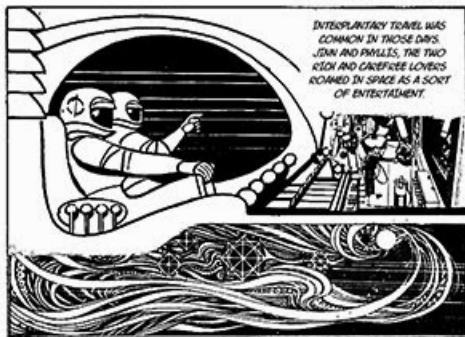
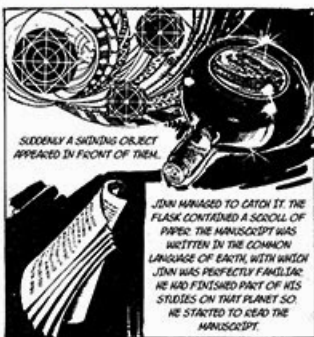


Planet of the Apes



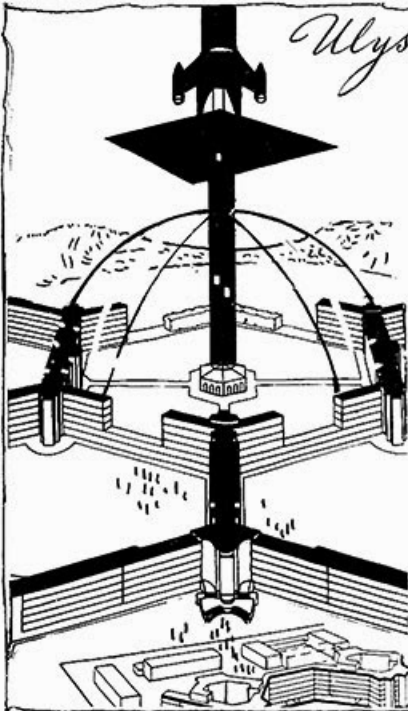
INTERPLANETARY TRAVEL WAS COMMON IN THOSE DAYS. JINN AND PHYLLIS, THE TWO KISS AND CAREFREE LOVERS ROAMED IN SPACE AS A SORT OF ENTERTAINMENT.



SUDDENLY A SHINY OBJECT APPEARED IN FRONT OF THEM.

JINN MANAGED TO CATCH IT. THE FLASK CONTAINED A SCROLL OF PAPER. THE MANUSCRIPT WAS WRITTEN IN THE COMMON LANGUAGE OF EARTH, WITH WHICH JINN WAS PERFECTLY FAMILIAR. HE HAD FINISHED PART OF HIS STUDIES ON THAT PLANET SO HE STARTED TO READ THE MANUSCRIPT.

Ulysse Mérou's message



I AM SENDING THIS TEXT INTO SPACE IN HOPE OF PROTECTING THE HUMAN RACE FROM A THREATENING CATASTROPHE! I AM ABOUT TO GET OUT INTO SPACE AGAIN WITH MY FAMILY. WE CAN SURVIVE FOR YEARS. WE ARE ABLE TO GROW FRUITS AND VEGETABLES ON BOARD THE SHIP. WE EVEN HAVE SOME POULTRY ON BOARD. MAYBE WE WILL ENCOUNTER A FRIENDLY PLANET ONE DAY. NEVERTHELESS, HERE IS THE STORY OF MY FATE.

IT ALL HAPPENED IN THE YEAR 2500. TWO OF MY CREWMATES AND I SET OUT ON A JOURNEY TO VISIT THE PART OF THE UNIVERSE WHERE THE GIANT STAR, RETELEGZE RESIDES. FOLLOWING THE EXPLOITATION OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM - WHICH PROVED TO BE UNINHABITED - WE CHOOSE THE OCEAN ALPHA AS THE FIRST INTERSTELLAR DESTINATION.

THE COMMANDER OF THE EXPEDITION WAS PROFESSOR INTELLE.

ITS MEMBERS WERE ARTHUR LEVAIN, PHYSICIST.

...AND MYSELF, ULYSSE MÉROU, JOURNALIST.





AFTER A TWO-YEAR JOURNEY, WE FOUND THE GIANT STAR AND ITS FOUR PLANETS. ONE OF THEM WAS ROTATING ON THE SAME TRAJECTORY AS US, AND ITS VOLUME SEEMED ALMOST IDENTICAL TO THAT OF EARTH. IT HAD AN ATMOSPHERE CONSISTING OF OXYGEN AND NITROGEN, SO WE DECIDED TO LAND. OUR TELESCOPES SHOWED SEAS AND CONTINENTS ON THE PLANET, WHAT'S MORE, INHABITANTS AS WELL. BECAUSE WE WERE FLYING OVER ENTIRE CITIES, WE SAT INTO THE SMALL ROCKET-POWERED PLANE WE CALLED THE LAUNCH. THE SPACE SHIP WAS LEFT IN ORBIT ABOVE THE PLANET WHILE WE ENTERED THE ATMOSPHERE WITH THE LAUNCH. PROFESSOR ANTELLE GAVE THE FINAL COMMANDS TO THE COMPUTERS, THE RETRO-ROCKETS ENGAGED, AND WE FOUND OURSELVES IN THE MIDDLE OF A PLATEAU AFTER LANDING.



THE AIR'S COMPOSITION IS THE SAME AS ON EARTH.

NO DOUBT, THIS IS THE TWIN SISTER OF EARTH.

LET US CALL IT SOROK THEN, MEANING SISTER.



THE FUN WE MISSED SO MUCH DURING THE LONG JOURNEY WAS INTERRUPTED BY LEVAIN'S SHOUT.

FOOTPRINTS!



WATER! LET'S FRESHEN UP.



THEY BELONG TO A WOMAN. SHE WAS HERE A COUPLE OF MINUTES AGO!



AND THEN WE SAW HER.



A WOMAN
DIDN'T TELL
YOU?



OUR SHOTS MUST HAVE
FRIGHTENED THE GIRL, WHO AT
FIRST DISAPPEARED, BUT THEN
SOON CAME FORWARD AGAIN.



FOLLOWING ANTELLE'S INSTRUCTION,
WE PRETENDED NOT TO NOTICE HER.
WE JUST SWAM HERE AND THERE, BUT
THEN A BIT LATER.



TO GAIN HER TRUST, WE ALL PUT ON
A SMILE WHILE APPROACHING HER.
"LET'S CALL HER NOW" - I SAID.



NOVA! NOVA!



I SMILED AT HER BUT I WAS SURPRISED TO SEE A WILD EXPRESSION ON HER FACE. SHE GAVE A STRANGE, ENTIRELY DUMB - ALMOST LIKE WHINING OR WAILING - SOUND



MAYBE SHE IS JUST A SAVAGE WOMAN, BELONGING TO SOME PRIMITIVE TRIBE, LIKE THE ONES WE HAVE IN NEW-GUINEA.

FIRST SHE MOVED LIKE SHE WAS ABOUT TO ATTACK US, BUT THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN SHE JUST DISAPPEARED IN THE WILDERNESS.



EVEN THE MOST PRIMITIVE TRIBES HAVE SOME SORT OF LANGUAGE ON EARTH, BUT THIS ONE COULDN'T TALK AT ALL.

WALKING AROUND THE LAKE WE COULD NOT FIND ANY TRACES OF THE GIRL. THE NIGHT WAS APPROACHING AND THE FOREST WAS FULL OF STRANGE NOISES AND MOVEMENTS. WE FELT LIKE WE ARE BEING WATCHED BY INVISIBLE EYES FROM BEHIND THE TREES.



WE SPENT THE NIGHT IN THE LAUNCH WITHOUT PROBLEMS. THE NEXT DAY WE DECIDED TO RETURN TO THE WATERFALL.

NOVA!

SHE WAS NOT ALONE THOUGH.



THE HORDE WAS ALL AROUND US. WHEN LEVAIN MOVED FOR HIS WEAPON, THEIR INITIAL EXCITEMENT TURNED INTO A FRANTIC FRENZY. THEIR ATTACK WAS SO OVERWHELMING THAT WE STOOD NO CHANCE TO DEFEND OURSELVES AT ALL.



THERE WAS SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT THEIR ATTACK. THEY TURNED THEIR ANGER AGAINST OBJECTS AND THINGS ARTIFICIALLY MADE INSTEAD OF US. THEY PULLED OFF OUR CLOTHES AND BROKE OUR WEAPONS. SINCE WE DID NOT FIGHT BACK, THEY DIDN'T REALLY HARM US AND SOON WE WERE ALL JUST STANDING THERE NAKED. THAT SEEMINGLY CALMED THEM DOWN.



LOOK THEY ARE ATTACKING THE LAUNCH AS WELL!

WE WERE JUST HELPLESSLY LOOKING AT THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR LAUNCH. THEN THEY SURROUNDED US AGAIN, AND LEAD US TO THE FOREST.



THIS AVANGUARD MARCH TOOK SEVERAL HOURS. I ALMOST COLLAPSED FROM EXHAUSTION WHEN WE FINALLY REACHED A CLEARING, THAT SEEMED TO BE OUR DESTINATION.



THE MEAL DID NOT REALLY
TEMPT US.



SOMEWHAT LATER, THE HORDE
SEEMED TO GET READY FOR THE
NIGHT. WE FOLLOWED SUIT.



NOVA BEHAVED LIKE A LOYAL
ANIMAL.



A HOSTILE NOISE WOKE
US UP AT DAWN.



THE NOISE WAS SIMILAR TO THE
SOUNDS USUALLY MADE BY THE
HUNTERS BACK ON EARTH. THE
HORDE WAS MADLY TRYING TO
ESCAPE. GUNSHOTS WERE HEARD.
WE RAN SEVERAL HUNDRED
METERS, WHEN,

IT SEEMS HE COULD NOT KEEP
UP. LET'S TRY TO HIDE
SOMEWHERE HERE.

WHERE IS ANTELLET?



THE GUNSHOTS SOUNDED LOUDER AND
LOUDER, AND THE HELLISH NOISE OF
THE HUNTERS SEEMED TO GET CLOSER.
THEN THE HUNTERS APPEARED.

THE SIGHT BEFORE US WAS
BEYOND MY WILDEST
EXPECTATIONS.

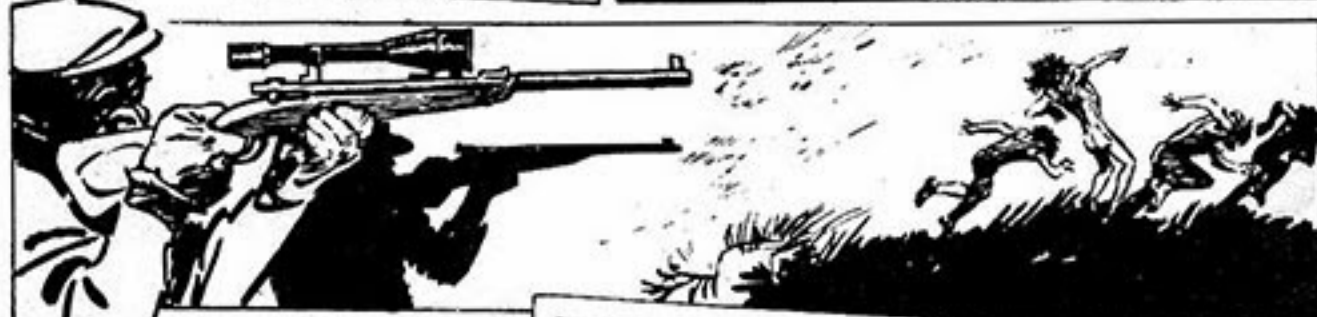




MOST STRIKING WAS THE EASE WITH WHICH THE GORILLA WORE HIS DRESS. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY USED TO WEARING CLOTHES, UNLIKE NOVA AND HER FOLKS. I COULD KEEP TRACK OF HIS FACIAL EXPRESSIONS, HIS GRUELY AS HE WAS HUNTING HIS PREY, HIS JOY WHEN HE FINALLY SHOT IT, AND ABOVE ALL THE HUMAN-LIKE NATURE OF HIS BEHAVIOUR.



MORE HUNTERS APPEARED IN A LONG LINE BEHIND THEM, LIKE SERVANTS FOLLOWING THEIR MASTERS, SMALLER MONKEYS RUSTLED AFTER CONSTANTLY RELOADING THE EXTRA-GUNS.



THE HUNTERS WERE GETTING CLOSER. AS SOON AS LEVAIN GLIMPSED THE FIRST ONE, HE PANICKED AND JUMPED OUT OF THE HIDEOUT.



I COULD NOT HELP MY UNFORTUNATE CREW MEMBER.



I WAITED FOR THE MOMENT WHEN THE HUNTER FINALLY GAVE HIS GUN TO HIS SERVANT, AND THEN.



I THOUGHT I ESCAPED BUT I
UNDERESTIMATED THE CUNNING
OF THE APES OF SOROK.



MANY MEMBERS OF THE HORDE ENDED UP
IN THE SAME NET WITH ME.



THE HUNTERS' BEHAVIOUR SEEMED
ARISTOCRATIC. THEY TALKED TO
EACH OTHER USING A LANGUAGE
UNKNOWN TO ME. THEIR FACES
REFLECTED HUMAN EMOTIONS,
WHICH ON THE OTHER HAND, WERE
NOWHERE TO BE FOUND ON NOVA.



THERE WAS AN OBVIOUS HATRED
BETWEEN THE TWO RACES.



TRUCKS SHOWED UP; THE BOUND
PRISONERS WERE SHOVED INTO THE
CAGES ON THEM.



THE CONVOY STARTED ITS
JOURNEY TOWARDS AN UNKNOWN
DESTINATION.



THE BUILDING SEEMED LIKE A BAR. IT WAS
OBTAINABLY THE MEETING PLACE OF THE
HUNTERS.



THE SIGHT OF THE GLORIOUS
HUNTING FEAST WAS BOTH
GROTESQUE AND DIABOLIC.



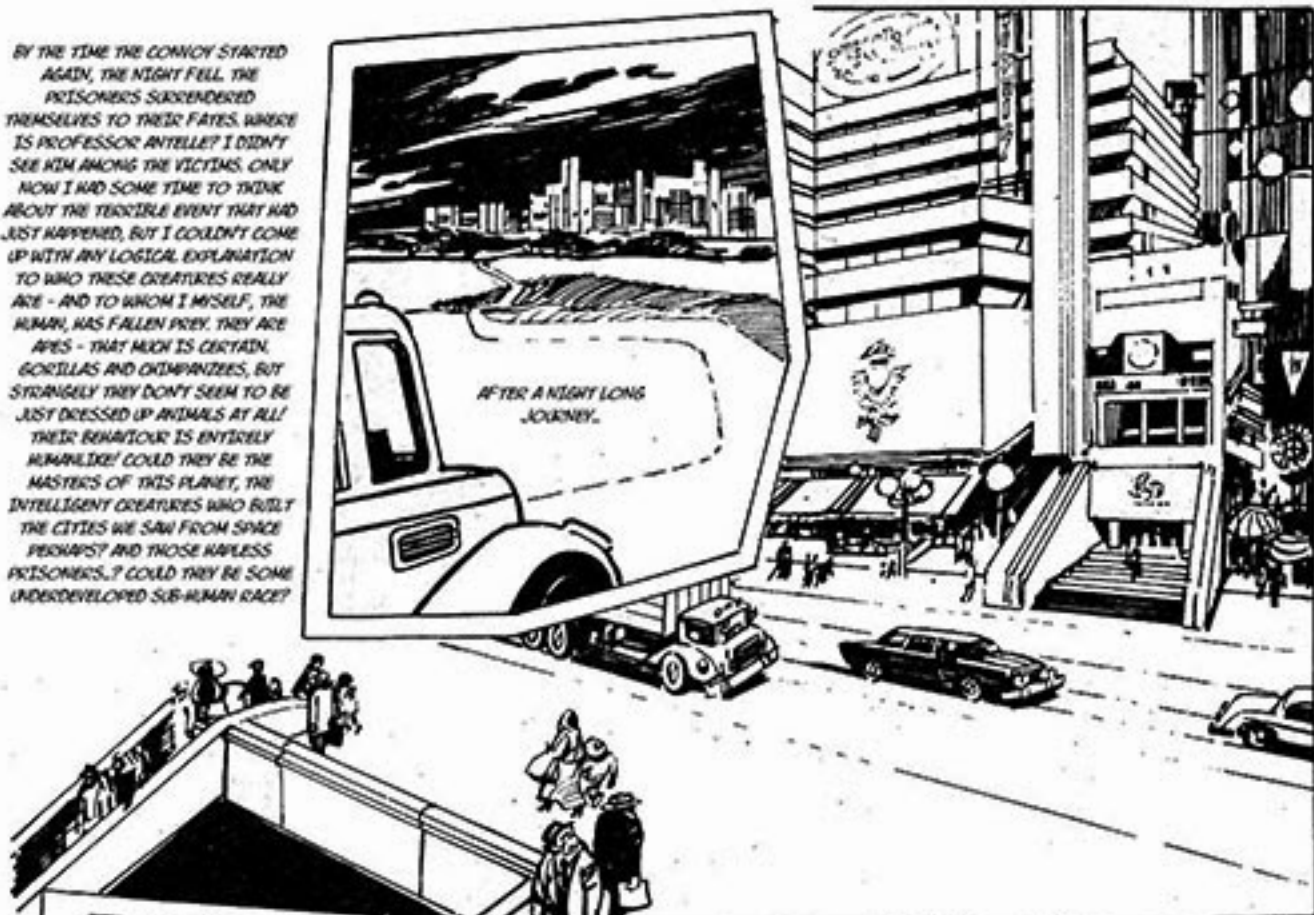
I HAD NO IDEA WHAT KIND OF
FATE THE MONKEYS HAD IN
STORE FOR US, BUT LOOKING
AFTER US SEEMED PART OF
THEIR PLAN.



THE TEAM-LEADER AND HIS
HELPERS STARTED TO CHANGE
THE COMPOSITION OF THE
CARGO. THEY DID SOME SORT
OF SELECTION AND I WAS PUT
AMONG WHAT I HOPED TO BE
THE MOST VALUABLE HUMANS,
THE YOUNG AND THE STRONG.



BY THE TIME THE CONVOY STARTED AGAIN, THE NIGHT FELL, THE PRISONERS SURRENDERED THEMSELVES TO THEIR FATES, WHILE IS PROFESSOR ANTELLE? I DIDN'T SEE HIM AMONG THE VICTIMS. ONLY NOW I HAD SOME TIME TO THINK ABOUT THE TERRIBLE EVENT THAT HAD JUST HAPPENED, BUT I COULDN'T COME UP WITH ANY LOGICAL EXPLANATION TO WHO THESE CREATURES REALLY ARE - AND TO WHOM I MYSELF, THE HUMAN, HAS FALLEN PREY. THEY ARE APES - THAT MUCH IS CERTAIN. GORILLAS AND ORANGUTANS, BUT STRANGELY THEY DON'T SEEM TO BE JUST DRESSED UP ANIMALS AT ALL! THEIR BEHAVIOUR IS ENTIRELY HUMANLIKE! COULD THEY BE THE MASTERS OF THIS PLANET, THE INTELLIGENT CREATURES WHO BUILT THE CITIES WE SAW FROM SPACE PERHAPS? AND THOSE HAPLESS PRISONERS...? COULD THEY BE SOME UNDERDEVELOPED SUB-HUMAN RACE?



AFTER A NIGHT LONG JOURNEY.

MY HOPE OF ENCOUNTERING INTELLIGENT HUMANS IN THE CITY SOON VANISHED.



WE OBVIOUSLY REACHED OUR DESTINATION.



I DECIDED TO DO EVERYTHING I COULD TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THESE APES WHO SEEM TO BE THE ONLY INTELLIGENT AND THINKING RACE ON THE PLANET.

HOW DO YOU DO? I AM A HUMAN FROM THE PLANET EARTH.



THE TWO TERRIFIED NURSES RAN AWAY. A FEMALE CHIMPANZEE SHOWED UP A LITTLE BIT LATER, WHO SEEMED TO HOLD A HIGHER POSITION, PROBABLY A DOCTOR. I TRIED TO TALK TO HER IN THE MOST FLATTERING WAY I COULD.



MADAME, OR MESSI I AM VERY SORRY THAT I HAVE TO INTRODUCE MYSELF TO YOU LIKE THIS.



IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE DOCTOR WAS TRYING HARD TO FIGURE OUT THE MYSTERY SURROUNDING MY PERSON. SHE SMILED BACK AT ME. SHE KEPT MAKING NOTES INTO HER BOOK. SHE PROBABLY SUSPECTED AT LEAST PART OF THE TRUTH, EVEN THOUGH SHE DID NOT UNDERSTAND MY WORDS. FINALLY, SHE RELUCTANTLY TOUCHED MY OFFERED HAND.



HE WAS AN ORANGUTAN, AND OBVIOUSLY A BIG BOSS AROUND HERE.



THIS IS HOW I MET ZIRA. ZIRA WAS THE NAME OF THE MONKEY-WOMAN, AS I HAVE FOUND OUT LATER. THEY STARTED A NUMBER OF ELABORATE TESTS WITH US THE NEXT DAYS. THIS INSTITUTE WAS QUITE POSSIBLE SERVING SOME SCIENTIFIC PURPOSES. ZIRA GAVE ME MORE AND MORE ATTENTION, AND A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER SHE SHOWED UP IN THE COMPANY OF ANOTHER APE, WHO SEEMED TO BE A VERY IMPORTANT PERSON.



I WELCOMED KIM WITH MY WARMEST SMILE, AND ADDRESSED HIM WITH SOME THEATRICAL SENTENCES AS AN INTRODUCTION. ZIRA READ KIM HER NOTES ABOUT ME.



THE BIG BOSS DIDN'T BELIEVE HIM. HE SUSPECTED A FRAUD. I NOTICED THAT EVERYBODY CALLS HIM "MR ZALUS". I FOLLOWED SUIT.



THE MONKEYS FROZE. ZALUS SEEMED SHOCKED AS WELL, BUT STILL NOT CONVINCED. HIS GESTURES CLEARLY INDICATED THAT HE CONSIDERS MY ACTIONS TO BE SIMPLE IMITATIONS, NOTHING ELSE.



WEEKS HAVE PASSED. I WAS REQUIRED TO DO MORE AND MORE ELABORATE TESTS. IN THE MEANTIME, I MANAGED TO LEARN MORE WORDS FROM THEIR LANGUAGE. FROM TIME TO TIME OTHER ORANGUTAN SCIENTISTS SHOWED UP AS WELL, BUT ZIRA COULDN'T CONFIDE ANY OF THEM ABOUT ME. I SUSPECTED THE INFLUENCE OF ZALUS TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THIS.



NEVER IN MY WHOLE LIFE HAVE I EVER FELT SO HUMILIATED AS THEN. BUT I MUST ADMIT, I WAS SOMEWHAT RELIEVED TO FIND OUT WHICH WOMAN WAS CHOSEN FOR ME NOW!

THE BIG BOSS ORDERED NEW EXPERIMENTS. WE WERE PUT INTO Pairs. WHAT PART OF THE HUMAN BEHAVIOUR DID THE MONKEYS WISH TO INVESTIGATE WITH THIS FURIOUS ENTHUSIASM, I WONDERED.



ONE DAY...



ZIRA WAS TAKEN ABACK, A HARD STRUGGLE WAS GOING ON INSIDE OF HER, BUT I COULD SEE THAT SHE FINALLY UNDERSTOOD WHERE I CAME FROM.

SHE HAD THE DRAWING WHEN ZADDIS RETURNED. FROM THIS I UNDERSTOOD THAT I MUSTN'T YET REVEAL MYSELF IN FRONT OF THE BIG BOSS.

FROM THEN ON, I MADE A RAPID ADVANCE IN UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD OF THE APES.



THREE MONTHS HAVE PASSES. ZIRA AGREED TO LET ME OUT OF THE INSTITUTE OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES, TO JOIN HER ON A TRIP TO TOWN, BUT MY ENTHUSIASM DIVIDDED, WHEN...

NORODY SHOULD SUSPECT YOUR TRUE NATURE. YOU WOULD LOOK RIDICULOUS DRESSED UP, ALMOST AS IF YOU WERE LIKE THE TRAINED HUMANS IN A FAIR.



PLEASE FORGIVE ME, BUT THE ONLY WAY TO WALK WITH HUMANS ON PUBLIC IS IF THEY ARE ON A LEASH. IT JUST SEEMS MUCH MORE NATURAL.





MY TORTURE TURNED INTO REGRET AS I NOTICED THAT THE OLD SCIENTIST BEHAVED ALMOST EXACTLY LIKE ALL THE OTHERS IN THE CASE. NOTHING ABOUT HIM REMINDED ME OF HIS FORMER SELF.



NO! YOU MUSTN'T GO THERE! YOU WOULD RISK EVERYTHING!

WE MUST WAIT FOR THE UPCOMING BIOLOGICAL CONGRESS. WE MUST TAKE THE PUBLIC BY SURPRISE OTHERWISE ZAUS AND HIS KIND WOULD TRY EVERYTHING TO STOP US.



THE WEEK BEFORE THE CONGRESS ZAUS VISITED ME EVERY DAY WITH HIS ASSISTANTS, AND PERFORMED HIS STRANGE EXPERIMENTS. I PRETENDED TO BE ONLY AS SMART AS HE OBVIOUSLY WISHED ME TO BE.



THE CONGRESS STARTED. ZAUS INTRODUCED ME IN HIS REPORT AS A PARTICULARLY SOPHISTICATED HUMAN, STILL LACKING ANY KIND OF MINDFULNESS. A HEATED DEBATE ERUPTED AND THE SCIENTIST SPLIT INTO TWO GROUPS. ONE OF THEM WOULDN'T ACCEPT THE POSSIBILITY OF ANY KIND OF SOUL IN THE CASE OF ANIMALS, WHILE THE OTHERS THOUGHT THAT THERE IS ONLY AN EVOLUTIONAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM AND THE APES. THE TIME HAS COME. I WALKED INTO TO THE ASSEMBLY ROOM WITH BOLD STEPS.



ZADUS HAD ALL HIS EQUIPMENT CARRIED ON STAGE BEFORE AND HE HOPED TO PERFORM HIS EXPERIMENTS ON ME NOW. BUT I TOOK THE MICROPHONE FROM HIS HAND.

YOUR HONOUR, I AM MOST WILLING TO GO THROUGH ALL THE TESTS YOU ARE PLANNING TO PERFORM ON ME, BUT BEFORE THAT, I WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT. I CAN ASSURE YOU, IT WOULD BE QUITE REVEALING FOR THE ENTIRE ASSEMBLY!

I OBJECT

"I, I DON'T REALLY KNOW HOW SHOULD I CALL YOU." - STAMMERED THE PRESIDENT, BUT THEN HE QUICKLY REGAINED HIS SENSES AND SHOOK THE BELL.

JUST SIMPLY CALL ME SIR.

YES... HMM... WELL, SIR THE SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS OWES THAT MUCH TO ITSELF TO FULLY LISTEN TO YOUR WORDS.

MR. PRESIDENT, YOUR HONOUR, NOBLE GORILLAS, WISE ORANGUTANS, SMART CHIMPANZEES, OH, MONKEYS!

ALLOW A MAN TO INTRODUCE HIMSELF TO YOU NOW...

APPLAUS, HISSINGS, AND CHEERFUL LAUGHS TURNED THE MONKEYS INTO A SINGLE MASS. IT TOOK AT LEAST FIVE MINUTES FOR THE STORM TO CALM DOWN. THEN I COULD START MY SPEECH.

IT WOULD TAKE TOO LONG NOW TO WRITE DOWN EVERYTHING I TALKED ABOUT THEN, BUT IN SHORT, I TOLD THEM ABOUT THE COUNTRIES AND CITIES ON EARTH, THE SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENTS, AND THE SOLAR SYSTEM. MY VOICE BECAME MORE AND MORE CONFIDENT. THEN I TOLD ABOUT MY ADVENTURES, NOW I ENDED UP IN THE RETELGAUZI-SYSTEM, THE PLANET SOROR, AND FINALLY INTO THE GAGE. I FINISHED MY REPORT WITH MENTIONING THE HELP I RECEIVED FROM ZIRA AND CONNELIUS.

I WAS EXHAUSTED BY THE TIME I FINISHED. I KNEW I WON THE SYMPATHY OF THE AUDIENCE, BUT I DIDN'T EXPECT SUCH ENTHUSIASM AT ALL. I WAS ALREADY HALF ASLEEP WHEN I SAW ZADUS ANGRILY JUMP ON HIS FEET. ALL MY STRENGTHS DESERTED ME AND I FELL ON HIS DESERTED SEAT.

WHEN I REGAINED MY SENSES
I FOUND MYSELF IN A
LUXURIOUS ROOM.

IT WAS AMAZING!

YOU WON!



ZIRA AND CORNELIUS TOLD ME THAT
THE HIGHEST COUNCIL OF SOROK
ORDERED FOR MY IMMEDIATE
RELEASE.

YOU WILL LIVE HERE NOW, IN
THE WING RESERVED FOR THE
INSTITUTE'S ASSOCIATES.

AND OF COURSE NOVA WON'T
BE HERE EITHER...



YOU WILL HAVE A COMPLETE SET OF
CLOTHES BY TOMORROW. LOOK, THE
TAILOR IS ALREADY HERE.

MY FIRST SUIT WAS WAITING FOR ME THE
NEXT MORNING. IT WAS A VERY REFRESHING
FEELING, I MUST ADMIT.



THE NURSE QUIETLY WHISPERED
SOMETHING TO ZIRA.

YOU CAN COME WITH ME NOW IF
YOU WANT. YOU ARE A FREE MAN.
AFTER ALL, NOVA MADE A BIG
UPHEAVAL ABOUT YOU LEAVING.
MAYBE YOU COULD CALM HER.





THE PRISONERS GUTTED DOWN AS SOON AS THEY SAW ME. THEY RECOGNIZED ME DESPITE MY CLOTHES.



NOVA! IT'S ME!


FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, I HAD THE FEELING THAT SHE UNDERSTANDS ME, AND THAT SHE EVEN WANTS TO ANSWER.



BUT AS SOON AS SHE TOUCHED MY CLOTHES, SHE FEARFULLY PULLED BACK.



IN THE END SHE ACCEPTED THE CANDY I OFFERED HER. AND WHILE I WAS LEAVING HER CAGE WITH A HEAVY HEAVY, SHE STARTED TO NIBBLE ON IT.



CORNELIUS DECIDED TO
INTRODUCE ME TO SOME
MONKEY COMPANY. WE SPENT
THAT EVENING AT A POPULAR
NIGHT-CLUB AND I ONLY HAVE
BLURRY AND DISTURBING
MEMORIES OF IT.

I WAS OVERCOME BY SOME UNUSUAL
SENSATION - QUITE POSSIBLY
BECAUSE OF THE ALCOHOL I WAS NOT
USED TO OF LATE. THE MONKEY
NATURE OF THE PEOPLE AROUND ME
SEEMED TO GRADUALLY DISSIPATE AND
BY BY I COULD ONLY SEE HEAD-
WAITERS, MUSICIANS OR DANCERS,
AND RICH PLAYBOYS HAVING FUN - BUT
NOT MONKEYS.

AT DAWN.

WHAT MADE YOU
SO SAD?

I AM THINKING ABOUT THE
UNFORTUNATE PROFESSOR.

I JUST INQUIRED ABOUT HIM. HE
CAN SOON REGAIN HIS FREEDOM
AS WELL.

I CANT WAIT! I MUST TELL HIM
THE GOOD NEWS!

IN THE MORNING.



THE POOR HUMANS WERE ALREADY TRAINED. AS SOON AS THEY SAW US APPROACHING, THEY STARTED THEIR USUAL TRICKS AND OFFERED THEIR HANDS TO THE VISITORS BEGGING.



SOON I FOUND THE PROFESSOR.



TO MY GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT, HE HAD THE SAME SPIRITUAL DARKNESS IN HIS EYES AS THE REST OF THE PRISONERS.



PROFESSOR IT'S ME! ULYSSE MÉRLOU WE ARE SAVED! DO YOU UNDERSTAND...?



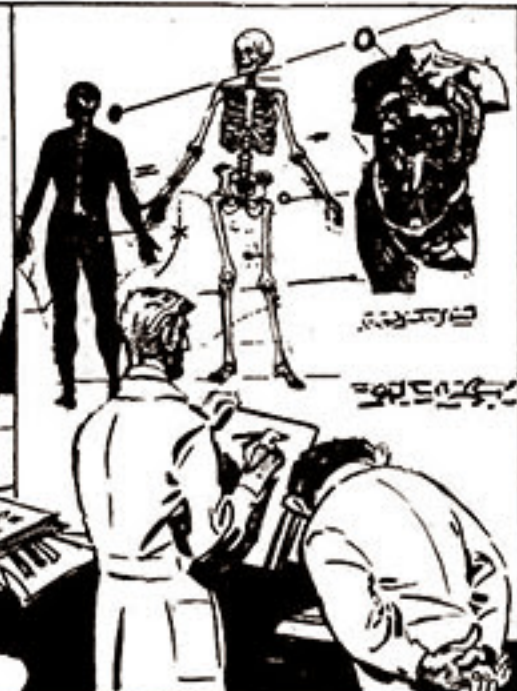
BUT ANTELLE DIDN'T ANSWER. NO SIGN OF INTELLIGENCE COULD BE SEEN IN HIM ANYMORE. WHAT'S MORE, HE GRAWLED BACK INTO THE BACKSIDE OF THE CAGE AS A FRIGHTENED ANIMAL. I WAS ALMOST NUMBED BY TERROR, BECAUSE WHEN I OFFERED MY HAND TO HIM, HE SCREAMED THE VERY SAME SCREAMS AS THE OTHER HUMANS OF THIS PLANET, WHEN THEY WANT TO EXPRESS FEAR. AND THEN HE STARTED TO WAIL.



PROFESSOR ANTELLE HAS GONE MAD.



I LIVE IN ONE OF THE MOST COMFORTABLE SUITES OF THE INSTITUTE. ZARUS WAS REPLACED, CORNELIUS IS THE NEW DIRECTOR NOW. ZIRA WORKS WITH HIM, AND I AM PART OF THE SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENTS AS AN ASSOCIATE AS WELL. I STARTED THE METHODOICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE HUMANS.



I FIND THE CONSTANT COMPANY OF THE MONKEYS BURDENSOME, BUT HERE I FEEL LIKE I AM IN A RECLUSE. A MONTH HAS PASSED, BUT I STILL COULDN'T FORCE ANY RESULT OUT OF THEM. I AM TRYING TO TEACH THEM TO TALK, BUT SO FAR WITHOUT SUCCESS.



I OFTEN TAKE CARE OF NOVA AS WELL, BUT I DON'T ENTER HER CASE ANYMORE, AND THIS GAVE ME BACK MY HUMAN DIGNITY. I STILL BLUSH WHEN I REMEMBER OUR INTIMATE MOMENTS. INTERESTINGLY I CAN SEE MUCH MORE RESULT IN HER CASE THEN IN THE OTHERS.

NO-VA-NU-MAN.



WEEKS LATER.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME WITH ME? THE ARCHAEOLOGISTS HAVE JUST FOUND SOME ANCIENT RUINS.

WITH PLEASURE.

AT THE EXCAVATION OF THE LONG-BRIDGED CITY.

OUR OLDEST LEGENDS AND FIRST CHRONICLES MENTION SOME ADVANCED CIVILIZATION WHICH MUST HAVE HAD THE SAME LEVEL AS OURS. OUR CULTURE SEEMS TO HAVE STARTED SOME TEN THOUSAND YEARS AGO, WITHOUT ANY PRECURSOR! I CAN EVEN IMAGINE NOW, THAT AT THE DAWN OF OUR AGE MY ANCESTORS SIMPLY JUST MIMICKED THINGS AS THEY WERE BEFORE THEM, BUT WHAT AND WHOM DID THEY MIMICK?



MAYBE WE CAN FIND PROOF UNDER THE RUINS.



WE HAVE ALREADY BEEN WORKING AT THE SITE FOR A MONTH. RUINS OF HOUSES AND FACTORIES RESURFACE. THEIR ANCIENT INHABITANTS HAD CARS AND PLANES, JUST LIKE TODAY'S MONKEYS!



THIS PUTS THE FORMATION OF INTELLIGENCE EVEN FURTHER BACK IN TIME.

ONE DAY...

— UYSSSE! UYSSSE!

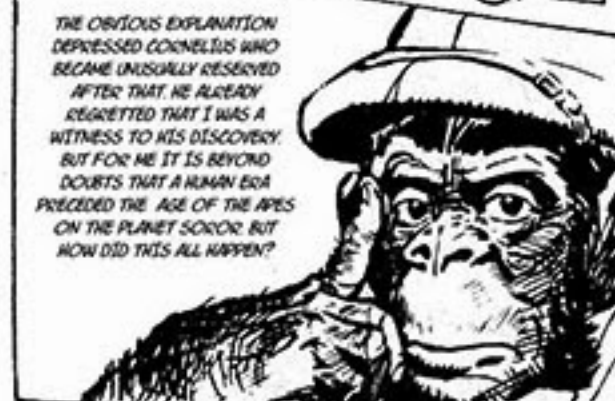


PA-PA

CORNELIUS CAREFULLY EXAMINED THE TOY AND ACCIDENTALLY TURNED ON ITS STILL INTACT MECHANISM.



THE OBVIOUS EXPLANATION DEPRESSED CORNELIUS WHO BECAME UNUSUALLY RESERVED AFTER THAT HE ALREADY REGRETTED THAT HE WAS A WITNESS TO HIS DISCOVERY. BUT FOR ME IT IS BEYOND DOUBTS THAT A HUMAN ERA PRECEDED THE AGE OF THE APES ON THE PLANET SODOR. BUT HOW DID THIS ALL HAPPEN?



A DOLL!



I CAN SEE WHAT MADE CORNELIUS SO EXCITED IMMEDIATELY. THE TOY IN HIS HAND WAS A HUMAN DOLL, DRESSED JUST AS THE DOLLS WERE DRESSED BY LITTLE GIRLS BACK ON EARTH.

AND THEN, AT THE EXCAVATION OF A GORBYARD, WHY AM I NOT ALLOWED TO GO THERE? WHAT KIND OF SKELETONS ARE THOSE?



WELL, YOU ARE GOING TO FIGURE IT OUT ANYWAY. THEY DON'T BELONG TO MONKEYS.



I HAD A COUPLE OF MONTHS TO THINK AFTER OUR RETURN. I COULD CLEARLY SEE NOW THAT THE MONKEY DIDN'T INVENT ANYTHING AT ALL, THEY JUST COPIED WHATEVER THEY HAVE SEEN IN THE PAST. WHEN SOME TERRIBLE CATASTROPHY HAD DESTROYED THE HUMAN CIVILIZATION THEY SIMPLY JUST TOOK OVER. ALL OF A SUDDEN I STARTED TO LONG AFTER MY FELLOW HUMANS.



WHERE IS SHE?

SHE WAS MOVED TO A SEPARATE BUILDING. SHE NEEDS SOME MEDICAL CARE. IT'S NOTHING SERIOUS, BUT OVERALL QUITE DISTURBING ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTORATE. NOVA IS PREGNANT.



NOVA'S CAGE WAS EMPTY.



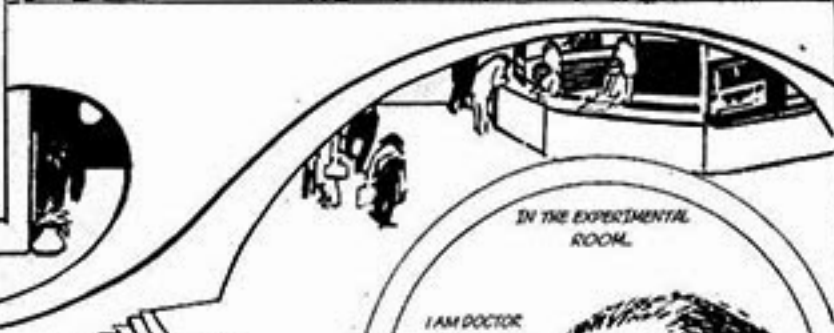
CAN I SEE HER?

I JUST STOOD THERE STUNNED. WHAT COULD THIS EVENT BRING? I AM GOING TO BE A FATHER IN THE RETELGEUZE-STAR SYSTEM! I AM GOING TO HAVE A CHILD WITH A WOMAN WITH THE BRAIN OF AN ANIMAL ON THE PLANET SORCOC. NOBODY HAS EVER ENDED UP IN A SITUATION SUCH AS THIS IN THE WHOLE UNIVERSE!

NOT YET. THE BIRTH IS EXPECTED IN 3-4 MONTHS TIME.

CORNELIUS HAS CHANGED. HE IS TORN BETWEEN HIS LOVE FOR SCIENCE AND HIS OBLIGATION TOWARDS APES.

I CAN'T KEEP IT A SECRET FROM YOU. WE HAVE UNDISPUTABLE PROOFS AT OUR HANDS SUGGESTING THAT AN INTELLIGENT HUMAN RACE HAD ONCE EXISTED ON OUR PLANET, BUT AT SOME POINT FALL BACK TO THE LEVEL OF ANIMALS. WE EVEN FOUND SOME SOLID PROOFS OF ALL THIS DURING THE EXCAVATIONS...



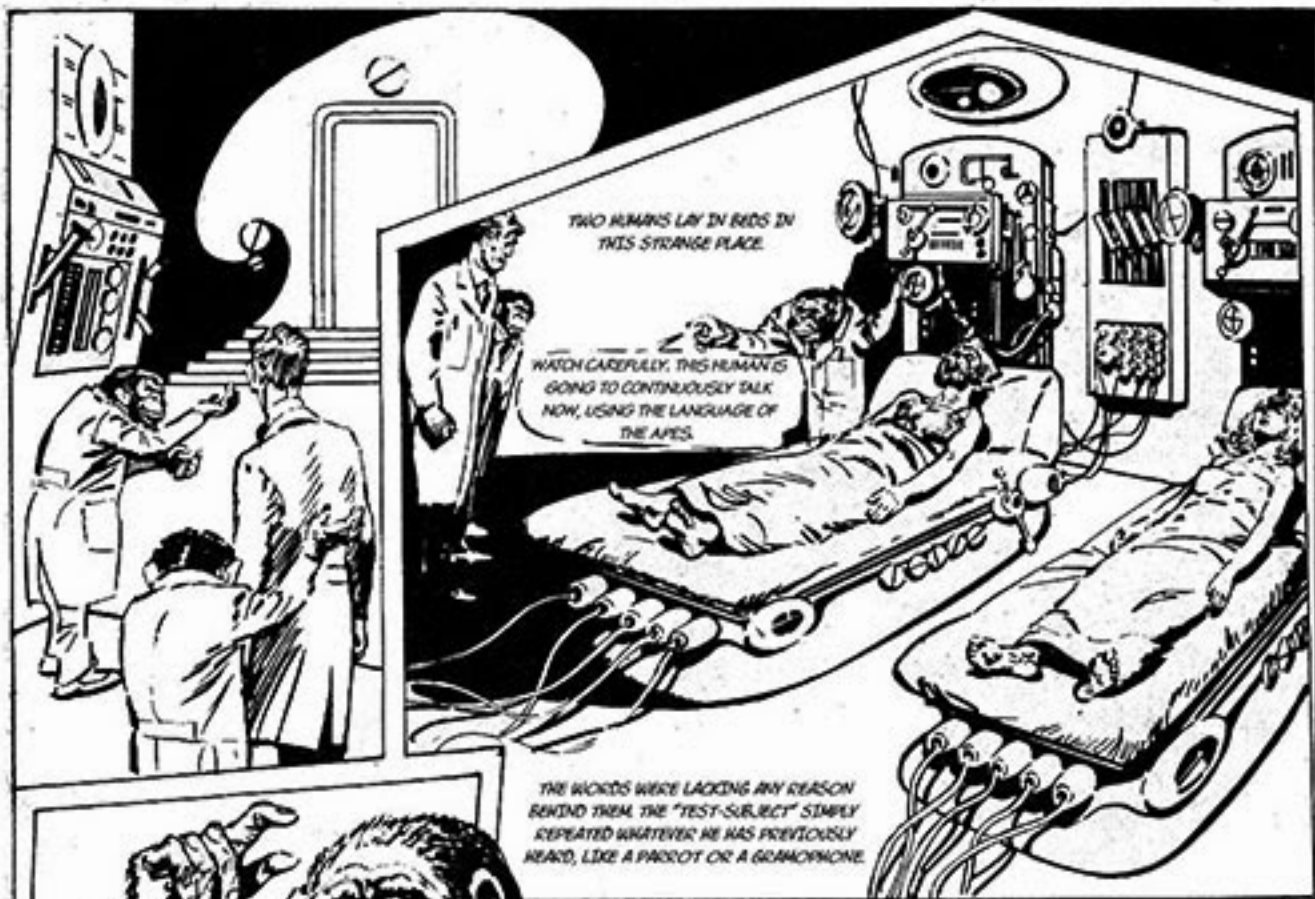
IN THE EXPERIMENTAL ROOM.

I AM DOCTOR HELIOS.



LET'S GO AND SEE THE LEADING PROFESSOR OF THE BRAIN PHYSIOLOGY DEPARTMENT. HIS EXPERIMENTS HAVE ASTONISHING RESULTS.





TWO HUMANS LAY IN BEDS IN THIS STRANGE PLACE.

WATCH CAREFULLY, THIS HUMAN IS GOING TO CONTINUOUSLY TALK NOW, USING THE LANGUAGE OF THE APES.

THE WORDS WERE LACKING ANY REASON BEHIND THEM, THE "TEST-SUBJECT" SIMPLY REPEATED WHATEVER HE HAS PREVIOUSLY HEARD, LIKE A PARROT OR A GOSSAMORNE.



THERE IS EVEN MORE! I GOT MUCH MORE RESULT WITH THE FEMALE! I REVIVED THE COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF THE ENTIRE RACE IN HER WITH THE HELP OF SOME ELECTRIC STIMULUS. LONG LOST MEMORIES OF THE LONG LINE OF HER ANCESTORS ARE AWAKENED, TELLING US ABOUT EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO!



AS THE POWER-LINES STARTED TO MURMUR, THE WOMAN GAVE A QUIET SIGH, AND THEN STARTED TO TALK, A BIT SLOWLY BUT CLEARLY. SHE USED THE LANGUAGE OF THE APES, FROM TIME TO TIME CHANGING HER TONE AS IF DIFFERENT PEOPLE WOULD BE TALKING THROUGH HER.

THESE MONKEYS... EVERY KIND OF MONKEY... IF IT'S GOING TO KEEP ON LIKE THIS, THEY WOULD SOON OUTNUMBER US. ONE OF THEM CAN EVEN TALK NOW...

HELP THE MONKEYS! THEY ARE LEAD BY GRANT GORILLAS. THEY EVEN HAVE WEAPONS... THEY CARRY WHIPS IN THEIR HANDS!

NOW THE WOMAN CONTINUED WITH A MIND'S VOICE. "WE ARE OVERCOME BY MENTAL DEPRESSION. NOT EVEN CRIME-STORIES OR STUPID MOVIES INTEREST PEOPLE ANY LONGER." AND AFTER A SHORT PAUSE: "IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO LIVE LIKE THIS. I AM GOING TO GIVE MY FLAT TO A GORILLA. I AM GOING TO RUN AWAY..." THEN ANOTHER WOMAN'S VOICE: "THE MONKEYS BROKE OUT OF THEIR CAGES AND CLOSED US IN INSTEAD. WE ARE RIGHT NEXT TO THE OTHER CIRCUS ATTRACTIONS... WE ARE FORCED TO PERFORM THE SAME TRICKS WE MADE THEM DO IN PAST, TOO... HUMANS ARE PLACED INTO CAMPS... OTHERS FLEE INTO THE FORESTS..."



FINALLY THE DAY HAS COME. I AM HAPPY NOW, BUT SOMEWHAT TERRIFIED OF THE UPCOMING DANGERS AS WELL. NOVA GAVE BIRTH TO A BOY.

THEY ARE STRICTLY GUARDED; THEY WOULD NEVER ALLOW YOU TO SEE THEM. HELIOS' DISCOVERY LEAKED TO THE PRESS AND THERE IS A GROWING UNEASINESS ABOUT IT. CORNELIUS IS AFRAID TO PUBLISH THE RESULTS OF HIS RESEARCH. ZAUS AND THE PEOPLE BEHIND HIM CONSTANTLY ATTACK HIM. THEY ARE AFRAID THAT YOUR SON WOULD START TO SPEAK ONE DAY, AND WILL GROW UP TO BE LIKE THE HUMANS ON EARTH.



ONE NIGHT IN SECRET.



WE MUST GO NOW. WE ARE ALL IN DANGER HERE! I PROMISE YOU I WILL TAKE CARE OF THE BABY.

TWO MONTHS HAVE PASSED, AND I HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR CORNELIUS' NEW WITH EVER-GROWING DESPAIR.



HOW IS MY SON?

HE IS GOOD, ACTUALLY MUCH BETTER THAN EXPECTED. UNRELIABLE BUT HE CAN ALREADY FORM SHORT WORDS, AND IT SEEMS LIKE HE IS GOING TO TALK SOON. AND THAT'S THE PROBLEM: HE WILL NEVER BE ALLOWED TO LIVE. FREED HE WILL BE TAKEN FROM NOVA AND PLACED UNDER THE ORANGUTANS' CARE...

...AND THEY HATE YOU, BECAUSE YOU ARE THE LIVING PROOF OF THEIR FALLACY. I AM AFRAID THAT YOU WILL SOON BE MOVED TO ZAUS' INSTITUTE TO REMOVE PART OF YOUR BRAIN UNDER THE COVER OF SOME OBSCURE EXPERIMENT, OR...

I COULD SEE THAT MOTHERHOOD GREATLY IMPROVED NOVA'S INTELLIGENCE. THE FLEETING SPARKLE OF REASON CHANGED INTO A CONSTANT GLOW IN HER EYES.



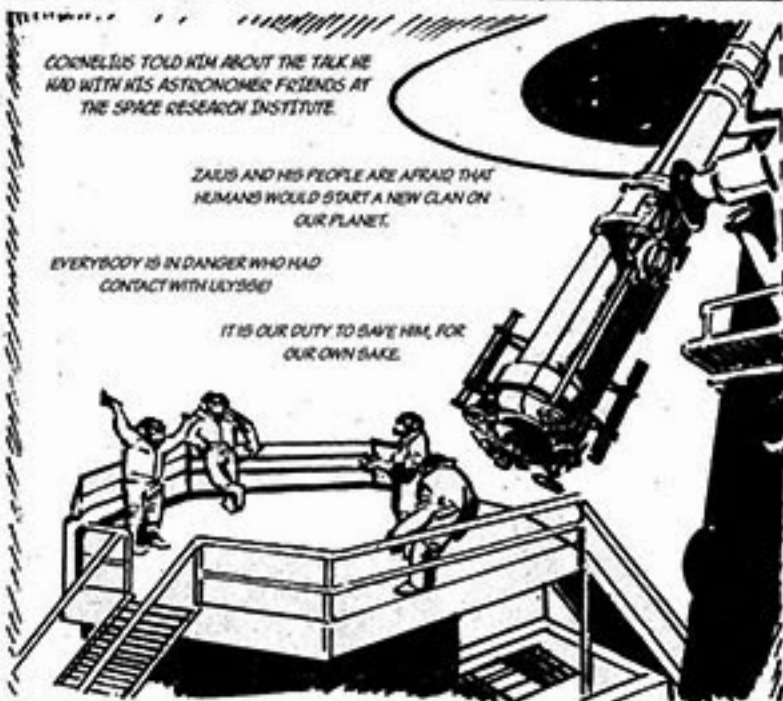


CORNELIUS TOLD KIM ABOUT THE TALK HE
HAD WITH HIS ASTRONOMER FRIENDS AT
THE SPACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE.

ZARUS AND HIS PEOPLE ARE AFRAID THAT
HUMANS WOULD START A NEW CLAN ON
OUR PLANET.

EVERYBODY IS IN DANGER WHO HAD
CONTACT WITH ULYSSE!

IT IS OUR DUTY TO SAVE HIM, FOR
OUR OWN SAKE.



THEIR SPACESHIP IS STILL IN
ORBIT. IT HAS ENOUGH FUEL,
OXYGEN AND FOOD TO CARRY
ULYSSE, THE FEMALE AND THE
CHILD TO THE OTHER END OF THE
UNIVERSE, IF NEEDED.

BUT HOW CAN WE
TAKE THEM UP
THERE?



WE ARE SUPPOSED TO LAUNCH A SATELLITE IN
TEN DAYS' TIME, WITH HUMAN TEST-SUBJECTS
ON BOARD. THERE ARE THREE OF THEM, TRAINED
TO PERFORM SIMPLE PROCEDURES. WE ARE
GOING TO REPLACE THEM.



CORNELIUS FINISHED HIS
REPORT.

SO, YOU HAVE TEN MORE DAYS,
DURING WHICH YOU WILL BE
GIVEN A THOROUGH TRAINING.
NOBODY WOULD NOTICE THE
SWITCH, BECAUSE FOR MOST
APES, YOU ARE JUST ANOTHER
HUMAN, NOTHING ELSE...

CORNELIUS' PLAN WORKED OUT PERFECTLY. I AM ABOARD OUR SPACESHIP AGAIN, TRAVELLING TOWARDS THE SOLAR SYSTEM WITH THE SPEED OF A COMET. NOVA AND OUR CHILD ARE WITH ME.



I THINK ABOUT ZISA AND CORNELIUS OFTEN. EVEN IF THEY HAD SOME INCONVENIENCES BECAUSE OF US, IT WAS PROBABLY LONG FORGOTTEN ALREADY. DECADES PASSED ON SODOR DURING THE TIME THAT WAS ONLY A COUPLE OF MONTHS FOR US IN SPACE.



AND TIME FLIES QUIETLY FOR US TOO. WE HAVE BEEN TRAVELLING FOR MORE THAN A YEAR ALREADY. NOVA IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE INTELLIGENT. SHE CAN FLUENTLY TALK NOW, JUST LIKE OUR SON.



I HAVE BEEN SEARCHING THE PLANETS AND SUDDENLY...





WE GOT IN TO THE SECOND LAUNCH OF THE SHIP. MY CALCULATIONS WERE CORRECT. WE ARE JUST ABOVE PARTS.

BUT WHAT IS THIS? THEY SHOULD HAVE NOTICED US LONG AGO. IT IS LIKE THERE IS NO TRAFFIC AT ALL. OR DID THEY CLOSED DOWN THE AIRPORT PERHAPS? THEN A CAR SHOWED UP.



WHAT AN OLD-FASHIONED CAR! I THOUGHT THIS MODEL WAS SENT TO A MUSEUM LONG AGO.

I EXPECTED A MUCH MORE CEREMONIOUS WELCOME! IT WAS ONLY A DRIVER AND AN OFFICER.



PHYLIS AND JINN LOOKED UP FROM THE MANUSCRIPT ALMOST AT THE SAME TIME.

SUCH A NICE SALE! THIS IS JUST ANOTHER EXAMPLE THAT YOU CAN FIND POETS AND TROCKSTERS EVERYWHERE IN THE GALAXY. INTELLIGENT HUMANITY! EH NO, OF COURSE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE!

THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WAS THINKING. BUT NOW, IT'S ABOUT TIME TO RETURN HOME!

AND THEN, THE PERSON STANDING IN FRONT OF US WAS... A GORILLA!



JINN RELEASED THE AIRFOILS, AND TURNED ON THE FULL, 3-DAYS-CHARGE OF THE SOLAR PANELS. PHYLIS CHASED AWAY THE LAST BITS OF HER DOUBTS ABOUT THE STORY, TOOK HER MAKE UP AND PUT SOME PINK COLOURING ON HER PRETTY CHIMPRIZZE-FACE.

THE END.