

# Mystery Eyes Over Earth

by Richard Elam

Dr. Myron Lowenthal, gaunt, keen-eyed, and sixty, shuffled over to the receptionist's desk in an office in the Pentagon. Clutched tightly beneath one spidery arm was a worn brief case.

"May I see Mr. Goodnight, miss?" Dr. Lowenthal asked.

"Who shall I say is calling, sir?" the young woman asked mechanically, not looking up.

"Lowenthal."

The young woman's eyes lighted alertly as if the name were of great significance to her. "Of course, Dr. Lowenthal. Mr. Goodnight is expecting you. Go right in."

At the sight of Dr. Lowenthal and his brief case, Mr. Goodnight rose slowly to his feet, his face reflecting deep interest not unmixed with apprehension.

"You—you have finished the translation?" he asked.

Dr. Lowenthal placed the brief case on the desk, and Goodnight's fingers were far from steady as he opened the case and pulled out top-secret manuscripts.

First he laid aside the sheaf of strange, charred papers, each protected by a cellophane envelope. The sheets were of very thin, amazingly tough material of unknown substance, and they were covered with tiny, neat hieroglyphics. The papers had been found by a farm boy twelve months before in Wickenburg, Arizona, and Dr. Lowenthal, archaeologist and cryptographer, had been all this time trying to decipher the hidden message.

Before reading the translation, Goodnight asked, "Is it your belief that this sheaf of papers was dropped from a flying saucer, as we first thought?"

"Undoubtedly," Lowenthal replied.

"Is it good—or bad?" Goodnight asked tremulously.

"Perhaps you had better read it, sir, and judge for yourself."

Mr. Goodnight began reading the manuscript translation:

FROM: Kal-Pota-Tekkala, Observer 13-J07, Group 507.

TO: Grand Council, Federation of the Triple Suns, Planet Ykaa, Takarala Sector GZ-5000-7076, Milky Way Galaxy.

SUBJECT: Planets of Sun 00836-Y, Specifically, Third Takarala Sector GZ-5000-7070.

Planet Called Earth, Charaan Year 37,811.

It is now my tenth year of observation in the planetary group called the solar system. In this brief report I shall review somewhat randomly a few of the things I have witnessed on Earth, only planet of intelligent life in this system and therefore the only world of interest to us in the Federation.

I arrived in the Earth year 1947. (What a youthful civilization this is, but about average in their development as compared to some 28,000 other worlds the Federation has so far observed.) I pride myself on being among the first of us (Group 507) to be detected by Earthmen in recent times. This was, of course, the sighting by one Kenneth Arnold near Mt. Rainier in America, the most advanced country of Earth. Our receivers picked up the newscast of the sighting and translated. Arnold's description of having seen what looked like "saucers" led to our craft being thereafter named "flying saucers."

Soon after this sighting, our receivers told us that nearly all the nations of Earth had taken up the cry of "Saucers! Saucers!" Indeed, the men of Earth must truly have been overwhelmed by the abundance of our craft in the sky at this time when our greatest concentration of observers viewed the planet.

It is hard to realize that many Earth inhabitants still doubt that there are other planets of habitation beside their own in the universe. (This is an opinion formed from reports of news commentators.) Yet how they can close their minds to such a fact, when they know that there are many billions of suns and planets, is beyond my comprehension. Of course, Earth has been an island to itself since the beginning of its civilization, and since they have not even yet ventured into space, I can understand their skepticism somewhat.

Incidentally, this skepticism of Earthmen is remarkable. Yes, even after the evidence of our heavy concentration of craft in their skies for ten years (at our latest visit), many even now doubt our reality. This is in spite of our near collisions with Earth craft reported by reputable witnesses (especially the Chiles-Whitted episode near Montgomery, Alabama, United States of America). Yet those who do believe in us are very staunch supporters, and I have heard newscasters say there have been some convincing books written on the subject. Some day—when we make contact—all must surely believe.

Earth is a planet of many races and different political groups. Although an effort is being made for co-operation through an organization called United Nations (not to be confused with United States), there is no real, enforceable unity among the countries of Earth. The planet has not even advanced to the point of a common tongue! Without being able to speak the same language, there is too much opportunity for misunderstanding, and this must be one of the causes of the deplorable bloodshed this planet has gone through in its history.

It is good to know that democracy presently seems to hold the balance of power on Earth. The world leader, America, has been a champion of democracy since its colonization by Europeans, and perhaps it has saved Earth from total disaster by intervention on two occasions in recent years.

There is one major threat to the democratic life of Earth. This is the nation of Russia, located in the Eurasian area. Its leaders have taken to the archaic system of totalitarianism. But at the present time the democracies are so strong that Russia appears hesitant to take the path of conquest. Besides this, I believe all realize that Earth cannot stand another world war because of the frightful nuclear weapons that would be used. In such a war there would be no victor, only losers and world destruction.

If Earth avoids the pitfall of major warfare, I believe she is on the threshold of great things. Even now she is launching satellites into space in the first step toward space travel. The aircraft of Earth are attaining greater speed, height, and maneuverability. They are still slow and awkward, of course, compared to the craft we have, but the engineers are learning, even as we had to do thousands of years ago.

Since Earthmen have still not gone into space, there has been no experimentation on craft utilizing force fields, but after observing our craft for the past ten years, I am sure the scientists have come up with some theories as to how we get about. They are baffled by our motions that seem to defy the laws of physics. They report that no living person can withstand the abrupt turns and acceleration of which we are capable. When they have utilized the cosmic rays of space and understand that a force field will permit a flyer to spin and soar with his craft, without distress of any kind, then they will have unlocked the key to what they believe to be a dark mystery.

Their attempts to overtake us in their jet craft have been laughable. I often wonder what they would do if we should suddenly stop and dare them to approach closer. Should they fire on us, it would undoubtedly fill them with fear and dismay to see their shots bounce harmlessly off our force field.

It is my opinion that the more prosperous races of the planet are not the leaders that they could be. There is much frivolity and lack of emotional discipline about them, and few seem to employ their fullest mental capabilities. Their radio and picture-radio are entirely in the realm of entertainment, and formal education seems to be largely abandoned after an Earthman has passed his school years. Our receivers constantly pick up, day in and day out, music of definite rhythms which seem to be enjoying current popularity. These melodies survive for only a few weeks, then new ones take their place and are, in turn, played to their deaths. There is a noble class of music that is heard less frequently and usually at late hours. This never seems to lose popularity, for some of our recorded pickups of these long compositions have been compared with recordings made some two hundred years ago by our prior observers, and they are identical.

Regarding the subject of frivolity, there is a deadly “game” being played unceasingly across the pathways of Earth, particularly in prosperous America. Although not really a game, of course, I am reminded of one as I see it going on. Each player is in control of a free vehicle (or “guided missile” as I think of it), and he attempts to survive by avoiding collision with another player. Some are indifferent to the game and drive their cars unexcitedly and with caution. Other players—and there are many of them—appear to enjoy the game very much and drive their “weapons” with reckless haste and seeming indifference to their own safety and the safety of others. Many of these players lose the game, and their remains are carried away systematically. It is very disturbing to see this bloody game going on without end, and I should feel better if America would abandon it in favor of travel of a less dangerous nature. But they seem years away from a truly safe, fully automatic car of our type with the electronic protection shield.

While on the subject of fatality, it is with regret that I heard of the disintegration of Paltaa-Vezek and his craft some days ago. Paltaa and I were boys together barely three hundred (Earth) years ago on the Symphony Lake plantation. We went through sleep-absorption education together for twenty years, and he was my dear friend. Paltaa’s force field collapsed when he was escaping a fleet of Earth craft which were rising into the sky in pursuit. At an acceleration of some 5,000 miles an hour, his craft collided with air in inertia, and he and his “saucer” were vaporized in a blinding flash and thunderous roar. The radio commentators calmly informed the world that it was merely a large meteor burning

itself up in the atmosphere. (The stubborn refusal of Earthmen to accept our existence continually baffles me.)

From what I have heard these radio spokesmen say, Earthmen who believe in us seem to regard us with a sort of awe. They rightly consider us much farther advanced than themselves, but you should hear the outlandish descriptions some have given us. And after the weird appearance they present to us, too!

I have judged the people of Earth to be excitable and unpredictable. Therefore I can understand the Federation's reluctance to have us make contact. Earthmen undoubtedly regard us as invaders and would treat us as such, although they must realize we have shown no acts of aggression. Nevertheless, there have been a few unfortunate instances that might tend to make them think we are belligerent (namely, the Mantell case in 1948). Kaal-taa-ar, pilot of the involved craft, I understand, has been recalled to Ykaa because of his mistake in permitting an Earth craft to venture into his force field, thereby destroying the alien craft and violating our strict orders to avoid any incidents with Earth craft.

In spite of the obvious risk, it is my greatest anticipation to meet these Earth folk face to face. Our observations have been from afar and therefore lacking much that we could really know about these people. I'm sure there are things they could teach us, and of course there is much that we could do to make happier their own existence. Some day, I know, the Federation will give the word to land on Earth soil. Should I be one of those fortunate ones, I am ready, and if it costs me my life I shall be satisfied to have first enjoyed making contact with other men who live so many light-years from our own Ykaa.

When will this contact be, my friends?

Today?

Tomorrow?

When?

As he concluded his reading of the report, Mr. Goodnight's eyes reflected the relief he felt.

"It is reassuring, Doctor, isn't it?" he asked, huskily.

"I think so," Dr. Lowenthal replied. "Even with my liberal translation, the nonaggressive attitude comes through continually."

"This is the final proof we needed as to the authenticity of the saucers," Goodnight remarked. "This couldn't possibly be a hoax, could it?"

"Not a chance. The substance of the original paper is completely alien in its composition and manufacture, and the language is undoubtedly the creation of minds farther advanced than our own."

Mr. Goodnight sighed as if a great burden had been lifted from him. "Well, our part in this is closed, Dr. Lowenthal," he said. "It is out of our hands."

"And now?" Lowenthal prompted.

“It is the job of others to determine if the manuscript is to be made public. This thing could be revolutionary in impact, Dr. Lowenthal. It could change the thinking and living of every person on Earth.”

The scientist nodded in agreement. “You know, Mr. Goodnight,” he said after a meditative pause, “I believe that Kal-Pota-Tekkala would be a rather nice fellow to know. I should really like to meet him.”

“So would I,” Goodnight replied, then added significantly with a sparkle of anticipation in his eyes, “Who knows? Perhaps some day, Doctor, not too distant, we *shall*.”

Source:

Elam, Richard. “Mystery Eyes Over Earth.” *Teen-Age Super Science Stories*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap Publishers, 1957. 33 – 42. Electronic.