

A green alien warplane is shown in a state of distress, flying through a clear blue sky. The aircraft is angled downwards and to the right, with a thick trail of dark purple and grey smoke billowing from its rear. Bright orange and yellow flames are visible at the base of the smoke trail. The plane has a sleek, angular design with a cockpit area and various sensors or antennas. The scene is framed by the dark silhouettes of leaves and branches in the foreground, suggesting a jungle environment.

TO SAY I WAS IN TROUBLE MAKES ME GUILTY OF CONSIDERABLE UNDERSTATEMENT.

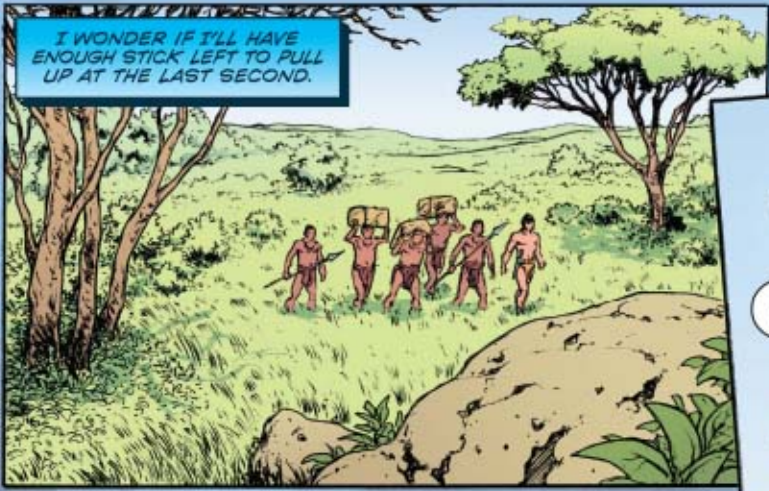
AS AMAZING AS THIS ALIEN WARPLANE IS, IT HAD SIMPLY TAKEN TOO MUCH PUNISHMENT TO STAY ALOFT.

MY HOPE WAS TO BE ABLE TO REACH CALIFORNIA.

I FELL SHORT OF THAT GOAL BY NEARLY HALF A GLOBE.

OH WELL. "WHEN NEEDS MUST..." IT SEEMS AFRICA WOULD HAVE TO DO.





UNCONSCIOUS, BUT STILL ALIVE.

PUT OUT THESE FIRES.

WE MAY NEED TO PRESERVE WHAT'S LEFT OF THIS STRANGE CRAFT FOR EXAMINATION LATER.







AWAKE  
AT LAST.



WE WERE  
BEGINNING  
TO WORRY.

LORD  
AND LADY  
GREYSTOKE!


WE SENT  
RUNNERS FOR  
A DOCTOR--OUR  
DAUGHTER-IN-LAW,  
IN FACT--BUT SHE'S  
AT LEAST A DAY  
AWAY.



A SIMPLE  
JOHN AND JANE  
WILL DO FOR  
WELCOME OLD  
FRIENDS.


YOU SHOULD  
LAY BACK,  
JASON. YOU  
NEED TIME  
TO RECOVER.

THIS IS  
A **STROKE**  
OF LUCK!



WHEN I REALIZED I  
COULD NEVER MAKE IT  
ACROSS THE ATLANTIC  
TO AMERICA, I SET  
MY SIGHTS ON  
REACHING YOUR  
HOME HERE.

BUT I'M NO  
PILOT, AND NOT  
MUCH BETTER AS A  
NAVIGATOR. I TRIED  
TO DUPLICATE WHAT  
I'D SEEN BEFORE,  
BUT--



IF YOU'VE GOT  
A TALE TO TELL,  
PERHAPS YOU'D  
BETTER SLOW DOWN  
AND START AT THE  
BEGINNING.

YOU'RE  
RIGHT.  
OF  
COURSE.



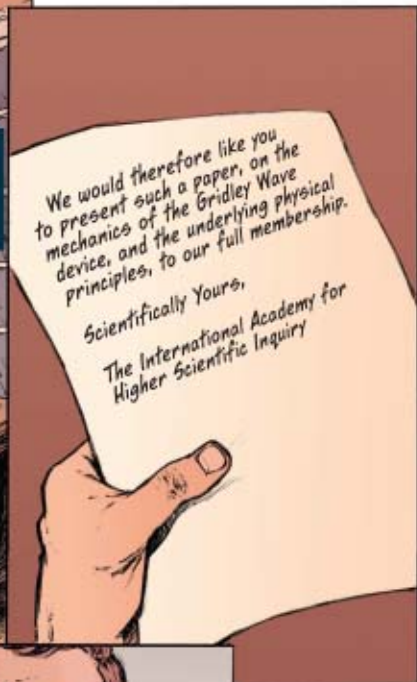


BUT WHAT I HAVE TO SAY SEEMS UNBELIEVABLE TO ME, EVEN THOUGH I LIVED THROUGH IT.



"ALMOST A YEAR AGO I RECEIVED A LETTER FROM AN ORGANIZATION CALLING ITSELF THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY FOR HIGHER SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY.

"PERHAPS I WAS NAÏVE. IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME TO INVESTIGATE THEIR CREDENTIALS, AS THERE ARE SO MANY LEGITIMATE SCIENTIFIC FRATERNITIES THE WORLD OVER."



We would therefore like you to present such a paper, on the mechanics of the Gridley Wave device, and the underlying physical principles, to our full membership.

Scientifically Yours,  
The International Academy for Higher Scientific Inquiry



"I WAS DELIGHTED TO COMPLY.

"THOUGH THE PATENT ON THE DEVICE WAS MINE ALONE, I FULLY SUBSCRIBE TO THE NOTION THAT GENERAL SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE BELONGS TO THE WORLD ENTIRE.



"THEY SENT A CAR TO FETCH ME ON THE NIGHT OF MY PRESENTATION."



"THE PRESENTATION NEVER TOOK PLACE."

"MY LAST CLEAR MEMORY OF THAT NIGHT WAS THE INTENSE BEAM OF LIGHT THAT STABBED DOWN ON US FROM ON HIGH."

"BY THE TIME I WOKE AGAIN, IT WAS IN A PLACE FAR FROM HOME."

WELCOME TO KARIS, MR. GRIDLEY.

"IN TIME I'D COME TO REALIZE IT WASN'T EVEN ON OUR WORLD."

I APOLOGIZE FOR OUR RUSE IN GETTING YOU HERE, BUT THE UNDERLYING MOTIVATION WASN'T PART OF ANY FALSEHOOD.

WE REALLY DO WANT YOU TO REVEAL THE PRINCIPLES BEHIND YOUR AMAZING INVENTION.

WHO ARE YOU, AND WHERE HAVE YOU BROUGHT ME?

WHO AM I? AN ADMIRER.

I'M AFRAID WE'LL HAVE TO LEAVE IT AT THAT FOR NOW.

AS FOR WHY WE FOUND IT NECESSARY TO SPIRIT YOU AWAY, MUCH FURTHER THAN YOU'D AGREED TO TRAVEL?

WELL, WE WEREN'T SURE YOU'D COME IF WE TOLD THE ENTIRE TRUTH.





HOW DOES ONE EXPLAIN, EVEN TO A MAN OF YOUR CALIBER, THAT WE'VE DISCOVERED A WAY TO TRAVEL SAFELY AND SWIFTLY BETWEEN THE STARS?

EASIER JUST TO SHOW YOU.

THAT'S MY SHIP, **THE RESOLVE**.

IT BROUGHT YOU HERE, TO THIS WORLD FAR BEYOND EVEN THE STARS YOU KNOW, AND WILL RETURN YOU HOME... IN TIME.



SEE? A NEW WORLD, FAR AWAY. NOW YOU KNOW WHY I HALF EXPECT YOU TO CALL ME A LIAR.

WE'VE BOTH BEEN TO AT LEAST ONE STRANGE NEW WORLD TOGETHER, JASON.

AND EVEN THOUGH PELLUCIDAR WAS STILL PART OF THIS GLOBE, WE KNOW OF THOSE WHO'VE TRAVELED TO OTHER PLANETS.





"CONTINUE YOUR TALE, WITHOUT WORRYING IF WE'LL THINK YOU'VE GONE MAD."

THE QUICKER YOU TEACH US ALL THE SECRETS OF YOUR GRIDLEY WAVE, THE SOONER YOU CAN GO HOME.

SO, I'M YOUR PRISONER?



NOT AT ALL. YOU'RE OUR HONORED GUEST-- PROVIDED YOU ACT LIKE ONE.

WATCH HIM CLOSELY.



"OVER THE NEXT MONTHS THEY FORCED ME TO WORK ON MY GRIDLEY WAVE, MODIFYING IT TO COMBINE WITH OTHER TECHNOLOGIES THEY'D OBTAINED.



"SOME OF THESE DEVICES WERE REMARKABLE INDEED.

"REMOTE VIEWING APPARATUS FROM BARSOOM, WHICH I'D HEARD OF, BUT NEVER SEEN."

THE TWO TECHNOLOGIES AREN'T AT ALL COMPATIBLE.

UNLESS...



"THEY WANTED BOTH SYSTEMS COMBINED WITH SOMETHING CALLED A T-RAY, FROM A WORLD CALLED AMTOR."

HOLD ON!

THIS IS A WEAPON!



"I KNEW ALL ALONG MY CAPTORS WERE UP TO NO GOOD. BUT I ONLY THEN REALIZED THEY WERE LOOKING FOR A WAY TO WEAPONIZE MY INVENTION."



"I SOUGHT TO ESCAPE IF POSSIBLE, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, I NEEDED TO MAKE SURE THEY HAD NO WAY TO DISCERN THE SECRETS OF THE GRIDLEY WAVE."



"I DIDN'T GET AWAY. NOT THEN."



"BUT AT LEAST I'D MANAGED TO DESTROY MY APPARATUS, ALONG WITH EVERYTHING I WORKED ON TO DATE."

"A VICTORY OF SORTS."





MR. GRIDLEY. REALLY NOW...

IF YOU'D STOP MAKING A NUISANCE OF YOURSELF, WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO KEEP RENDERING YOU UNCONSCIOUS.



WHERE--?

ABOARD MY SHIP, HEADING FOR HOME, AS I PROMISED.

YOU WRECKED SO MUCH EQUIPMENT, WE HAVE TO REPLACE IT, STARTING WITH ANOTHER OF YOUR GRIDLEY WAVE DEVICES.



YOU DIDN'T CAUSE US AS MUCH DELAY AS YOU MIGHT GUESS.

WE HAD TO GO BACK TO EARTH EVENTUALLY. YOU ONLY ALTERED THE TIMETABLE A BIT.



NOW, YOU MUST LEARN TO BEHAVE YOURSELF. I WON'T THREATEN YOU, SINCE WE NEED YOU ALIVE AND COOPERATIVE.

SO INSTEAD I'LL THREATEN THE LIVES OF EVERYONE YOU KNOW AND LOVE. TRUST ME WHEN I ASSURE YOU I'M IN DEADLY EARNEST.





THOUSANDS OF LIGHT YEARS DISTANCE IN THE SPACE OF AN HOUR? HOW?

"HAVING NO OTHER RECOURSE, I QUIT MAKING TROUBLE."

"INSTEAD I USED THE REMAINING DAYS OF OUR INCREDIBLE VOYAGE BETWEEN THE STARS LEARNING AS MUCH AS I COULD."

"I MADE MYSELF USEFUL, PITCHING IN TO HELP WITH REPAIR AND UPKEEP."

NO, THE ADJUSTABLE SPANNER.

THE ONE IN THE RED TOOLBOX.

"IN TIME THEY BEGAN TO TRUST ME, ALLOWING ME PARTIAL FREEDOM OF THE SHIP. IT WAS A WARY SPECIES OF TRUST, BUT USEFUL ALL THE SAME."



THIRTY FIGHTER PLANES IN A SINGLE HANGER, AND THERE ARE HOW MANY HANGERS IN THE ENTIRE SHIP?



"TWENTY DAYS AFTER WE LEFT THE ALIEN WORLD HE CALLED KARIS, WE'D ARRIVED ON EARTH."



"I MADE MY MOVE, WITHOUT HESITATION, STEALING ONE OF THEIR SMALL FIGHTER PLANES AS SOON AS WE HAD ENOUGH ATMOSPHERE TO PROVIDE LIFT."

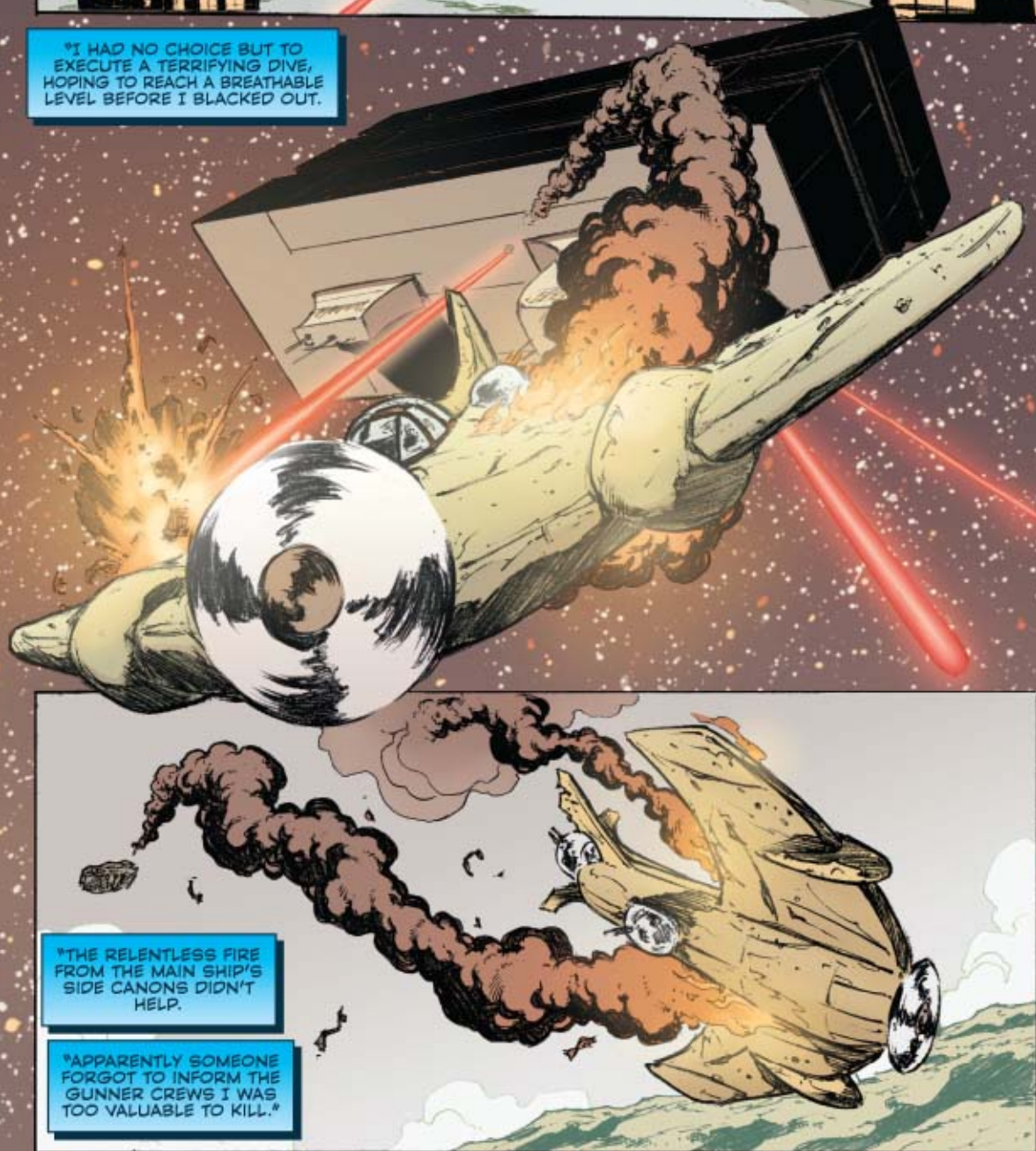


"THAT TURNED OUT TO BE A CRITICAL MISTAKE. THE CRAFT I'D STOLEN WASN'T SEALED AND PRESSURIZED FOR HIGH ALTITUDE FLYING.

"I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO EXECUTE A TERRIFYING DIVE, HOPING TO REACH A BREATHABLE LEVEL BEFORE I BLACKED OUT.

"THE RELENTLESS FIRE FROM THE MAIN SHIP'S SIDE CANONS DIDN'T HELP.

"APPARENTLY SOMEONE FORGOT TO INFORM THE GUNNER CREWS I WAS TOO VALUABLE TO KILL."







THE REST YOU KNOW.

THE RESOLVE IS HERE, NOW, NO DOUBT ON ITS WAY TO CALIFORNIA TO SECURE ANOTHER GRIDLEY WAVE SET.



I FEEL OBLIGED TO THWART THEM, IF I CAN, NOT JUST TO KEEP THEM FROM STEALING FROM ME, BUT--

BECAUSE THEY'RE INVOLVED IN SINISTER UNDERTAKINGS AND SHOULD BE STOPPED.



EXACTLY.



YOU'LL HAVE MY HELP, OF COURSE.

OUR HELP.



I WAS HOPING YOU'D SAY THAT.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

FIRST WE NEED TO TRAVEL, AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, TO NEW MEXICO.



THERE ARE TWO OTHER EXISTING SETS OF MY APPARATUS IN THIS WORLD--ON THE SURFACE WORLD AT LEAST--AND NEITHER IS WHERE OUR VILLAIN EXPECTS TO FIND THEM.

WE'LL NEED TO BEAT HIM TO AT LEAST ONE OF THEM.



I THINK I CAN ARRANGE A QUICK PASSAGE.