERE A BABY SITS AMONG THE RUINS, COVERED WITH RADIATION BURNS, CRYING FOR MY WORLD...



MY WORLD CAN BE A WORLD OF DESOLATION...
WITHOUT LIFE...WITHOUT HOPE...

...OR IT CAN BE A WORLD OF EVERLASTING PEACE AND
UNDERSTANDING AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN...



MY WORLD CAN BE A WORLD OF SPACE-STATIONS...

...OF ROCKET TRANSPORTS THAT LEAP ACROSS CONTINENTS IN
MINUTES...



...OF ATOMIC-POWERED LINERS THAT SPAN GREAT OCEANS
WITH THE ENERGY DERIVED FROM A SINGLE LUMP OF COAL...

...OF GREAT SPACE-SHIPS THAT CARRY TOURISTS ON
BRIEF HOLIDAYS TO VENUS OR MARS OR SATURN...



... OR MY WORLD CAN BE UGLY. IT CAN BE A WORLD OF INVASIONS FROM OUTER SPACE BY HORRIBLE INTELLIGENT ALIENS BENT ON CONQUERING MY WORLD... COMING ACROSS SPACE IN FLEETS OF FLYING SAUCERS...



.. LANDING AT NIGHT AND ENTERING MY CITIES AND KILLING AND MAIMING AND DESTROYING...



MY WORLD IS WHAT I CHOOSE TO MAKE IT. MY WORLD IS YESTERDAY...



...OR TODAY...



...OR TOMORROW...



FOR MY WORLD IS THE WORLD OF SCIENCE-FICTION... CONCEIVED IN MY MIND AND PLACED UPON PAPER WITH PENCIL AND INK AND BRUSH AND SWEAT AND A GREAT DEAL OF LOVE FOR MY WORLD. FOR I AM A SCIENCE-FICTION ARTIST. MY NAME IS WOOD.



THE END