



Volume 1
 Number 4
 November
 1950

Feature Novel

THE WORLD-MOVER George O. Smith 8
 Les Ackerman finds himself in a mad tangle with the inhabitants of three possible worlds, each certain that only Ackerman alone can save their existences. And to protect one world means the total atomic destruction of another and the disappearance of a third. Then Ackerman finds that he is the cause of the dilemma, only he does not know how he has brought it about!

Novelet

THE SECRET PEOPLE James Blish and Damon Knight 46
 Believing themselves to be the first humans out from Earth, the crew of the Conquest discover another, titanic ship. Now they see it...and then, now they don't!

Short Stories

THE TERROR Alfred Coppel 62
 Panic reigns when Jan Carvel's space-flier returns with evidence of unknown creatures preparing invasion-bases!

MOON OF MEMORY Bryce Walton 68
 Hunted, harried, Barstec finds an unexpected aide in a girl who wants to save him... for a killing.

DAY OF THE HUNTERS Isaac Asimov 74
 Solving the mystery of what happened to the great dinosaurs poses a bitter question.

CARIDI SHALL NOT DIE Walter Kubiilus 80
 The greatest discovery of the Solar System must be suppressed by its broken-hearted discoverers, because...

Departments

TODAY AND TOMORROW 67

READER'S PREFERENCE COUPON 87

DOWN TO EARTH 89

FROM THE BOOKSHELF 98

Cover by Milton Luros Robert W. Lowndes, Editor
 Interior illustrations by Fawcette, Finlay, and Luros.

FUTURE COMBINED WITH SCIENCE FICTION STORIES, published bi-monthly by COLUMBIA PUBLICATIONS, INC., 1 Appleton Street, Holyoke, Mass. Editorial and executive offices at 241 Church Street, New York 13, New York. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at Holyoke, Mass, under the act of March 3, 1879. Entire contents copyright 1950 by Columbia Publications, Inc., 20c per copy; yearly subscription \$1.20. When submitting manuscripts, enclose stamped, self-addressed envelope for their return, if found unavailable. The publishers will exercise care in the handling of unsolicited manuscripts, but assume no responsibility for their return. Printed in the U.S.A.

CARIDI SHALL NOT DIE!

★ ★ ★

by **Walter
Kubilius**

(illustration by Fawcette)

The relics of the Caridi civilization were the greatest archeological find in the Solar System. And they were right on top of the richest power-source mine in the system, too!

CAPTAIN FULSOM of the Solar Museum Expedition dropped his beam wand in despair. "It's no use," he said, discouragement in his voice, "Can't find the slightest trace of artificially-created structures. The radio waves reflect nothing but the same old crust of Pluto."

"Then those hieroglyphics on Mars..." Morely began to say.

"Fakes," Fulsom broke in bitterly, "If there ever was a civilization on Pluto we would have found a trace of it by now."

Wearily, struggling with the clumsy movement of their space-suits, they made their way back to the Rocketship Darwin.

Captain Fulsom was lost in thought, thinking of the millions in-

The being appeared suddenly before the astonished Bender . . .



vested in the expedition and wondering how he would face his colleagues back on Earth. A lost civilization on frozen Pluto! Even now he could see them laughing in the laboratories and museums of Earth. He could even hear them as they jeered.

"What!" they would ask laughingly, "traces of a lost civilization on icy Pluto? On the planet that receives 1/3600 of the sun's rays that Earth receives? So, Captain Fulsom, chasing the ghosts of the past?"

A buzzing within his helmet interrupted his reverie. Someone was trying to call him. He turned around and saw, far on the bleak snowy mountain, a small figure leisurely waving a greeting to them.

"Must be one of the prospectors," Morley said, "hunting for barrite-crystals, the source of atomic power."

"He's probably starving for a chance to talk," Fulsom replied, "Here's hoping he hasn't got spacemadness, or we'll never hear the end of his adventures."

"You can hardly blame them for talking so much. Some of them spend months all alone on a planet."

The prospector soon bounded up to them. He wore the usual apparatus. On his suit's legs were strapped pickaxes, rods and blasting equipment. On his back were two double-sized concentrated oxygen tanks; this meant he was prepared to spend more than a month away from a spaceship or camp.

He was an old man—they could see his wrinkled face and white-streaked beard through the visor of his space suit. "Hi ya friends," he greeted them warmly, "ya prospecting?"

His voice came weakly over the suit-to-suit radio. *H'm, thought Fulsom, he must have been here quite some time. His powerized battery is almost shot.* "Not exactly," he said aloud; "we're from the Solar Museum. We're hunting for traces of lost civilizations on Pluto."

A flicker of suspicion shone in the prospector's eyes and then died away. He forced a smile to his lips.

"Scientists, huh? You don't say!" he crackled, "Use ta be a scientist myself. I'm the fellow who invented the automatic meteor-warner. Yes sir!" he added proudly, "That's me!"

Fulsom smiled. The meteor-warner was invented by nobody; it was only the logical result of years of space-traveling. Each rocketeer who ever left the Earth added something—each giving what he knew so that others would follow in the dread recesses of space. But the old prospector was a pleasant sort of liar nonetheless.

"How long have you been here?" Morely asked.

"Nigh unto twenty years!"

"Twenty years! That's impossible! How do you get air, food and materials?"

"Oh, easy enough," the prospector said as his face wrinkled into a smile again. "I buy 'em from occasional prospectors and expeditions who come along. There's one around here every year or so."

"But suppose no one came for over a year?"

The prospector shrugged his shoulders and looked at the desolate scene on the Plutonian landscape. Sharp jagged mountains cut into a grim dark sky. Death was easy on Pluto.

For all he knew, Fulsom thought, the prospector may have been telling the truth. When a man travels through space for a long time he picks up strange ideas—like spending twenty years on a piece of ice. But the old prospector was pretty sane; he could see that. No space madman had a sense of humor.

"Say!" the prospector said, "How about inviting me on board?"

"Sure!" Fulsom agreed, ashamed that he had forgotten. When a man wears a space suit for a long time he gets tired. "Come on!"

Arm in arm, chatting as they went, the trio stepped aboard the Rocket ship *Darwin*.

AFTER he had relaxed within the soothing warmth of the ship and had a few sips of the space-famous Mercurian tea, the old pros-

pector began to spin his yarns. Fulsom and Morely, discouraged after months of fruitless work on Pluto, were soon smiling again.

"Why," the old man drawled once more, taking another sip of Mercurian tea, "I remember the time I got lost in the rings of Saturn with the giant of a ship I had then! By Solar! But that was a time!" he chuckled, "I moved slowly, like a worm, and wiggled my way through 'em. I got out into space pretty well for a couple of thousand miles when I look around and what do you think I saw?"

"Haven't the faintest idea!" the two scientists said.

"Them moons were following me! So help me Solar! There was a string of them moons behind me! The Palomar Observatory checked up on my story and to this day you can see them on Saturn where my ship dragged them away. The Old Prospector's Strings—that's what they call them! Ah yes! Them were the days! A man could go out into space and start something or find something. Tain't like that any more. Barrite crystal prospectors everywhere!"

"But you're a barrite crystal prospector yourself!" Morley interrupted. The old man looked at him as if he was hurt.

"That's different!" he said, suddenly changing his tone. Morely and Fulsom listened to him in surprise. "I mean it!" he went on, "Barrite crystals are the source of atomic power. That's why everybody hunts for them. Even me. But do you think they'd use that power successfully? For the good of the system? Building a ship to reach the stars, for example? Hell, no! They build war rockets! Damn them!"

"Yes," Fulsom said soberly, "atomic power is a wonderful thing, but it becomes horrible when used in space-war; I've seen it."

They paused, each one in his thoughts. The old prospector, more than the others, seemed to be struggling with something. He found it difficult to speak. "You fellows,"

he began hesitantly, "What are you here for?"

"We're hunting for traces of a lost Plutonian civilization," Fulsom began. "Hieroglyphics on Martian ruins pointed this way. But we haven't found anything."

"I want to show you something," the prospector said, getting up.

He walked to his space-suit hanging on the wall and paused before it as if giving himself a last chance to back down. He squared his shoulders, and trembling hands rummaged through the suit's pockets till he found the precious scrap of paper. He carefully unfolded it and tenderly carried it back and gave it to Fulsom. "Look at this," he said, a touch of command in his voice.

Fulsom took it, glanced at it. Suddenly his eyebrows arched in astonishment. "This is the same type of writing as the Martian hieroglyphics! Where did you get it? Where is it from?"

"From the Caridi."

"The Caridi?" Fulsom and Morley asked, standing up; "what do you mean?"

"The Caridi," he said, looking up at them. "was the civilization on Pluto."

"Good Lord, man!" Fulsom asked excitedly, "Have you found traces, ruins?"

"Yes," he said slowly, "I found ruins."

"Then that's why you are here!"

"Yes," he added softly, "To see that no one else finds them."

"Are you mad?" Fulsom broke in. "If these Caridi ruins, or whatever you call them, exist—why, they might explain the entire history of the solar system! You can't keep such knowledge hidden! Where are those ruins?"

"Those ruins go back thousands of years. I might even say," he added hesitantly, "millions. But there's one damn thing!" he shouted. "Those ruins are placed right smack upon the richest barrite-crystal layer in the entire solar system!"

THE PROSPECTOR stood up and nervously paced the interior

of the ship. Fulsom and Morely watched as he gesticulated angrily with his arms. "Don't you think I wanted to have capable scientists examine those traces of the Caridi and help decode the inscriptions which have baffled me? Of course I did!"

"Then why don't you?" Fulsom demanded.

"Because they would have discovered the barrite-ore underneath! There's enough there to blow up the whole system. Do you think any one planet could have kept its discovery a secret? It would have become known and the damndest inter-planetary war would begin for the control of Pluto! Mars couldn't afford to let Earth control the ores and Earth couldn't trust Mars. Venus couldn't let either of them! And in the fighting that would go on here every vestige of the Caridi civilization would be destroyed!"

Fulsom and Morely were stunned. What planet would ever permit a leisurely examination of pre-historic ruins that would explain the dark pages of knowledge, while knowing that underneath it was an unlimited store of barrite, enough to enable it to master the solar system? It could not be done; one or the other had to be sacrificed. Knowledge would be destroyed by war.

"I think I know what we can do," Fulsom said slowly.

The old prospector looked at him and smiled, "Just what I'm doing?"

Fulsom nodded his head.

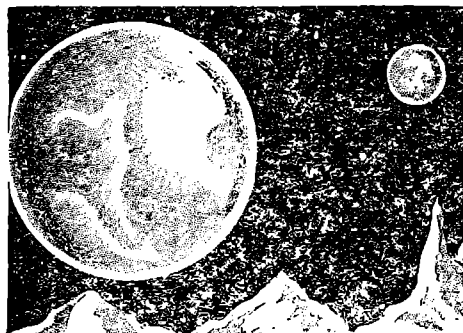
"What is it?" Morely asked.

"I could stay here," he said quickly, "and examine those ruins with the prospector. I'll put every inch of the planet under the microscope if necessary, but the secret of our solar system and its civilization must be discovered!"

The prospector and Morely listened intently while Fulsom paused.

"You," he said, to Morely, "could go back to Earth and say that nothing was found but a few traces which I am unearthing; that would satisfy the Museum. Above all, say that barrite-crystals are almost non-existent on Pluto. While planet fights planet, they must not come here!"

"We're not expected for six



months," Morely decided, "so I'll stay and help you."

"That's good," the prospector said, "Let's go to the fields now; I'll show you what remains of a great but lost civilization."

Fulsom went to the controls and the Rocketship *Darwin* blasted away. In two days they came to a gigantic sunken valley on both sides of which razor-like hills stood protectingly. The ground was like a multi-colored candy stick laid down between two mountain ranges.

"There was a giant upheaval on Pluto countless ages ago," the prospector said, "which exposed the buried civilization of Caridi. Each layer is the history of a million years."

The rocketship descended and rested on the dark frozen soil of Pluto.

SIX MONTHS later, the prospector came to Fulsom and Morely as they worked on a map, planning the next day's excavations. "I finished the translation of the inscriptions we found."

"Splendid!" Fulsom said; "the years you spent here were not wasted. Morely and I could never have decoded the simplest word."

Fulsom and Morely dropped their work and listened. This was a message from a people that were a million years dead when the pterodactyl screamed on Earth.

"Many were the tears shed in Caridi today," he read slowly, "for evil news has come from the third planet of our sun."

"That's Earth!" Morely shouted in surprise.

"...the colony of Caridi has fallen

to the ice! The brave men who gave their lives for the glory of science shall be ever remembered in the annals of Caridi. Our colony has failed. Few are the years that remain. Here, as on the Third Planet, the dark night of the ice awaits us...

The prospector put down the paper for a moment. "From here on," he said, "I can't piece the disjointed ideas together. There is only one idea which gives itself to translation. It is this: *'...the Caridi will be born again—on the Third Planet!...'*"

"They must have tried to colonize again, but failed."

"No," the prospector said, "the words are definitely *'will be born again'*. But that isn't all. This is what it says later on."

Carefully, testing the weight and meaning of each word, he read: *"...the intelligences yet to be born shall not remember Caridi. To them we shall be nothing but ruins upon a frozen planet. But Caridi shall not die! It will be born again! It will live silently in the memory of the Third Planet, always there, vaguely hinting and encouraging them to find their heritage underneath our ruins.... They shall remember, looking at the stars, only when their memory speaks in terms of hope and progress...."*

"That heritage," Morely said, "is the barrite crystals! The unlimited source of atomic power!"

"Not only that, but in those ruins we will find the accumulated knowledge of a million years—waiting."

"Those words, the Caridi will be born again, hint of something else," Fulsom said, nervously rereading the prospector's translations. "What is life? Is it something that is an accident in the universe? How did it come to Earth? Those life spores that some say came from the outer reaches of space—may not their source have been Caridi?"

"Some call it Caridi, others call it God!" laughed Morely.

"Did it ever occur to you," he said in answer to Morely's joking remark, "to ask why Earth has always been practically teeming with life?"

Nothing ever evolved to civilization on Mars or Venus before Caridi or Earth colonized them! Only one planet in the entire solar system is immanent with life—and that planet is Earth!

"I still can't understand it all," he added, his brows hardening into lines of concentration. "But I feel that those frozen ruins outside, incredibly ancient as they are, may hold the secret of life itself!"

They were silent for a moment, awed by the full impact of the inscription they had found beneath the strata of Pluto. Each one felt his insignificance as he thought of the eons of measureless time that had passed since Caridi had known its greatness.

Their silence was suddenly broken. A shrill whistle from the control board filled the little room on the space-ship.

Surprised (for who would ever come to this graveyard planet?) they turned and watched a quivering needle on the dial.

"Space-ship approaching," Fulsom said softly.

STANDING ON the surface of Pluto, they watched the long, black space-ship descend. When the rockets had sputtered and died the trio, dressed in their heavy clanging space-suits, approached the strange ship, half in wonder and half in fear.

It was battered and worn, a space-ship that had seen many years of service in the lanes. There was something else that made them uneasy as they approached. From port-holes on the ship peered ominous and powerful gun nozzles.

The air-lock opened and three men stepped forward. The first one held nothing in his hand but a metallic roll; the other two were armed. Only a short distance separated them from Fulsom, Morely and the prospector. The leader motioned with his arm that he was ready to speak.

"Who are you?" Fulsom heard the gruff voice through the microphone of the space suit.

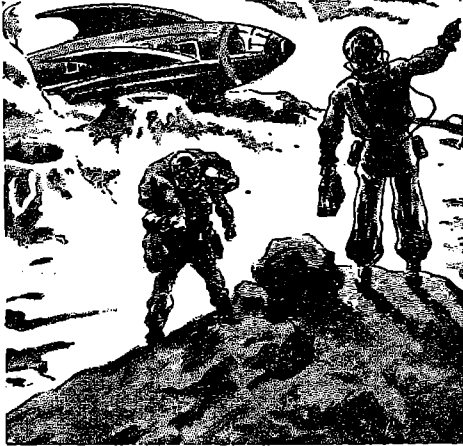
"Captain Fulsom on the Solar Museum. And you?"

"What're you doing here," the stranger said, ignoring the question, "prospecting?"

"Yes," Fulsom answered sharply; "Is it any of your concern?"

"Looking for barrite crystals in this valley I suppose?"

"No. There is nothing here of commercial value to interest you. We're examining ancient ruins of a pre-historic civilization."



The stranger laughed out loud and then cut it short with an angry snarl. "Got a claim?"

"No. We don't need a claim. This is a scientific expedition from the Solar Museum of Earth. Who are you and what do you want?"

"My name is Bender," he answered. "Have no claim, eh? Well, you need a claim to touch land in the Solar System. Planetary Courts say so. I got a claim, a mining claim, for barrite crystals. That old buzzard there," he said, pointing to the prospector, "was around when I first laid my ship down on this valley two years ago. I recognize him."

"But I got a claim now," he shouted, brandishing the metallic roll before them; "now get the hell off my land before I order the three of you shot down!"

"You can't get away with this, Bender," the prospector broke in. "There's important work going on here! You'll smash those ruins in order to get to the barrite crystals. You can't do that! Those ruins are important to science!"

"Damn science! Get off my land!"

"I'll appeal to the Planetary Courts," said Fulsom; "there are laws prohibiting the destruction of archaeologically valuable land."

"It will be six months by the time you get to a court," Bender sneered. "By that time I'll have enough ore ready to buy out every court from here to the sun."

"You'll pay for this," the prospector said evenly, "I'm warning you!"

"See those guns on my ship? They're trained on yours. If you are not back in it within twenty minutes and set off from this valley, I'll blast your ship to pieces—and you too for that matter."

Fulsom and Morely, hopelessly furious with rage, cursed the fact that there was not a single gun on the *Darwin*. Turning away, the trio made their way slowly and despairingly to the ship. Oddly enough, the old prospector didn't seem to mind; he smiled grimly to himself as he trudged along.

Within the *Darwin* Captain Fulsom paced the floor, pale with anger. "It takes millions of years," he raged, "to discover all that science has achieved in those ruins, and they'll be destroyed in six months by a bunch of barrite-stricken, power-mad fools!"

"We better start going," the prospector said; "we have only a few minutes."

"We can—" Morely began, and then stopped.

"We can what?" Fulsom demanded.

"We can ram them," Morely said quickly. "That will prevent them from destroying the ruins. Only one is needed—"

"I'll be the one!"

"No," the old prospector broke in, "there's not a chance. The ship would be shot down before it got near enough. Set the motors."

"Where to and why?"

"Up to the highest mountain so we can get a complete view of the valley. I'm going to show you what happened to me twenty years ago."

"What in the world are you talking about?" Fulsom asked, irritated.

"You'll see. I would have told you before, but you would not have believed me."

MORELY turned on the power and within a few moments the rocket blasted its way upward. When it was several thousand feet above the surface of the planet they levelled off and shot across the giant valley to a great peak in the distance. Near it they stopped and brought down the ship to rest upon the mountain top that overlooked the plain.

"Focus your telescope and watch Bender and his mob," the prospector ordered.

"I still don't get what you're driving at," Fulsom said, but both he and Morely obeyed. They aligned the telescoping sights so that a clear picture of Bender's rocket ship and his men could be seen. The black rocket was like a rotten egg lying upon a colored sea of sand.

Bender and six men, evidently the entire crew, were outside the ship. They quickly separated, each armed with a barrite-rifle and each holding a beam wand. Obviously they were losing no time for the blasting would soon begin. The seventh man, who wheeled a small carriage, was the man who would place the charges in the ground before setting them off.

As Fulsom and Morely watched, the old prospector spoke.

"Twenty years ago," he said, "I did the same thing. What will happen to Bender and his men, happened to me. Watch."

Like seven small insects Bender and his men scurried around the ship, jubilant that underneath their feet lay an ore that would make them the most powerful men on Earth. Nothing could be seen in the entire valley but the ship and the seven dark men.

"I lied to you when I said I came here with my own ship," the old prospector continued, "I came here twenty years ago on the *Balter*. It's on the other side of this mountain range now. Ours was a prospecting expedition; we were hunting for barrite-crystals, just like Bender is doing. I was captain and we found

that the whole valley was situated on a gigantic layer of crystals. I ordered one of my men to begin blasting..."

Bender could be seen, however dimly, waving to one of his men. The man with the carriage rolled up to him. Bender pointed to a section of the valley to which the man quickly made his way. The man with the carriage bent down, removed his tools and plunged them into the earth.

"He's boring a hole before blasting," Fulsom said to Morely.

"Look!"

One moment ago the valley was empty but for seven men. But now there was a eighth!

She materialized suddenly before Bender and the man who was preparing to set the blast. Her skin was dark and shone with a faint luminosity. She stood erect, a head taller than the brawny and muscular Bender.

Bender reeled back in surprise. The kneeling man stood up and walked back a few steps, stunned.

Bender must have recovered from his surprise for he moved forward a few hesitant steps toward the strange being.

They stood gazing at each other for a moment, and then Bender's arms slowly went up. The palms of his suit-encrusted hands pressed against the sides of his head and his knees buckled under him as if he were in great agony.

"For God's sake, man!" Fulsom shouted to the prospector, "explain what's going on!"

"Telepathy," he said, "There is no international language, so thoughts must be translated into words. The Caridi just drained Bender's mind of all his knowledge. Painful."

"Is that what happened to you?"

"Yes. All I got was one message: *Do not blast. These ruins are precious. There is knowledge in them.* The sudden pain passed. I turned to tell my men to remove the blasting. They laughed at me and..."

"She's saying something to his men!" Morely shouted. Fulsom and the old prospector turned and looked through the telescreen in time to

see the figure of Bender facing his men.

An order was given. Immediately the five who were armed unbuckled their rifles and aimed them at the strange being.

They were waiting only for Bender's command to fire.

BENDER faced the thing again and both stared into each other's eyes. No word could be heard by the three who watched the scene from the top of the mountain, but they could sense that a battle raged between them.

One minute had passed when it appeared that the exchange of thoughts was finished, but not to the satisfaction of Bender.

He turned and spoke to his men. At an order from him their guns spat flame.

The barrite-rifles flashed. At the apex of the bullet stream from five rifles, was the being—unharméd! She stood, unscarred and untouched, as shot after shot bounced helplessly off him.

Panic-stricken, Bender's men

dropped their guns and ran frantically to the air-lock of their ship. It was a race that doomed them from the beginning, for as each one ran past the being, a ray of white light flowed from her eyes.

As the rays touched each man he fell clumsily and became nothing but a mass of dead flesh and hot metal as he struck the ground. Six were killed in as many seconds.

Bender stood his ground and did not move. Whether he was too terrified to flinch or whether he was a man who faced death as he had lived life—cold-bloodedly, the three men in the *Darwin* could not tell.

When Bender's withered body collapsed on the frozen soil of Pluto the strange being turned and looked toward the spaceship in which Fulsom, Morely and the old prospector sat.

It raised a hand in silent recognition and then disappeared.

"That being will never be seen again," the old prospector whispered as it faded away, "Its task is finished."

[Turn Page]

FULSOM turned to the old prospector who stood behind him, looking at the dark valley.

"Who are you?" he asked softly.

"Just an old prospector," the old man smiled, "who remembered."

"I—I can't understand it," Fulsom said, "Who was that being? Could the Caridi foretell the future? Did they—did they know we were coming? I feel as if it is all really quite simple, that one fine day every single thing that baffles us now will be clear. It's like—like trying to recall something important that had slipped your mind."

"It takes time for a race to remember," the prospector said.

"Why do you say, 'remember'?"

"Isn't that as good a word as any? A man remembers his childhood. Why shouldn't a race remember its own? But here is a translation of the inscription on the last wall of one of the Houses of Science we excavated. I did not want to show it to you before."

He took out a small piece of pen-

cilled paper and read: "*The three shall descend from the roof of the mountain and continue the work. They shall clear away the valley and bury the dead. And one of them shall say, I have remembered!*"

"*Yes! Beings of the Third Planet! You will remember! The suns grow and die in cycles that never know an end. And each star and planet, like each individual life you live, will someday become still. But we shall not die!*"

"*When your planet, like ours, feels the approach of death—fling the torch of life across the stars!*"

The old prospector folded the piece of paper and gave it to Fulsom. "I translated that yesterday."

"Is there more?"

"Perhaps there is," he answered, smiling, "but we will get to the rest later."

It was sunrise on Pluto as the three men descended into the valley, bearing in their hands the scrap of paper.

THE END

(This story has been reprinted by popular request.)