

Ralph 124C 41+, Part 8

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Synopsis of Preceding Installments

Ralph 124C 41+, living in New York in the year 2660, while in conversation with a friend at his Telephot, an instrument enabling one to see at a distance, is cut off from his friend and by mistake is connected with a young lady in Switzerland, thus making her acquaintance by Telephot.

The weather engineers in Switzerland who control the weather decided to strike against the Government and turned on the high depression of the Meteorotowers, thereby snowing in a large district. An avalanche threatens to sweep away the house in which the young Swiss lady, Miss 212B 423, lives and she appeals to the great American inventor, Ralph 124C 41+, to save her, which he promptly does by melting the avalanche by directed wireless energy from his New York laboratory.

The inventor on the same afternoon is given an ovation by distance, in which the telephot plays a great part. Afterwards he reads a “newspaper,” the size of a postage stamp, and “writes” a lecture by means of the Menograph, an instrument by means of which words are made to appear on a paper tape by impulses from the brain acting on the apparatus. During the night his head is connected electrically to the Hypnobioscope, an instrument by means of which words and sentences are transmitted directly to the brain while one sleeps, in such a manner that everything can be remembered the next morning.

The great inventor, the next day, is visited by Mr. 212B 423 and his daughter from abroad. Both arrived by means of the Subatlantic Tube, piercing straight through the earth from New York to Brest in France. In the afternoon in presence of his guests and twenty professors from all over the globe, 124C 41+ brings life to a “radiumized” dog, who had been killed three years previous in

presence of the twenty professors. The dog had been preserved with the rare gas Permagatol and Radium-K bromide, which latter occupied the blood vessels of the dog for three years.

124C 41+ then proceeds to show Miss 212B 423 wonderful New York. Both put on "Tele-Motor-Coasters," propelled by wireless energy and roll about the town. They then visit the new electric restaurant: the "Scientificafe," and enjoy a lunch of semi liquid food, supplied through tubes. Afterwards they see the monument of the last horse to die in harness in New York A. D. 2096.

Both then proceed in an aerocab to the National Playgrounds of New York City, located on Long Island where Montauk was formerly; they cover the distance in 10 minutes. They then play tennis and the charms of Miss 212B 423 keep 124C 41 spellbound. Finally when the young lady's wonderful long hair comes down by accident, 124C 41 takes a solemn oath that he can never be happy without her. In the evening 124C 41 entertains his guests in his Tele-Theater i.e. theater by distance. They hear and see the new play "La Normande," playing at the "National Opera" four miles distant from 124C 41's house.

The entire party then proceeded to view New York by night. They entered a store and the young lady was much impressed with the automatic electric packing machine which makes metal boxes while you wait, fitting the size of the package. This box, by means of a Packet Post Conveyor, running under the street, delivers the package automatically to the residence of the purchaser a few minutes after purchase has been made. The young inventor then took his guests up 10,000 ft. over New York, where they view the Signalizers which are search lights turned sky-ward. These signalizers are used to signalize flashes to aerial liners far out to sea. The entire party then witnessed an aerial carnival, composed of six thousand aerial flyers all flying together at the same speed, the flyers being lighted up on the bottoms. Thus they view an immense American flag and various geometrical figures, etc., all outlined by the lighted up aerial flyers. Afterwards 124C 41 takes his guests to his Bacillatorium by means of which Arcturium rays are shot through the human body which kills any germs or bacilli and thereby lengthens life considerably.

Letter from Vilonette 88B 90 to her friend Alice 212B 423.

Ardois-au-Lac.

August 35th, 2660

DEAREST:

Since I talked to you over the 'phone the other day several things have occurred and I thought it best to let you know at once ; I am sending this by the sub-Atlantic tube so it will surely reach you in the morning.

Now, dearest, don't be upset, because I think everything will be straightened out satisfactorily in the end.

Who do you think came in yesterday ? You will never guess, or perhaps you have guessed already : Fernand 600 10! Of course he was the last person on earth I expected as a caller since our scrap two years ago, and I plainly showed my surprise. He was of course smooth and well-mannered as he always is, as long as everything goes the way he wants it to, and for that reason I was as snippish and cattish as I could possibly be ; but it did not seem to disturb him in the least. After a while he cleverly managed to turn the conversation to you, and I knew at once the object of his visit was to get information about you. I consequently was well on my guard, as you may imagine.

He of course was aware that you were in New York at the present, and he also knew that you and your father were the guests of Mr. 124C 41. He asked me when you would return and I told him I did not know. He then wanted to know if I could find out for him and I said I would try.

I would not have thought much about his visit were it not I did not like the ugly look that came in his eyes every time he mentioned 124C 41, whom he seemed to hate from the depths of his heart, (if he has such an organ).

If Fernand thought that before your departure he had at least a ghost of a chance with you, he seems to think now that your famous Yankee friend has spoiled even that slight chance, and he naturally feels bitter towards him I imagine.

I know of course, clearest, that you don't care for Fernand, but I thought best to advise you. And what do you think ? This afternoon I heard my brother tell one of his friends that Fernand is leaving for New York to-night! Hence I wrote this letter, as I could not reach you by 'phone. I suppose he will call on you tomorrow, so be on your guard.

Let me know soon, dearest, I am anxious to learn developments.

In haste, your loving VILONETTE.

N.B.—Thanks for the samples of the netting. If not too much trouble, kindly send me five meters of netting as enclosed sample. I would prefer the color to be dark antique green-oxidized, though ; the enclosed sample shows the alomagnesium color too much, and you know that color is not becoming to me,

Translation of code letter of Llysanorh' CK 1618 to his friend Rrananolh AK42

New York,

September 20, 2660.

DEAR FRIEND:

Although I am booked on the Terrestrial which departs to-morrow, I have cancelled my reservation and consequently will not arrive on Mars November thirty-first as planned. I do not know if I will book on the next transport, in fact I don't know where I am at. My case seems hopeless. I should never have come to this earth. As you have guessed already—it's love at first sight. Never mind her name. You who have never visited this planet cannot understand, consequently it does not matter. Inasmuch as intermarriage of Martians and Terrestrials is forbidden by law, here as well as on Mars, this makes it all the more hopeless for me. I have tried everything to free my self—in vain. Chemicals and Radio-treatments seem only to accentuate my longing for the wonderful creature I love so madly, and I know by this time that I can never free myself. The good part is that she does not know how violently I love her, as I have always been careful not to betray myself. I know she likes me, but she very probably does not love me—in fact I can only hope that she does not ; it would only heighten my agony to know that she should have to suffer on my account.

I will, I suppose, go the way of all Martians who fall in love with Terrestrials. There is no return. A little Lisadinide injected under the skin will free me from all. Don't be shocked—you know my strong mind. If I could o-et out of it, I would, that is all thereti:.. is to be said. I have lost and admit it.

Please hand enclosed documents to my Second and break the news gently to him. I have arranged everything of importance and there is nothing I can ask you to do for me. Please do not mourn me, but keep me in mind and think sometimes of

Your unhappy friend, LLYSANORH'.

Letter from Fernand 60O 10 to his friend Paul 9B 1261

New York,

September 28th, 2660.

DEAR PAUL:

Well, everything is fine—for everyone else except for me. However-you know me-I am not downed so easily. Fact is, I might just as well run against a steelonium wall as against Alice. One is as hard to conquer as the other. That, however, is to my liking. I love obstacles especially if they are as pretty as Alice I never wanted her more in my life than now, now that she has thrown me down. I suppose if she really had given me en- couragement I would not care a lot for her. Now it is different. I will have her. I will make her love me and I will use force to gain my end.

I have told you already of Llysanorh', the funny Martian. It is too funny to see him look at Alice with his big black horse eyes. I do believe he really is in love with her, but these Martians certainly can control their emotions.

If Alice should ever take a liking to this lanky seven foot Llysanorh', she'd be lost to me, Ralph, and the rest of the world. That fellow certainly can be sugary if he wants to. However, I really think she loves that crazy Ralph scientist and, as I said before, between him and that Martian I have absolutely no chance. I know Alice could learn to love me if she really knew me well, but she never had an occasion. I am going to provide for that occasion. Yes, I will carry her off. Everything is arranged. If I am successful, I will take her out into space for a few months. My machine is in readiness and I have even a well trained maid for her on board. The machine is the latest type, the finest I've ever seen. rovision , books, reels for the Hypnobioscope, instruments, etc., in fact everything you can think of is on hand and I assure you Alice won't find it very lonesome. Besides, I flatter myself as being a good entertainer.

The purpose of this letter is to ask you kindly to attend for me to the several matters as per enclosed rolls. You will understand everything after you read the instructions. I do not think I will be away longer than three months at the latest and you will see from the gray document that I empower you to take charge of my affairs. I thank you in advance for your pains. Now I must close ; I will send you a message from on board the machine if everything goes right.

Sincerely yours,

FERNAND.

It was a beautiful night. The moon was full and the early autumn air was invigorating.

Ralph 124C 41 and Alice 212B 423 were enjoying a ride in a two-seated aerocab above the ocean, in the neighborhood of New York. This was one of Alice's favorite diversions and both enjoyed these rides immensely.

For some time already both had stopped talking. During the weeks of their acquaintanceship both had not lost time studying each other thoroughly. They had the same likes and dislikes for most things, and they usually agreed on the most vital subjects. They were moreover extremely sympathetic to each other, so much indeed that each one when blind-folded or in the dark could tell the presence of the other in a room full of people without difficulty.

The great scientist 124C 41, who two months ago was an avowed enemy of the fair sex, had at last been conquered. The great scientist had been turned into a meek lover, and he had, moreover, forgotten his own lectures ridiculing love as being nothing but a "Perfumed animal instinct." Ralph, the lover, had indeed changed his mind on the subject. Alice, who for sometime past had watched the moon with a dreamy expression in her eyes, was building aircastles—a favorite habit of hers. In fact she was so engrossed in. a lovely pink dream with baby blue edges on it that it was some time before she became aware that Ralph

had taken her hand into his. She had never held hands with anyone in such a shocking manner and consequently withdrew it violently—in her imagination. However, as the novel feeling of holding hands with a very sympathetic young man was surprisingly delicious, she actually did not, of course, withdraw her hand violently. ' Quite the contrary. She sat perfectly still and both for a time enjoyed the thrill of the sympathetic flux surging back and forth between them through the clasped hands.

Centuries back on a like occasion the young man would have said or perhaps whispered a lot of sweet as well as foolish things—and thereby most likely have spoiled the whole effect. He would of course have asked her if she wanted to be his wife, if she would love him all her life, and other equally unnecessary questions.

Ralph and Alice, however, being highly advanced beings with the refinement and culture of past civilized centuries behind them, neither talked nor whispered. Sitting close together, the exchange of their thoughts was attended with no difficulty. Both felt in the same manner. both understood and thought through similar channels.

By and by their two other hands met and clasped and still further by and by their lips met, and neither of the two spoke. In fact speech had become impossible, obsolete. Both were electrified ; every nerve in them tingled and pulsed! and vibrated. They were not sitting in an aerocab any longer, they floated in a rose-red sea of delicately scented emotions, in which time stood still. Their ears heard nothing but far-off sonorous chimes, ringing and singing in regular intervals—at least that is what it sounded like to them ; what they did hear, or rather feel, however, was the rhythmical beating of their hearts. Just how long they floated on the sea of their emotions and just how long they heard the chimes in each other's hearts is difficult to ascertain, as no authentic report on these subjects is available. It is, however, well known that both were brought back to earth, or rather to their aerocab, by another aeroflyer, which hailed their driver, asking for assistance. The strange flyer seemed to be having trouble with its motor and asked permission to draw up to our friends' cab, which permission was of course granted. When the two cabs had made fast, the driver of the aeroflyer asked the other driver for a few copper connectors which would enable him to repair the damage. Ralph, who had his head turned away, annoyed by the unpleasant interruption, was holding the left hand of Alice, as if he were loath to break away even for a second. He suddenly became aware of a sweet, pungent odor, which rapidly became sickening. He tried to turn his head to ascertain where the odor originated, and everything was blotted out. .

. . . .

When Ralph awoke the moon had sunk low to the horizon. He was unspeakably tired and felt sick and nauseated. For a time he stupidly looked down into the ocean. Then suddenly with a rush his full senses and vitality came back. He sat up straight in his seat, looking around him in bewilderment. Only then did he notice that the seat near him was empty. He cried out in rage and agony at

this discovery and only restrained himself with the greatest effort.

The driver, his hands on the steering disc, sat rigid in his seat, his head “low down” on his chest. Ralph opened the glass window in front of him, and with an uncertain hand shook him by the shoulder. The air blowing his way carried a strong odor of chloroform into his nostrils, which made him deathly sick for a few seconds. The cab was still flying at its former speed and Ralph saw that it was imperative to bring the driver back to life, if a dreadful collision was to be averted. In a few minutes, however, the driver had regained his senses. and Ralph ordered him to rush to New York at top speed.

Ralph was in a terrible rage. He had become entirely transformed.

“Only that devil 600 10 could perform such a dastardly, cowardly trick,” he muttered between tightened teeth, “but I guess he doesn’t know whom he has to deal with!”

He jumped up, pulled his coat off and threw it overboard ; the glass doors, cushions, matting, the hood of the cab, everything that could be wrenched loose he threw into the ocean below. The cab. thus greatly lightened, forged ahead at a tremendous speed and in a short time Ralph jumped on to the landing platform on top of his tower.

He immediately cleared for action and within thirty minutes af ter he had regained his senses every detective and special agent was on the lookout for the kidnapper and Ralph’s stolen sweetheart. Ralph had immediately transmittec Alice’s photograph to the central office, where it was placed before a telephot which connected wirelessly with every special agent and detective of the entire force. Each had a portable instrument on which Alice’s face was projected for ten seconds ; during this time her features had been strongly impressed upon each member of the force.

However, it was so’on revealed that nobody had seen or heard of the kidnapper or of Alice.

At the hotel where 600 10 stopped, the information was obtained that the gentleman in question had left three hours ago with his baggage. His destination was unknown.

“I knew it !” Ralph muttered. “Nobody but he would do it, the low-down dog. But just wait !”

On second thought it occurred to him that it might be of advantage to visit the hotel, and, as it was only a few blocks off, Ralph flew over to it, leaving his assistants in charge of his wireless stations, with strict orders to record each and every message, to tune into everything, and to take the messages down on the recorder disks.

At the hotel he was recognized at once, and as the news of his bereavement had traveled all over town like wild-fire, he was treated with more than the ordinary deference which his high office brought with it.

He closely questioned everyone and then wanted to see the rooms which Fernand 600 10 had occupied up to only a few hours ago.

The rooms were not straightened out as yet, and Ralph asked permission to search for clues alone without anyone to disturb him.

He looked into every nook and corner, but without results. He was already to give up when his eye caught the reflection of a light-ray falling on a bright object under the dresser.

Insignificant as the bright little metal object was, it was enough to freeze Ralph's blood in his veins. His technical knowledge had told him at once that the metal turning belonged to the balancer of the Gyro-Gyrator of a Space-Flyer. Evidently the metal part had fallen down under the dresser and 600 10 had not had the time to look further for it. Ralph reasoned that 600 10 had obtained a supply of the parts which are only required if one thinks of undertaking a prolonged flight into space.

He knew now that Fernand 600 10 had carried off his sweetheart in a space-flyer and that the machine by this time was probably far out from the earth's boundary, headed for unknown parts, where it would be practically impossible to follow without knowing the direction of the fleeing machine.

In a daze Ralph returned to his laboratory, where he immediately communicated with the central office. As all space-flyers must be licensed by law, he had little trouble in finding out that a brand new machine had been registered only four days ago. It had been acquired by a gentleman whose description coincided perfectly with 600 10's appearance. The machine was built in Detroit, and the make was of course known. Ralph at once called Detroit and, while it was very late in the night, the manufacturer, as soon as he heard who the caller was, supplied him eagerly with all necessary details. He ascertained that the entire outside metal shell was of Magnesium—his own invention—and that this particular space-flyer was the first one to be equipped with the new metal. Ralph's joy had no bounds when he heard this, and terminating his call he shouted:

“Now it will be child's play ! What luck ! The only machine out in the Universe with Magnesium, my own Magnesium, of which I know more than any one living ! Fernand, your time will be up shortly !”

(To be continued.)