

**TO THE SONS OF
TOMORROW**

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The *Olympus* could never return to her home planet; her crew was destined to live out their lives among the savages of this new planet. But savages could be weaned from their superstitions and set on the road to knowledge, Theusaman thought. Or could they?

Baiel had always shown me the degree of respect prescribed in the Space Code. Aboard the *Olympus* we clashed only once, and that was when I ordered the emergency landing.

"You've no right to risk it, Captain Theusaman," he protested.

"We can't do anything else," I answered. "We're ninety-three million light years away from the Earth, and twenty-five outside the patrol area."

"Sir, this star sector is totally new to us!" Baiel was standing by the control panel, a tall, thin man in his early thirties. His face was hollowly angular, sun-bronzed and capped with a brush of thick, black hair. He looked away from the sight dome and I saw bitterness and anger blazing in his blue eyes. "This is an exploratory expedition, Captain Theusaman. We were sent out to record the conditions beyond the periphery of the Earth charts, and it's vitally important for us to return with the data."

"I'm aware of that, Baiel."

"Then face the facts. We've blown our dorsal tubes and lost our emergency fuel. Unless we restock with fissionable material,

we've no chance of getting back to Earth. You believe we can restock on that unknown planet out there, but—"

"I know we can. I've seen the spectroanalysis; it doesn't lie."

"Not in the statement of data. But—with the best of intentions—a man can lie in the generalization he draws from the data. The spectroanalysis tells us that planet out there has an atmosphere like ours. It tells us there's an abundance of fissionable material in the mineral chemistry. But suppose it can't be recovered with any of the machines we have aboard? If we land, we'll have no chance of rising again."

"It's a necessary risk."

"No, Captain Theusaman! We have almost enough energy in our functioning tubes to reach the outer fringe of the patrol area. From there we'd be close enough to beam an emergency call back to Earth. One of the patrols might pick it up in time to—"

"Might," I snapped. "I'm glad you recognize that as a possibility, Baiel."

"Even if none of us survives, our data will still be there; sooner or later an Earth ship would find the *Olympus*."

"You risk more than I do, Baiel."

"But our information would be saved for the scientific processors."

"I prefer to save the men. We know they can live on that planet, even if we find no fissionable material. The issue is settled."

"There's one other consideration, Captain Theusaman. With our dorsal tubes gone, we can't maneuver. Even you can understand, sir, that a crash-landing—"

"I've given the orders, Bael. Will you execute them, or must I have you cabinized for insubordination?"

"Very well, sir."

He departed without saluting.

Bael was right, on both counts. I knew there was a chance he might be. Yet I had made emergency landings before. Nothing had ever gone wrong.

This time it did. As soon as we nosed into the stratosphere we were in trouble. The *Olympus* angled down too sharply. The gyrometers failed, since they were engineered to make use of the compensating drive from the dorsal tubes. I tried to bring the ship up into the freedom of space again, but the best I could manage was a slow, corkscrew dive toward the unknown planet.

As we spun through the cloud wreath, I studied the globe carefully. Within limits, I could still select the place where I wanted to land. The planet was capped at both poles by gleaming ice fields which spread down over the sphere like giant hands. Only a narrow equatorial band was free of ice. The landing site I chose was a wooded area at the edge of the glacier. The nearby ridge of jagged mountains suggested volcanic action, and the possible presence of the fissionable metals we wanted.

We crash-landed at the base of the glacier, skipping over the ragged ice until the bow caught and shattered in a deep ice gorge. The safety stabilizers functioned in all the cabins that were not pierced by ice. Our heaviest casualties were among the tube-room crew and the astrographers. Only one of the scientists survived. I ordered station formation on the frozen meadow outside the ship. Baiel bawled out the roster, while I ticked off the names of the survivors: forty crewmen, none seriously wounded; one scientist, fatally hurt; and fifteen of the female staff of astrographical clerks. Counting Baiel and myself, we numbered fifty-eight.

As the last of the names was read off, we stood for a moment shivering in the icy wind. Slowly Baiel looked up from the ship's roll and let his blue eyes move along the buckled hulk of the *Olympus*. Then he glanced at me, and the set of his jaw was as coldly emotionless as the ice bank behind him.

"Have you any further orders to give, Captain Theusaman?" His tone was frankly insolent. I clenched my fists, but checked the response I might have made. Baiel and I were the only Space Officers with the expedition; any difference between us would be disastrous.

"Turn all hands into the stern cabins," I said, "and break out the landing gear. It'll keep us warm. Detail five men to check on the damage, and have them report to me."

An hour later Baiel and I stood at the control panel reading through the list of damages. Remarkably little had happened—nothing, at least, that we could not repair with material we had

at hand. We organized all survivors into repair crews of five each; even the women were given assignments.

Baiel and I made preliminary soil tests for fissionable metals. The computer prognosis from such highly selective data is never infallible, but the probable degree of error is no more than .0006. Over a period of two hours we made five tests, with the same results. There was fissionable matter on the planet—no doubt of that—but it was locked in a chemical combination we could not release without building a giant separation plant such as we used on Earth.

"Our data is too limited if we sample so close to the ship," I told Baiel.

"Possibly." There was a long pause before he added the prescribed, "sir."

I nodded toward the hill sloping away from the glacier toward a forest of tangled pines. "We'll make another test down there." With a shrug, Baiel followed after me obediently.

Three miles from the *Olympus*, in a thick grove of trees, we found the man. Naked, he lay bound over a heap of boulders, his dead eyes staring up at the sky. A gash had been torn in his chest and his blood had spilled out over chunks of glacial ice arranged in a crude pyramid beside him.

To both of us, the sight of a man and the thing it implied was vaguely terrifying. For almost five centuries expeditions of Earthmen had explored the skies, slowly reaching beyond our own solar system toward the stars. Where the atmosphere was hospitable, we had built thriving colonies. But nowhere had we

found a race of people like ourselves. The planets had been so consistently untenanted that we had grown to expect nothing else.

Now here, on this unknown world, twenty-five million light years beyond the periphery of the Earth patrols—here we found men, men like ourselves!

Baiel cut the thongs and lifted the rigid body off the pile of rock. "If you don't mind, Captain," he said, "I'd like to examine—this—up in the ship lab. Since there's a chance—just a chance, sir"—His sarcasm was unmistakable, "—that we'll be staying here, I want to know what we're up against."

Late that night, while the rest of the expedition slept, Baiel and I carried the body into the laboratory. Baiel performed a thoroughgoing, workman-like autopsy. It was impossible not to admire his efficiency and skill. We were momentarily united in the rising excitement of mutual curiosity.

"There's a fascinating structural similarity to our own," Baiel pointed out. "Identical organs; identical blood composition. All the differences are minor—a smaller brain case, with a retreating forehead, and pronounced orbital ridges. And look at those teeth and the chinless jaw!"

"In a way, it suggests Bonn's Hypothesis," I said.

"Aubrey Bonn? Why, he's the laughing stock of the Anthropological Academy. We've never found a whisper of evidence to suggest a basis for his Hypothesis."

"How could we? There have never been any people on any of the planets we've explored."

Baiel dropped his scalpel and stepped back from the table, kneading his chin thoughtfully. "Bonn said that an identical chemistry and atmosphere, plus identical time phase, would produce an identical chronology of the species. This planet may do that. It should have been obvious when we had the negative tests for fissionable material. The Earth itself is the only planetary body we know where we've had to build separation plants to recover the metal."

"But, according to Bonn's Hypothesis, the resemblance should be exact." With disgust, I glanced at the torn corpse on the table. "None of us has an idiot's skull like that."

"We may have had once, Captain. You're forgetting the time phase. This planet is the Earth as it was millennia in the past, in the age of the great glaciers. The ice cap here has obviously reached its maximum penetration. It will begin to recede now, decade by decade, and civilization will slowly take root where now there is nothing but primitive savagery."

"Civilization, out of that brain, Baiel?"

He smiled at the ape-face of the corpse. "Not that, but the one that comes after. Perhaps the new man will evolve, Captain." Baiel licked his lips thoughtfully. "Or perhaps he will be created."

"I don't think I quite follow—"

"Created by the gods!" Laughing, Baiel ripped off his laboratory jacket and flung it over the corpse. "I think, Captain, that we shouldn't tell the others about him quite yet. You and I have some investigating to do first."

The next morning Baiel called me into the control room. When the door was shut, he turned up the viewscreen. By adjusting the angle of the beam, he had focused the projection upon the *Olympus* and the frozen terrain surrounding the ship in a ten mile radius.

The ship lay on a tilted, empty meadow above a forest of pines. Five miles away a limestone cliff rose out of the forest. A crude, semicircular clearing was beneath the cliff and on it we saw a tribe of men and women gathered around a fire built at the mouth of a cave. Baiel turned up a section enlargement and we studied the men carefully. There was no doubt that they were the counterparts of the corpse lying in the laboratory of the *Olympus*.

That same morning Baiel and I made our first visit to the village. Fortunately we went armed, for they received us with violent hostility, attempting to drive us away with a volley of spears.

A peculiar greeting from a people we now understand to be cordial and open in their friendship! But their motivation was entirely logical. Faced by a diminishing source of food, the tribe saw every stranger as a potential threat to tribal survival.

Baiel and I used our Haydens to curb their belligerence. The sight of red flame blasting their spears into dust awed them

into a sullen kind of submission. But it was not until our second visit, when we took them a gift of bear meat, that we began to make any progress in communication.

We watched curiously while the tribe wolfed the meat, crudely searing it over an open fire. As hungry as they obviously were, each of them nonetheless set aside a liberal portion which was later taken to a grizzled old man who never moved from the mouth of the cave. In response to our gestures, they made it clear to us that the old man was their equivalent of high priest. He apparently commanded the wind and the sun, and he had some sort of a terrifying blood relationship with the glacier.

Comfortably fed, the tribe became cordial. Baiel and I had found a touchstone. Whenever we visited the village after that, we always took them food. In less than a week we knew their dialect. It was a very small vocabulary, built chiefly of denotative symbols. Baiel concentrated his attention upon the high priest; I stayed with the tribal Chief.

It was a tactical error on my part, since Baiel already knew what he intended to do. I did not. I wasn't aware, then, that the conflict between us had already begun.

As our degree of communication improved, the various members of the tribe shyly began to express curiosity about us. Our Haydens aroused no interest, except for a vague and superstitious awe. The mechanism of the weapon was entirely beyond their comprehension; they wrote it off as a kind of magic closely allied to the mysteries practiced by their priest. Our garments were of greater significance. The tribe was irresistibly drawn to caress the sleek material, to hold it

against their cheeks and chatter excitedly over its unexpected warmth.

Once, as we sat in a circle around the fire, the Chief asked me the name of our tribe.

"We are Earthmen."

"The Earth tribe? I do not know it."

"It is not a tribe, but a place." I picked up a handful of soil. "This is earth to you—everything that you see around you. We came from another place like this, a place in the sky."

They stared at me blankly. Then one of the young hunters scooped up soil, as I had, and said brightly, "Earth. Yes, your name for the hunting ground. Earth! It is a good name."

"No. We are Earthmen!"

"Yes, Earthmen—all of us. Not beasts that howl by night and haunt the forest trails. Men. We are men. But also we have a tribe."

I tried to make my explanation more explicit. "We came here in a sky carrier which is named the *Olympus*. It rests now up by the great ice wall. There are others like us, too, who may—" I stopped, because one by one they were rising and moving away from me.

"You are wrong!" the Chief cried. "Your tribe cannot live by the glacier, on the tabooed ground!"

As he mentioned the name, it threw the whole tribe into a panic. Nothing I could say would undo their rising fear. They

shrank from me, running into the dark recesses of the cave. Eventually the high priest—with Baiel standing beside him—restored order by crying shrill prayers up at his brother, the glacier. Fortunately, the harm I had done did not seem to call for the drastic remedy of human sacrifice.

After the tumult had passed, the Chief said to me, "It was a cruel thing to say, Seus-man." (The tribe always had trouble pronouncing my name; sometimes they would drop whole syllables from it.)

"On my word, it was not meant so," I replied. After a silence, I asked cautiously, "Suppose it had been true?"

"It may not be. The brother glacier is a great threat to us all. He is not a friend. In my time and in the time of my father before me, the ice has always moved closer to us, everywhere destroying more and more of our hunting ground."

"Can your people not move away from it, into better land?"

"We have, as far as we dare. Beyond the forest the ground is taboo. There the sun god strikes fire from the mountain tops, to warn us away from his domain."

"Is there no land on the other side of the fire mountains?"

"The hunting ground of the dead. It is not for us, the living."

When Baiel and I returned at dusk to the *Olympus*, I walked thoughtfully through the swirling snow, saying very little. For the first time I faced, without regret, the fact that we were doomed to live out our lives on this frozen, nameless world. I had found a purpose, and it seemed good.

This friendly, impoverished tribe was man himself, as he had been on the Earth in the remote darkness of our own uncharted past—man, clinging precariously to a hard-won savagery, plagued by ice and wind, threatened by a vanishing supply of food.

To the nearly insurmountable problems set by nature, this tribe had added one final prison of their own creation, the taboos and superstitions that penned them fast on the brink of the glacier. As things stood, the tribe would not survive. To become men as we were, they had to be freed of the weight of the gods, freed of superstition so they could deal with the facts of reality. With our help the tribe might eventually learn how to create a civilization. Without it, they were doomed.

Hesitantly I explained myself to Baiel.

"Of course," he said. "It's obvious. We can't allow nature to forget the proper chronology of the species, can we?"

"It will be slow work, but—"

"But not impossible. Their life span averages less than thirty years; ours exceeds a century. That's time enough."

He agreed with me at once and, I think, he was entirely sincere. We were simply using the same words to express two totally opposed ideas. Neither of us, I'm sure, was aware of the ambiguity.

The need for decision came immediately. That night the power failed in the *Olympus* and the winter cold settled slowly into the cabins. The residue of fuel energy left in the tanks was not

enough to power the heating grids, and our portable solar heaters were ineffectual in the cavernous space of our cabins. Our food tanks froze over; the producing cultures died. Baiel and I built an open furnace in the control room, and the expedition crowded there around the fire.

Baiel and I had already told them about the primitive village; the expedition had learned the tribal tongue as we brought the knowledge back to the *Olympus*. Now, for the first time, I told them frankly that we were never going to leave the planet. Hand-picked, psycho-processed personnel, the expedition adjusted readily to the new reality. Without the benefits of the machines of our earthly civilization, we were faced with extreme hardships on such an unfriendly world. Our only sound course was to join the village tribe and survive through mutual efforts.

The following morning I went to the Chief to propose the merger. He refused until I offered to guarantee a food supply for both groups. It was a safe enough promise. We had the Haydens and enough energized rounds to kill anything that walked the forest, for at least a year or more. I counted heavily on the fact that, within that period, we would be able to unhinge the paralyzing weight of tribal gods and taboos. The tribe could then be encouraged to migrate into a more fertile area.

The business of negotiation was concluded in less than an hour. But the elaborate ceremony of union lasted for two days. It was not a frequent occurrence, and yet tribes had occasionally united in the past. There was, therefore, a rigid body of custom proscribing the form; it was interpreted entirely by the priest.

Since I symbolized the chief of the incoming tribe, I was expected to spend the first night in the village alone, while the rest of the expedition shivered around the improvised fire in the *Olympus*. The Chief sealed me in tribal brotherhood by the gift of his daughter. Dayhan was shy, filthy, repulsive with the stench of the animal skins she wore. Lice ran in her matted hair and grime streaked her cheeks. She smiled at me with an idiot's grin.

Yet I went willingly with Dayhan to the dark recess of the cave, which was traditionally reserved to the new wedded. It was painfully obvious that the success of my negotiations depended upon our mating. I stomached my revulsion in silence. In the morning, when Dayhan first addressed me publically as "My Lord," the tribe was satisfied.

Throughout the day the ceremony became general, climaxed by the symbolic mingling of blood. To satisfy custom, each member of the expedition—except for the women—was paired with a tribesman of equal status. Curiously, they seemed to accept Baiel as our high priest. With decided misgiving, I watched while he complacently established himself in the priest's portion of the cave.

At sundown the ceremony ended. The old priest mounted a granite pedestal erected near the fire. Raising his long arms to the sky, he screamed guttural syllables at the gathering darkness. As the sun tinged the distant glacial wall with scarlet, the priest looked down upon the throng and proclaimed the need for sacrifice to brother glacier.

The members of our expedition reacted with shocked silence, but the primitive tribe matter-of-factly went through the deadly lottery. The chosen hunter moved out toward the sacrificial grove, followed by the priest who held his blade naked in his hand.

I cried reason at them, to hold them back. But the tribe neither heard nor comprehended. With glazing eyes they were lost in the terrifying ecstasy of tradition. Satisfy brother glacier, and the village would be safe.

At the grove Baiel suddenly joined the priest. They whispered together for a moment. Then Baiel raised his arms and spoke.

"Wait! We bring the tribe the new gods of the sun. Our gods are stronger than brother glacier. Let them speak to the ice, and no life need be given."

"Let the new gods satisfy the old!" the tribal priest echoed.

His statement gave Baiel's innovation the stamp of approval. The tribe began to chant a sing-song thanksgiving. Baiel, like the priest, raised his arms and shouted gibberish which they took as prayer. When he lowered his hand, he pointed at the pile of rock in the grove. Red flame flashed. The stones dissolved. The surrounding ice wasted into a pool of water, slowly seeping into the blackened earth.

It was a simple enough trick. Baiel had concealed a Hayden in his sleeve. But it impressed the tribe. They sang their exaltation, clapping hands on the broad shoulders of the young hunter who had been spared.

Baiel joined me as we walked back to the village.

"I knew something had to be done, Captain Theusaman," he explained. "Fortunately, my idea worked."

"It's wrong, Baiel; all wrong."

"I saved the man, didn't I?"

"By substituting new gods for theirs. We want to free them, Baiel."

"Is there any other way to do it?"

"By teaching them the truth. By destroying their burden of gods and superstitions—not by creating more."

This amused him and he laughed. I thought his reaction was odd, but I still misinterpreted it.

For the next two months I became more and more involved in helping the tribe find its way toward civilization. We could not impose anything remotely like our Earth culture. The answer to the problem, without the technique for reaching the solution, would be meaningless. But in small things, like the brief spring thaws that slowly ate away their planet-capping glacier, we could erode and destroy their shell of savagery.

Because of its application to my own situation with Dayhan, the first teaching I undertook was cleanliness. On the Earth it is an old joke that, when we build, we plan the bathing facilities first; our space ships are notably awkward to maneuver because we include so many elaborate baths. To us, filth equates with savagery. Cleanliness was a concept which the

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