Now he made out the flicker of the braking drive a mile or so overhead, and presently soft motor thunder came down to blanket the almost lightless city with sound. A beam swayed through the throbbing darkness, caught the descending ship and held it, a small gleaming minnow slipping through the dark heavens. A faint glow rose from Pi Mesa, where the spaceport lay above the city, as a runway lighted up—draining the last reserves of the city's stored power, but draining them gladly now that, in those autumn days of the historic year 819, relief was in sight.