

MABBUL AND THE EMERALD PLANET

|| A HEAVENLY NEWS NETWORK REPORT ||
ON THE DESTRUCTION OF PLANET EARTH ||

CHARLES E. GUTHA

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This is a work of fiction. All of the characters, names, incidents, organizations, and dialogue in this novel are either the products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously.

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DEDICATION

A special thanks to Donna, charter member of our Omaha Meetup group, who helped me advance to the next writing level.

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To Walt Brown, whose theory I mangle. In the early days, we discussed aspects of his theory, not yet published. Now his theories and predictions have grown beyond the scope of this book.

To Jessica, my oldest daughter, who first introduced me to the Hydroplate Theory.

To all the other people who reviewed and commented on this manuscript.

A special thanks to my wife, Cindy, who still puts up with me.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(M = Male; F = Female)

Adon (M: Lord [Boss])

Angela

Asah (M: Make, do)

Avath

Avlam (Explore)

Banah (M: To build)

Bara (F: Creating)

Betsah (F: Eggs)

Brick layer

Chakam (Wise)

Chatubath (F: Color)

Cherubim

El

Ezer (M: Helper)

Halak (M: Follower)

Ham (or Cham)

Henry

Hilda

Japheth

Jerry

Ken

The King

Lamech

Lat (M: Secret)

Madad (Measure)

Malak (Messenger)
Methuselah (Man of the Dirt)
Michael
Middah (Tax)
Naal (M: Lock)
Nakar (M: Hear)
Navigator
Noah (Eminent)

Paras
Professor Tur (Explorer)
(Rudy)
Ruth Fox, Dr.
Satan (Adversary)
Sedeh
Seraphim
Seth
Shama (Announcer)
Shem
Shimmur (F: Watch)
Sis

Smitty
Solomon (M)
Taphar (M Taylor)
Tom (M: Witness)
Tur (M: Explore)
Tsaphah (Keep Watch)
Tsel (F: Shade)
Tsud
Yaphah (F: Beautiful)
Yvette (Little Eve)

PHOTOS AND DRAWINGS

Photo 1: Hale-Bopp Prof. Dave Kriegler

All other drawings and photos by Charles E Gutha:

Floor Plan of HNN Science News Room

Conceptual Floor Plan of the Ark

Noah's Compound: Early days

Noah's Compound: Latter Days

Ark Cross Section and Detail

Picture of Three Primary Colors

Professor Tur's Observatory

Crack Forms

Photo of Skimmer Tank Pipe

Wind Currents at Two Hours

Wind Currents Day Five

Wind Currents Day Forty

Vault Currents Day Forty

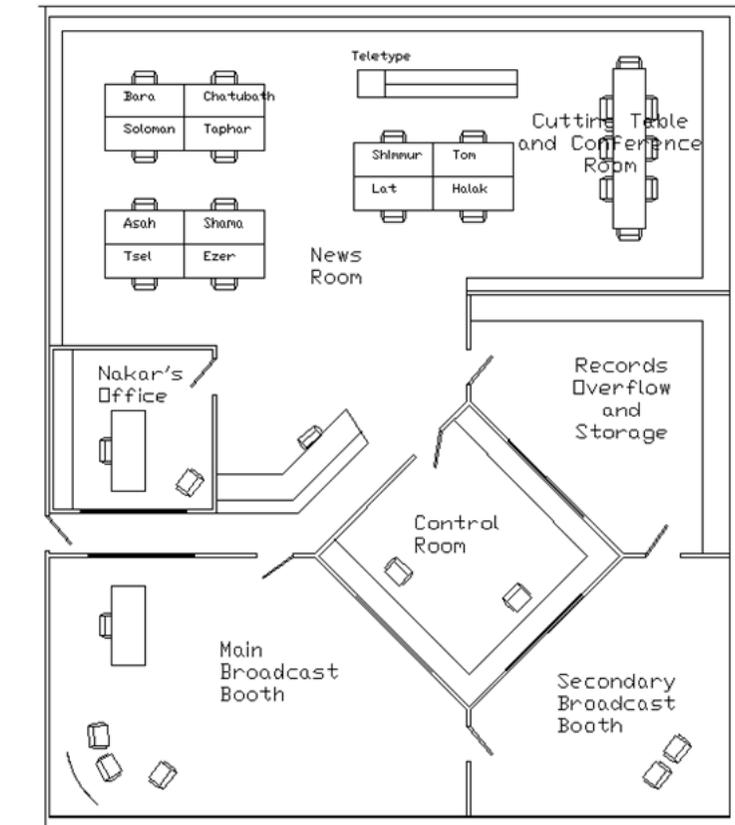
Vault Currents Day One Hundred Fifty

Mountains Moving Continents

Continents Buckling

PART A

TROUBLES



Floor plan of the Heavenly News Network, Scientific Division, Earth
(HNN Science, Milky Way Galaxy, Planet Earth)



TOP SECRET

Science is observable, repeatable, and measurable.

—The Scientific Method

Two angels quickly flew toward Professor Tur's moon-based observatory. Stopping just outside the artificial atmospheric barrier, they glanced around, nodded to each other, and then stepped through the barrier. Again, they scanned their surroundings.

Removing equipment packs from their chests (for unlike humans, who carry packs on their backs, angels must carry packs in front to free their wings for flight), they began sparkling with a greenish-blue tint. Their falcon-like wings retracted. The two now appeared as humans: without wings, dressed in short sleeves and jeans.

"I am wondering, Tom. We cannot be telling anyone about this, can we?" Halak, the taller angel, asked in his singsong voice. His light-brown skin and short black hair punctuated the broad smile of a twenty-year-old man enjoying life.

"You know our orders." Tom referenced the instructions as he gathered his pack. "Top secret." Although Tom was in charge, his unmanageable hair and angular features made him appear only seventeen. "How long will it take to file this?"

"I am supposing that if I am allowed to have Lat's help, we can complete the task in twenty minutes."

Tom confirmed the suggestion with a nod.

Again they surveyed the area.

Shouldering their packs, they embarked toward the building: a fifteen-minute hike.

Halak broke the silence. "I am still wondering. This will be catching everyone off guard. They could be missing the entire event, and then all we have worked so hard for would be happening without us."

"I know," Tom said. "Nevertheless, we must keep strict silence. We cannot tell anyone. Orders are orders. Send the report. Keep silent and wait."

They made their way toward the observatory's curved wall. Lined with benches, it was a perfect place for solitary contemplation.

Lowering the cameras and other supplies from their backs, they glanced around. No one else was outside.

They dusted each other's clothing.

Halak shouldered both packs. "So," he said, "I am still wondering how it is that you are going to sound the alarm."

"Haven't a clue," Tom admitted as he smoothed Halak's collar. He gave Halak the thumbs-up. "Twenty minutes. Let Shimmur help, also."

"Fifteen minutes, with the helping of Lat and Shimmur," Halak said as he peered around the corner. "I am seeing no one in the vicinity. It is looking like the path is being clear." Halak straightened to his five-foot-six-inch height and strode toward the building with the air of a seasoned soldier. He entered the main door as if nothing was happening. He walked past the vacant reception desk and turned into the office on the right.

Tom sat on a bench admiring the moonscape.

He looked up at the emerald planet. Only one-eighth of the planet reflected light from that lone star to the left. Only one-eighth glowed with various shades of green—the rest was dark.

In those days, Earth had no large oceans or tall mountains.

Instead, lush vegetation covered the entire planet from valley to low hill. Small seas dotting her face accented her glorious features. With little or no topography, her surface looked as smooth as a large pearl.

Tom wiped his moist eyes and waited a long minute. Scanning the moonscape, he confirmed he was alone. No one else could see the day's moonscape. No one else knew how soon something—anything—was about to happen.

He stood, dusted his clothing, and approached the entrance.

The echoes of the large doors squealed as Tom pulled them open. Oil would help, but then there was no need—not anymore. This last operation had completed the series of missions. Soon the waiting would be over.

The lobby was empty. “Why was there a reception desk?” Tom quietly mumbled to himself. “No one ever sat at it. After all, no one ever came to visit.”

Tom headed directly toward the open stairway beyond the desk and quietly began his ascent.



Hundreds of off-duty angels filled the noisy dayroom, sitting at tables reading papers, laughing, talking, and playing games. A few dozed in chairs. A quick observation revealed these were clearly social creatures.

Tom took a deep breath, then completed that final step to the third-floor lounge.

“There you are, Tom!” The excited voice of an elderly figure came from far across the room, piercing the drone of aimless chatter. Wearing a brown tweed sport jacket and faded blue jeans, the jolly manlike creature scurried toward Tom with a slight waddle. “Where’ve you been? I’ve been looking everywhere for you.”

Tom glanced around, but no one was paying attention. A smile

came across his face, “Oh. Hiya, Professor.” He waved nonchalantly. “What’s up?”

Professor Tur’s salt-and-pepper hair accented his disposition. He gave Tom a friendly poke in the ribs. “Special assignment,” he whispered with a sly grin.

Tom winced, stumbling back a step.

The professor’s smile widened with excitement. Pulling a voice recorder from his pocket, he explained, “I’ve been asked to write an article summarizing our observations here on the moon.” He grinned. “I’m recording it in case I happen to say something worth repeating.”

Tom watched the professor place the device back into his pocket. “*You* have a special assignment.” Tom smiled wiping his brow.

“Sure.” He again elbowed Tom in the ribs. “I was hoping you could help.” The professor turned, motioning to the empty couch in the far corner.

Tom exhaled deeply. “Give me a moment, Professor. Then you can tell me what you have so far.”

Tom looked around.

In the far corner, a couch and matching chairs faced the entertainment screen, where residents could watch special reports or other programs transmitted from other galaxies. Behind him, at the opposite end of the lounge, was the food service area. Tables and chairs, sofas, and benches filled the cafeteria/lounge, providing varying comforts to the many coworkers. On the right, a door led to the sleeping quarters. On the left, bookshelves partially blocked windows overlooking the observatory’s Situation Room—or “Sit Room,” as they called it. Above the entire length of the lounge was a skylight. It allowed direct viewing of the heavens and a perfect view of that spectacular emerald sphere floating overhead.

Tom followed the professor, then reclined on the couch. “Okay, Professor. I’m ready.”

The professor cleared his throat.

Looking up, he gestured toward the ceiling. "Through the sky windows here on the third floor of my observatory, we observe that beautiful green planet rotating effortlessly above us. Suspended above, in the same relative position, we watch as her phases change. We orbit her every twenty-nine and a half of her revolutions. She, in her turn, journeys around Sol, her star, every three hundred sixty days. Who, and from what species, could ever imagine such beauty and design?"

Tom nodded approvingly.

The professor stretched his arms, palms facing out, fingers together. "Ordinarily, it takes eight fingers at arm's length to cover her girth," he said. "However, this satellite, her moon, is approaching its minimum orbit, and we are as close to her as ever. Today, that green world is nine fingers wide. Compare this to Sol, appearing only the diameter of the minor digit in width," he declared.

Tom laughed. "You mean that from here, it only takes our little pinky to cover the sun."

The professor nodded. "From here, the planet appears green. Very few places lack water. Those that do are high in the hills, nearly seven hundred feet above the surface of the seas.

"Earth's poles host a different variety of life as she spins about her axis. During the summer, the flora is lush, enjoying long days with very short nights. However, in the winter, the nights are long, and the temperature sometimes drops below freezing. Here the trees turn color in the fall, shedding their leaves. They go dormant for the season. What a marvelous world with creative variety."

A broad smile spread across the professor's face. He wiped his forehead. His gray eyes twinkled as he turned to pat an eight-foot compound telescope aimed at the planet. "From here, a strong telescope allows us to observe larger creatures as they lumber among the vegetation. From her moon, we can observe the planet unnoticed. Yes, indeed. This is an ideal location from which to study such a beautiful lady."

By this time, many of the crowd had become spectators.

The professor stopped. Turning back to the couch, he asked, "How shall I finish this, Tom?"

Tom got up to walk toward the telescope. "How much time do you think she has, Professor?" Without waiting for an answer, he looked into the lens remorsefully. "There's Noah's compound. I never even had a chance to say goodbye."

The professor paced to the center of the room. "The planet is waning. Today we see that white mist hovering over her dawn, while in her darkness she sparkles with the many artificial luminescence created by her inhabitants. We are three days from a total solar eclipse."

"That's right! I forgot!" Tom looked at the professor excitedly. "Such a rare opportunity too. Are you going to double your crew to cover both events? Oh, what a choice." He walked to the entertainment screen. "One show from the heart of heaven and the other from the heart of trouble."

The professor turned and studied him carefully. "Why should I double my crew? We've seen eclipses before. Besides, from this room, we can watch both."

Suddenly, the monitor flashed on.

"Is that the celebration?" The professor nodded toward the screen.

"This looks like last year's highlights," Tom said. "The celebration won't start for a few minutes."

The professor rubbed his chin. "So we have a little time. I suppose I should mention the dangers in this narrative." He walked across the room.

"Not far from this observatory is a military complex where soldiers enforce the blockade. Alas, this planet is under strict quarantine. No one goes in. No one comes out. No one, that is, except a handful of my crew members. Those few have special passes allowing them to work on the planet."

"The enemy uses you," Tom scoffed as he stood. "He uses you

to torment the King when you document the spread of his cancerous activities.”

The professor returned and sank deep into the couch. “The damage is hard to ignore,” he agreed. “The enemy allows us access only because he benefits from our studies. The treaty, if you can call it that, is an uneasy one. Still, we must visit the planet if we are to study its life-forms in detail. There is no alternative.”

“How much time do you think she has, Professor?” Tom circled the couch to sit in a chair.

The professor eyed him closely. “Where were you last light, Tom?”

Tom recoiled. “Do you think her time is close?”

Turning with arms animated, Professor Tur answered. “The stresses are critical, Tom. It could happen at any moment.”

Sitting, the professor continued somewhat calmly. “The enemy also monitors your transmissions to learn what’s happening off planet.”

“Of course.” Tom leaned toward the professor. “But we report on only a small portion of the situation.

“I must admit,” Tom said quietly as he leaned back against the chair and looked up, “I’ve always admired the way you camouflaged those instruments. The natives think they are sticks poking out of the ground. I like that you put leaves on some. They look like small trees. No one recognizes them as sophisticated instruments.”

The professor stared deeply into Tom’s eyes. “It took a long time for my engineers to come up with designs that the natives would not bother. Those creatures are very clever.”

“I remember.”

“Tell me, Tom, how is it that you know how we camouflage our instruments when you are not allowed on that planet?”

The screen flashed.

Raising his eyebrows, the professor asked, “Is this the start of the celebration?”

The crowd gathered to watch.

“Finally!” Tom’s expression changed to relief. He sat up and leaned toward the screen. “This has always been my favorite part: the Gate-Opening Ceremony. Here come the guards. What spectacular uniforms.” He somehow stayed seated, although it was obvious to any spectator, he was jumping up and down on the inside.

Rising to walk behind the couch, the professor said, “We should be there. I wonder why we were ordered not to attend this time. It makes no sense—” He interrupted himself. “Tom, why did the screen go black?”

“What?” Tom grabbed the remote. He stood, flipping through channels. Pausing only long enough to check each one, he scowled. He looked around, threw the remote to the couch, and then stared at the blank screen.

“Take it easy, Tom,” said the professor. “I’m responsible for this stuff.”

“Impossible!” Tom stepped back, falling over the chair. He recovered, glanced at the screen, turned to the professor, looked into the faces of those gathered around, and then bolted toward the stairway. “Sir! Something’s happening!” he shouted, bounding down the stairs. “Something’s happening, Sir!” His voice faded in the distance. “Sir, I think it’s time!”

The professor took a deep breath while shaking his head.

He picked up the remote, switched off the screen, and swung his feet to recline on the couch. Looking up through the skylight, he placed his arms behind his graying head and smiled.

“Just a few more days, my friends,” said the professor. “Just a few more days.”