

U.F.O.

FINAL PART
OF OUR
SPINE-CHILLING
SPACE SERIES

When Close Encounters Are Too Close For Comfort

IN STEVEN SPIELBERG'S film, *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind*, a selected group of people come face to face with alien beings.

The title of the film was, in fact, taken from a catalogue system devised by the late Dr J. Allen Hynek. A Close Encounter Of The Third Kind (CE3) defines a sighting of a UFO at close quarters with the addition of "animated creatures."

Such sightings take us into the most bizarre and controversial area of the UFO experience.

While many people are prepared to accept that, occasionally, someone may see an aircraft of unknown design and origin, they balk at the thought of encounters with humanoid beings.

Unless, of course, it has happened to them . . .

Sinister

When canteen assistant, Mary Kent, set out for her daughter's house, little could she imagine what awaited her along the route.

The Lancashire council estate where she lived is set in an isolated valley serviced by a single narrow road.

Once surrounded by huge hills of coal slag, the estate benefited when the NCB initiated a programme of land reclamation in the early Seventies. This included putting down top soil, then seeding the area with grass, trees and bushes.

One such hill, overlooking the road, was to play a sinister role in May of 1976.

Mrs Kent rose early, dressed, then prepared her things for work. While enjoying a cigarette and cup of tea, she remembered promising to drop a new pack of tights around to her daughter's, who also lived on the estate. As it was only 6.15 a.m., she decided there was time before she was due for work.

It was a bright, sunny morning, quiet and pleasant as she walked along the road at the edge of the estate. She stopped abruptly. There was someone staring intensely at her from just below the brow of the hill.

He was wearing a one-piece, silver suit with a cloak tied at the neck, and raised, pointed lapels. On his head sat a cone-shaped hat, and boot tops were just visible above the height of the grass.

The figure stared down at the middle-aged woman, mesmerising her on the deserted roadway. Then something else tore her attention away. To the right of the "man," and behind him, stood a large, silver, spherical object which cast a bright light down the hillside.

Mary Kent turned and hurried off to deliver the tights.

Frightened

I asked if she had notified her daughter about the incident.

"I don't understand why, but I said nothing. Perhaps I was frightened, or thought she wouldn't believe me. Anyway, I kept it to myself."

This is a common reaction with witnesses. They are so baffled and sometimes afraid, they keep it inside until they can deal with it more openly.

On her return, the figure was still there. Mary was so concerned she took a different route back to her house.