

**IS ANOTHER WORLD WATCHING US?**

# Tragedy above clouds

*Grim chase by fighter pilot  
after giant flying saucer*

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**O**N January 7, 1948, Captain Mantell, in command of a scout group of three fighters, followed a huge flying saucer above the clouds at Goodman Field, Fort Knox, Kentucky. The giant disc was about 500 feet across.

Captain Mantell told his commanding officer through his radio speaker that the saucer was climbing at more than 400 miles an hour. He was going to follow it up. The giant disc had been seen by those on the ground shooting out pulses or blasts of red flame. This was a showdown.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

**A**T last, at a quarter past three Mantell's voice

was heard again. He was holding on and up. But the thing was still rising above him and maybe increasing the gap between them.

Still he'd track it as far as he could go—he thought he could stand up to 20,000 feet altitude. Then if that didn't bring him at least to a better view and a closer-up he'd give over.

Probably he did. No one knows for certain. What did show up was dumb, dead dumb. The wreckage of his plane was picked up over a wide area.

How he actually met his death no one could say for sure—but dead he was.

When his voice could no longer be heard on the loudspeaker, the commander ordered one of his companions to search up. He went not only to 33,000 feet.

He swung over hundreds of miles of skyscape. But there was not a glimmer of the immense thing they had all seen rolling above them.

**T**HERE was a rumour that at Columbus, Ohio, at the airfield there, as the sun was setting on

AS THE SUN WAS SETTING ON that fatal day, a disc rushed overhead, and this disc had a big, flaming flue-blast trailing out behind it.

So the tragic chase closed with the first saucer casualty.

The sacrifice made by the gallant pioneer didn't add to our knowledge any more than might have been gleaned from the ground.

The observations from the tower showed that it was a new species, and may be a new genus of this strange visitation.

Before, no disc of that size had been noted—though some may have been as big, but too high to be gauged. But what none before had shown was this great flare of angry incandescence from the stern.

It was now October, 1948. Year Two of the Discs had been full of inconclusive evidence, some hoaxes, a lot of mistaken sightings — weather balloons, &c.—a lot certainly pointing to something—but to what, to what definite conclusion? No one could say.

No one very much wanted

No one very much wanted to say. For if it was a secret weapon no one wanted to talk about what might be spoilt by talking. If it was "another Power," there again no one wanted panic started.

And if it was something not human at all — why then least of all did anyone want to talk

The case that follows, though it is important and puzzling, did not thank heaven, end in tragedy, only in further bewilderment.

The evening of that first October day had already settled in. It was now night over the North Dakota town of Fargo.

**A** NATIONAL Air Guard lieutenant named George Gorman, a man of some importance in the city, was coming in from a practice flight in a fighter.

He was the last of his group, and had just received the O.K. that it was clear and safe for him to land. But, looking below his craft, he saw, moving very fast, a light between him and the ground.

It was moving at an unwise speed, considering how

wise speed, considering how

close he judged it to be the earth, for he took it to be the hind light of a plane.

Naturally, he told the landing control below to make sure again all was clear. They told him there was only one other plane in the district, and as it happened he could pick up its outline—well out of his way.

This plane was nowhere near the patrolling light.

**F**URTHER, as the light circled about until it was between Gorman and a lighted ground area, Gorman saw no body, no structure of any sort round the light—there was just a flame without a holder, a moving light without anything to move it, or carry it.

Now the tower control man caught sight of the light. He had, of course, night binoculars — so he could see far better than Gorman. But like Gorman he could see just the light and nothing round it.

Then Gorman decided on

matic opponent—an oppon-

matic opponent—an opponent who certainly knew how to play the game, and who, in boxing terms, could show some pretty footwork.

They danced this night sky duet above the airfield. But some of the turns made by the light, as leader, were so sharp and neat that they made Gorman go as black in his consciousness as the night outside.

This touch and touch again of the grim danger of blacking out made Gorman think fast. The thing was behaving humanly, one might even say humorously, but could it be human and flick round corners and make turns like that? Could

a bold thing. He was above the light. So he swooped on it. And that apparently caught its wandering attention. It paused and then, quick as a toreador with a charging bull, side-stepped.

As Gorman swooped past he could see it as it slipped off to his right. It was only a foot or so in size, a white globe. Gorman thought it was making for the tower, so he dived at it again.

at it again.

**F**OR 20 minutes this skilful flier dived and ducked at this queer, enig-

any human brain stand such spinning and sudden twisting?

**T**HAT problem of whether humans can turn as quick as discs turn is going to turn up again. We had best, then, note it well now. For certainly a lot may well turn on it, on that one queer fact.

The facts of human anatomy are stubborn things. We weren't meant to function above a certain rate and pressure and power of spin. Go over that and you'll be lucky, very lucky, if you don't find

yourself laid out—and perhaps for good.

But when at last Gorman, by a quick stroke, seemed for a moment as though he might actually get in its path, for a moment it seemed to lose patience. With its usual unexpected readiness it suddenly swung.

readiness it suddenly swung. But not away—straight on to Gorman.

The two, he and the light, were now diving right into each other. Gorman then did dip and the light sailed over him. Perhaps that counted as a point to it.

**G**ORMAN thought, however, that he must make another dash for it. Again they came head-on. But this time—as it must be owned the discs always seem to do—it took to its good manners and used its full powers—it just hopped right up into the air, as the old Cretan bull-fighters used to leap right over the charging bull.

But Gorman wouldn't let it go. By that time, however, the Thinking Light had tired of playing ball with its rather clumsy human pick-up.

He came on, panting up behind it. But, it, light as Ariel, rushed up to 14,000 and then (after Gorman's plane had coughed but got its wind again and taken him to 17,000 feet) the Light shook itself free of its heavy hanger-on, sailed up into the night and was

up into the night and was gone.

**T**HIS unequalled joint-performance of man and mystery, flame and fighter plane, was watched by quite an audience. To the two men in the tower were added another couple, who had just arrived by plane.

This moving body—if it can be called a body—had no trail. And no one heard any sound come from it.

One thing will strike anyone who reads this report, or at least one question must arise, "surely that Light was being projected"?

There must have been—if the whole thing wasn't a phantom hunt and not a factual hunt—there must have been someone high, high aloft, who was directing this little bright "bait," directing it on the flying field of Fargo, North Dakota, to see what the minnows in the bottom of the earth-atmosphere pool would do.

**T**HE "person" far, far above played with the one "minnow" that rose. But, and this is vitally im-

But, and this is vitally important, though the minnow, like any other mindless minnow, dashed at the bait and tried to capture it, the high, hidden "fisherman" was, thank heaven, much more a patient naturalist than a sportsman wanting to land a catch.

He played with the poor little creature, which was only able to swim as high

as the water of its pool extended (and so at 17,000 feet could be let slide back to mud-level).

He took care to learn as much as he could of the minnow's power of not only manoeuvre, but of mind—tested to see what turns it could take, what tactics it was capable of, what its resistance to strain, what its inventiveness to sudden movement might be.

**T**HERE is, then, no escaping the conclusion not only—as all who were in on that play agreed—that there was an intelligence guiding that Light.

As to the tragic Mantell case—again, what else

case—again, what else could be expected? This huge thing, this monstrous sky-master, scuttled away from the silly gnat that kept on rushing after it.

No one knows how near Mantell got. The current explanation is that as he hadn't got oxygen with him, above 20,000 he "blacked-out" (to be expected), and that while he was in a swoon his plane got out of control.

**A** CRASH from that height has happened

from that cause, and the crash will do all for the victim and his plane that the account of that plane's break-up bore out.

But Mantell may have got right into the danger zone—and by that is meant right near the wash of this terrible thing's inconceivable engines. And such facts as we have seen point to one thing—these "ships" are quite as peculiar in their power as in their shape. They do command some sort of prodigious energy the like of which is just under the horizon of our speculation.

**E**

**F**INALLY there was a report that Mantell's plane fragments did show signs of such "handling." There were grooves in the metal, driven right through it.

Taking for granted the size and power of this, the greatest of all sky-visitors, yet viewed (with any accuracy), we can only conclude one thing. These searchers and explorers from the sky are considerate—indeed, there is every reason to suppose that they are wise as they are clever, as gentle as they are ingenious.

In this case they were escaping so fast that they thought they had left the "gnats" safely behind.

Then one got close enough to hit that intense "wake" of discharging atom - force radiation energy, needed to drive this artificial island up into the airless sky, out into space, maybe.

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## **TOMORROW**

Flying saucers travel at  
18,000 m.p.h.

