

The Fate of One Planet

by Ian Dow

Chapter 20

Eater

Jay woke up; his breath had frozen his jacket to the cold metal wall. His bum and shoulder were cold and numb. The tough jacket material peeled off the wall, and a gloved hand massaged circulation into his numb bum. He had been unconscious some time and vaguely remembered the side of the Eater swinging around and hitting him into the wall. There were multiple new holes in the walls now.

"What is it up to?" said Jay to the empty, holey corridor.

Jay followed the new holes until he found the Eater, eating the Round Ship. The black triangular teeth had no problems with any material they encountered. It was also evident that the material eaten today alone vastly exceeded the volume of the Eater, with no sign of any waste output. The Eater stopped eating and presented its side to be touched.

Jay said, "What are you doing?"

The reply was, "You are too weak; I eat to make you stronger."

"How and why?" said Jay.

"For you to understand me, I need to eat you."

"I got that, and I was ready for that," said Jay.

"Negative, you are not ready, you are weak, you must also live to understand. We will make you a strong ship so I can eat you, and you live to understand."

"OK, so what you are saying, is we are going to build a ship so I can go into you safely? Please elaborate so I can fully understand?"

"Yes!"

"Do you want me to make copies of me to help?"

"Yes"

"Do we start a new ship, or do you want to modify my ship?"

"The Flying Bog, Food and O2 Supply will do."

"How do you know its name?" Enquired Jay.

"You see in me; I see in you. Why are you so happy?"

"Because I am going to be modifying a spaceship with a super being!"

Jay beamed.

Jay and his copies followed the Eater to a room with another non-working White Parallelogram in it. The Eater used its teeth to gently cut the dull white covering off. One of the Jays had his hand on the Eater to speak for it.

"The bit that goes around on the front, is the detector ring. We need that." The Jays scrambled over the open parallelogram and disconnected the part.

"Mount it on the front of the Flying Bog, Food and O2 Supply. This will help you see." The Jays copied the detector ring and then brought the little ship into the maintenance hanger for its refit.

The Eater dictated the modifications, and the Jays did the work, and they loved what they now called 'upgrade time'. The Eater went off every now and then to eat nonessential sections of the Round Ship.

When the Flying Bog, Food and O2 Supply was ready, Jay got in, and the Eater climbed on top. "This is a one direction journey; you do not come back, understand?"

"Got it, and I am ready."

The Eater's skin split and melted over the Flying Bog until only the detector ring was visible under the shimmering surface. The Eater had a new larger

body and a brighter green shimmering skin. The old skin was to protect the Flying Bog.

The Eater just swallowed it in one go. The Jays were visibly shocked at how fast the ship disappeared. Jay reported in, by thought, to the other Jays.

"OK, we, I mean the ship and I, are still in one piece. The detector is working fine, and yep, there is a black hole inside, and it is a long way off. I wonder if it will cause ttiimmmeeee dddiilllaatttttiiiiooonnn."

"So, with the time dilation, how long till Jay gets the answers?" The Jay copies asked the Eater.

"I have little concept of time, but we could go to your home planet before the Jay inside has the knowledge he seeks."

The Jays' minds did a backflip but just said, "Excellent."