

The Conquering of Earth

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The thick clouds stifled the sunlight which shone so brightly above the murky atmosphere, and allowed the surface of Venus to be shrouded in an eerie glow. The sunlight, already fairly weak when it reached the ground, was a dusky shadow when it had made its way through the thick walls and winding corridors of Specter Hall, the largest building located on Venus. Through the gloominess which occupied the building, two creatures were walking. Or rather, the one which was large and stolid was lumbering slowly, while the other, which was wispy and spirit-like seemed to float effortlessly by his companion's side. One could easily see that the former was a Martian, the latter a Venusian. The two soon reached their destination: a large cavern, in the middle of which was a table set for a meal.

Unlike humans' habit of bestowing unending speech to whomever they happen to be with, many of the other species of life in the Solar System pursue the more practical method of speaking only when they have something useful to say. Accordingly, not a word was passed between the creatures until five minutes into the meal (which they immediately began once they arrived at the cavern), when the Venusian began to talk with his guest for the first time.

"I hope the food is to your liking?"

The Martian, who was not known for his eloquence, only grunted.

"Good, excellent. Now, if you have no objection, I would like to convey the reason for inviting you here to my house today."

Stelib, for that was his name, leaned back and studied the ceiling, as if determining the best way to begin.

"Elroid, I have taken an intense interest in Earth," he said finally. "I first began to observe it about one hundred years ago, and I discovered how much I love its remarkable beauty quite by accident. One day I chanced to climb our observatory's tower and look through the telescope. It happened to be pointing directly at this marvelous planet, and I was at once struck by the loveliness of swirling blue, green, white, and brown, which is unlike any other planet I have seen. I soon fell in love with it. At this time we had just discovered how to travel through space without the use of machinery, and I at once resolved to visit my beloved Earth.

As soon as I arrived I saw how very different the inhabitants were than any other creatures in the Solar System. Their looks, personality, character, everything about them is unusual. We, of course, are invisible to humans, (that is what they

call themselves) and I was able to study them at very close range. Earth was made long after ours, and they are now only in about the 8,000th Earth year, or as they say, the year 1700. They are intelligent, but they have hardly developed any of the modern technology that we have produced. I am sure they will at some time start to discover and create it, but I have no way of knowing when that will happen. But we, we," he emphasized the word, "Can change that."

Elroid stared at him dubiously.

"I don't understand," he said in a deep gruff voice. "What am I supposed to do?"

"I was just getting to that. The first time I visited Earth I realized how wonderful it would be to live there. The sky is so clear, at night you can see thousands of twinkling stars (the clouds of sulfuric acid which continually cover Venus make the sky invisible), and during the day it is such a startling, light blue. What I wouldn't give to live there!"

"But if the humans can't see you, are you not at liberty to take up residency without their knowledge?"

"Regrettably, I cannot. Have you forgotten that I am the leader of all Venetians? No matter how much I love Earth, my duty and conscience would never permit me to forsake them for a new home. For another reason, the buildings, towns and cities which they have built are naturally made for humans, not Venetians. We can visit quite easily, but for us to live there would be extremely difficult and trying. For example-"

Elroid interrupted, "I still don't see where we came in. Did you invite me here just to tell me of your dreams and plans?"

"Patience, patience. I have not finished. I soon found that the only path open to me was to conquer the planet. But I was not able to use physical force, because in addition to not being able to see us humans can also not feel us or anything from this planet. We would not be able to use their weapons either, as we cannot even pick them up. After years of scrutinizing, planning, and researching, I have come up with an alternate plan. I am positive that if the correct steps and precautions are taken, the humans will be able to be taken over by means of technology and machinery!"

Martians have never been very intelligent, and it was several moments before the depth of what Stelib said was fully comprehended. Stelib waited for his companion's face to light up with understanding before continuing.

“Listen, you are skilled in the art of telepathy, correct?”

“Well yeah, but-”

“I have found certain humans who are very bright who would be perfect for creating the first advanced machines. Would you be willing to convey some ideas to a few individual humans which I would point out to you? The humans, as I have said, are intelligent, but they are also great lovers of comfort and ease. I am positive that if they are only given the basic ideas they will do the rest.”

He pointed to a table close by which was covered with small clay statues depicting numerous engines, appliances, instruments and devices.

“Here are some of my ideas. I have made models of machines that will be useful to humans around the world. I will tell you exactly what to convey to them.”

Elroid still looked doubtful.

“You will, of course,” Stelib put in hurriedly, “be paid whatever you like.”

The look of uncertainty was wiped from Elroid’s face and was replaced by one of hungry greed.



And so the conquering of Earth began. Elroid chose several Martians – ones who were very experienced with telepathy - to live with Stelib on Venus, and they soon started extrasensory perception with humans.

One day in 1950 Stelib called a meeting of all Martians and Venetians whom he had employed. When all the laborers had gathered, Stelib began to address them.

“Martians and Venetians, contributors and sponsors, I want to thank you for everything you have done these past 156 Earth years! It has been a busy one-and-a-half centuries filled with hard work from all of you. Let me review our progress. We started with a machine which is now considered one of the most basic devices: the engine. Starwret, this capable and talented Martian,” he smiled kindly on a young Martian who was sitting in front of him, “Gave Robert Street the idea to create an internal combustion engine, and the first one was made in 1794. Within less than two hundred years the steam locomotive, automobile, and air plane had been invented and people heavily depended on them for transportation for both long and short journeys. In 1800, Alessandro Volta became the first man to create a continual electric current. About 80 years later Thomas Edison produced the light

bulb, and from that point on thousands of electricity-using machines were created and subsequently used by people across the world. Throughout the 19th century many appliances such as dish washers, clothes washers, clothes dryers, and toasters were created, as well as cameras, telephones, typewriters and sewing machines. We have now reached the goal – 44 years early - which we vowed we would complete at the end of two hundred years: we have made humans feel completely dependent on machines which a short while before did not exist. Well done, all of you! How little did the inventors of these various machines realize that their brilliant inspirations came from another source: us!” He paused as the thunderous clapping and shouting filled the cavern. “Now,” he began, “I shall talk to you about what is, so far, our greatest accomplishment. As you know an English mechanical engineer and polymath, Charles Babbage, created the first computer in the early 1800s. It is currently not widely used, but that will soon change.”

Sure enough, by 1980 computers were being made and intended for nontechnical users. In 1983 internet was created, and the World Wide Web was made by Tim Berners-Lee. A short 30 years later 2 billion computers existed in the world, and the consuming public could no longer imagine life without them.

Stelib sat in his lab, which doubled as his office. It was here that all research and construction of the models for the human’s machines took place. He heard a movement behind him and saw that it was Elroid, who had come to see how the telepathy was going.

“Ah, Elroid, come see this.”

The Martian obeyed and turned his glance to the large screen which Stelib pointed out to him, which was on the desk at which he was sitting. He had recently installed invisible cameras in millions of the human’s houses, as well as on billboards, street signs and cars so that he watch many of the roads and intersections. He flicked through the many cameras which he had stationed around Earth. The cameras showed what life had become for humans. They showed fathers stretched out lazily on the couch, their eyes fixed on television. Mothers were stopped dead in their tracks in streets, stores, or their own house, mesmerized by what they saw in the small device which they held in their hands. It showed young girls typing on computers, unaware of all that was happening around them; and young boys so engrossed and enthralled by the video game they were playing that anyone who saw their face would have thought they were saving the world from a great evil.

A sigh of satisfaction escaped from Stelib. How well his plan was working! It would not be long now before the humans could be utterly controlled by these amazing contraptions which they, with his help, had discovered.

“Elroid,” he said, “It is not many people who can say these words and know them to be true, but I can now confidently say: the world will soon be mine.”