

CLASSIFIED

04/23/67

The following is a report on Operation Godspeed. In 2064, NASA made the significant breakthrough of getting a small object to travel faster than the speed of light (how this was achieved is in a separate report). Operation Godspeed was an experiment in making larger things travel faster than light. We designed and built a ship that could travel several times faster than light, called the Icarus, while preserving the things inside of it. The first test was sending the Icarus to the Large Magellanic Cloud, the nearest galaxy to the Milky Way, and back. The Icarus completed the trip there and back in less than a day. The astronauts piloting the ship presented no bodily harm from the trip, so the next step was to send an expedition beyond the ranges of our telescopes and, if possible, past the edges of the universe.

The Icarus was launched on January 1st, 2066. It was intended to be a several year voyage. On March 10th, 2066, the Icarus crashed into the Atlantic Ocean with no survivors. Fortunately, the ship's log was intact. It is currently the only source of information on what transpired aboard the Icarus during its journey.

<TRANSCRIPT OF AUDIO LOGS>

<Begin Log – 01/01/66>

"Hey, it's Johnny. The lab boys asked me to take notes on the trip, so I figured I'd get started before takeoff. Folks are all pretty excited about this, myself included. We're about to see secrets of the universe for the first time! I just finished doing a little equipment check, everything looks good to go. Guess I'll sign off for now."

<Begin Log – 00/00/00>

"Hey, it's Johnny. We just finished taking off – it's hard to believe we're able to go this fast. Right now, looking out the window only lets you see darkness. I hope it's not always like that... Oh, one thing I forgot to mention. Since concepts of time while going this fast are a little... debatable, we basically set all of our clocks and calendars to start at takeoff and count up from there. Right, that's all for... What?"

<A voice can be heard, but is too far away to be intelligible.>

Johnny: "Oh. Matt says hi, everyone. Johnny, signing off."

<Begin Log – 00/02/00>

"Hey, it's Johnny. We've made it a little ways out of the Milky Way. Nothing too eventful yet, but I suppose that's why I brought books. For the sake of not annoying the crew too much, I've decided to only make these updates when something actually significant happens. Until then, this is Johnny, signing off."

<Begin Log – 00/10/00>

"Hey, it's Johnny. We've reached the threshold of getting beyond the range of Earth's telescopes. Things should get pretty exciting now, we're all hoping. The sheer amount of things to check out is a bit intimidating, I'll admit, but I'm sure the ancient astronomers thought the same thing about all the stars. Anyway, there's what appears to be a galaxy in the distance, so we're going to check it out. Johnny, signing off."

<Begin Log – 00/11/00>

“Hey. Something’s kinda weird about the galaxy. It looks a lot like the Andromeda. I don’t just mean that it’s a spiral, I mean that almost everything is exactly the same. I say almost, because a few of the stars appear to be replaced with brown dwarfs, but pretty much everything else is right where you’d expect it to be if we were in the Andromeda instead of... well, whatever galaxy this is. The researchers are just saying that it’s a cosmic coincidence, bound to happen eventually, but I don’t know... Anyway, I’ll let you guys know how the next one goes. Updates are probably going to be more frequent! Johnny, signing off.”

<Begin Log – 00/13/00>

“Hey, it’s Johnny. We’ve toured more galaxies, but the results have been similar. Some Messiers, the Black Eye galaxy, et cetera. Feels like when we go into a new one these days, it’s just us playing a matching game. The... discrepancies, I’ll call them, have been weirder. Some ‘stars’ have been chunks of solid gold, or water, that kind of thing. Feels impossible, yet there it is. I can’t think of any possible explanation for it, but I guess that’s why I’m just here to report it.

We’ve started up a betting pool on when we’re gonna find the Milky Way. Matt says it’ll be in a couple days, and his wife Jan says it’ll be more like a week. I’m on four days, myself. If there were signals coming from it, I’d have...”

<There are several seconds of silence.>

“Hm. Anyway, I’ll update you guys when we find something else interesting. Johnny, signing off.”

<Begin Log – 00/17/00>

“Hey, it’s Johnny. Looks like I won the bet. We found something that’s pretty similar to the Milky Way. We naturally made a beeline for where the Solar System should be. I wouldn’t say anyone outright declared that we’d be making contact with the humans on the other Earth, but there was some excitement as we got closer. “

<There is a sigh.>

“Earth was the weirdest thing we’ve seen yet. All the land formations were right, but it felt like the planet’s composition was completely messed up. The ocean was made of some strange red liquid. No one wants to call it blood, but that’s what it looks like from up here. The continents were made of different materials. It wasn’t just by landmass, either. The border between Europe and Asia was pretty clearly defined by a shift from diamond to some sort of white cloth material. The other continents were made of steel plate, glass, all sorts of things. It all feels like it has some kind of internal consistency, but I can’t figure out what it is. You see something like that, and it makes you think that there’s something human here, but we couldn’t find a single sign of intelligent life anywhere. No buildings, no people, not even animals.”

<He pauses.>

“I don’t like saying it, but morale is low. We haven’t really discovered anything ‘new’ yet, and what we are finding is starting to go from weird to disturbing. We’re having mechanical problems too. Just

recently, while we were cruising, the ship's lights all shut off for a few minutes before turning back on on their own. I was right in the middle of reading something, too. We don't know what caused it, which naturally means we don't that it won't happen--"

<He suddenly stops himself.>

"Well, sitting here complaining about it won't help. For some better news, apparently Jan is pregnant. I think she and Matt could've waited for a better time, personally, but it's not my business. Anyway, that's all for now. Johnny, signing off."

<Begin Log – 00/23/00>

"Hey, it's Johnny. Things are getting weird now. It's only been Milky Way galaxy clones ever since we first found that one, each more twisted than the last. One of them showed us an exact replica of what we think our solar system would look like when our Sun goes nova. There was another where every single planet was comprised with some burning liquid. One time 'Mercury' had such a strong magnetic field that we nearly became stuck to it. One time, everything was completely untouched except for the Sun being replaced with one of those nebulae that looks like an eye."

"It all feels too specific. Tailored to us, somehow. I'm not sure how else to put it... Why is it that as soon as we look behind the curtain, we stop finding new galaxies? Did we go too far, and now the universe is out of ideas? None of this is scientific, but... It just doesn't feel like that's what's going on anymore."

"How long are we supposed to be doing this for?"

<Begin Log – 00/25/00>

"Hey, it's Johnny. We found something 'new' today, I suppose. It was another version of our ship, just floating adrift in space. The ship's name was listed on the side, but it's hard to pronounce. It was spelled 'A, C, R, S, I, U'. Can't make much sense of it, myself. Matt and I were actually able to get inside the ship. Jan seems like the type to wanna do this sort of thing too, but I guess she wasn't feeling well. Things were weird inside, from a construction standpoint. The food dispenser, which usually just gives us some nutrient paste, was spitting out rocket fuel. The sleeping pods were made out of the same material as the walls and floor, rather than the cushiony stuff we have. Just little inconsistencies like that, as if whoever built this ship didn't know anything about humans and was only using our ship as a reference. Not that I actually know who, or what, created this. There were no signs of life inside the ship. I don't know if that's a good or a bad thing, honestly. We left and got back on our own ship. Signing off."

<Begin Log – 01/01/00>

<Sounds of yelling are in the background. The sounds of someone scrambling to pick up the recording device can be heard.>

"--an emergency! Jan started going into labor all of a sudden, but whatever is in her isn't human! I can't even make it out, it's some red--"

<Gunshots fire off in the background, louder than Johnny's voice.>

"--it just came out of her, she's probably dead, it got both of our researchers before Matt could even get the gun, oh--"

<A man's scream is heard, and the recording device hits the floor. In the distance, more gunshots can be heard before eventually stopping.>

<Begin Log – 01/01/00>

"Hey. It's me. It's just me, now. I shot that thing until it stopped moving. Hopefully that means it's dead. Everyone else definitely is. I've been debating what to do with the bodies. I don't think I can bring myself to throw them out into space, but we don't exactly have a morgue on the ship. I've placed them in their sleeping pods for now, though I'm not sure if the smell would reach me or not."

"I suppose I should be more worried about myself. I've managed to turn the ship around. No more good can come from being out here. I've noticed some strange changes in the ship. Things like automatic doors not opening right away, or more of those occasional power losses I mentioned a while ago. We've had more of them lately, since the incident. I don't know what it means. At this point, the ship should be aimed well enough to reach Earth even if I can't pilot it anymore. Signing off."

<Begin Log – 01/05/00>

"Hey, it's Johnny. This might be my last recording. The food dispenser has started spitting out blood and nothing else, so, I'm not really expecting to survive the trip home. I guess this is the last chance I get to say my thoughts on things, so I suppose I'll preach a bit."

"Don't come back out here. We weren't supposed to go this far, plain and simple. It feels like the universe itself was against us being here. Being out here, it's felt like reality itself is breaking apart, bit by bit. Something about the composition of things, big and small, getting shuffled around. I think that's the main key, but I can't make any other sense of it. I'm not gonna go down the route of trying to figure out some internal consistency, because I don't think there is any. The only thing I can hope for is that whatever is causing it doesn't ride back home with the ship."

<Begin Log – 10/75/23>

<Note: This log is seemingly made up of prior voice recordings. Line breaks indicate points when cuts seemed to occur.>

"Hey, it's

universe

too far

too

fast.

Johnny

intelligent

Don't come back

<Gunshots fire off in the background.>

This concludes the audio transcript. Decomposed bodies of all crew members were found in their corresponding sleeping pods. The ship was inspected for further changes to its composition. The letters on the outside of the ship had changed order, now saying "RUCSAI" rather than "ICARUS". We could not determine how or when this change, or other structural changes in the ship, had occurred. The hostile creature mentioned in the report was found; it is currently being carefully stored in Nevada, though no signs of life have been seen. Early examinations revealed that its DNA is very similar to that of a human's.

That is the sum all of the information we have on Operation Godspeed.