

Excre-mental By David Stevens

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A story of a dying race and its fight for survival and the devastating effects that fight lead to. this is a nice tale of woe written for fun and could suit any age above ten

Published on
Booksie

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I have a passion for twisting little stories, this is one simple example. You will discover that I write on many subjects from Sci/fi to Fantasy Fiction, from Horror to Macabre, no matter the subject matter, for instants take Transgressions my first book, it is ostensibly a love story (a romance tale) but one with a hell of a difference, (Amazon or mygreenpublisher).). Watch out for the "Lifestone Chronicals" scheduled for publication in April 2013 a fantasy fiction adventure trilogy.

The aim is to always tell a rollicking good and hopefully entertaining story, no matter the subject matter. I hope that you enjoy the free stories presented to tickle your fancy, if only just a little. David Stevens.

EXCRE-MENTAL

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Today of all days I got up late, now I would have to rush if I was to attend the lecture with any hope of understanding it.

I should explain first that this is an extract from my journal, about which I will explain later. At this point I should also explain that I was one of those youngsters that our society describes as excessively gifted. So at nine years of age I was supposed to be sitting in the theatre of knowledge, the lecture hall, listening to the Senior Professor of Special Drives and Systems, Ado G. Slife, as he attempts to explain deep spatial parsec travel and it's necessary relationship to life, and peace of mind for all.

I made the lecture just as the professor entered stage left and took his place at the lectern. I noticed that he did not carry the obligatory reams of notes; I was soon to learn that he was so certain and dedicated to his chosen field, that he could and did speak for ages, almost without pause for breath seemingly!

To be concise, which is something that the professor was not, I have to explain a few simple problems within our society. The largest is that the ground beneath our city is quivering, not an occasional shake but full blown building shaking, quivering! The professor claimed that in my life time our cities would crumble, crops would fail, even those in the bio-pods, and shortly after, all life, our life, will be exterminated by one or another of the causes he has outlined. He also touched lightly on the increasing or as he phrased it. "The Global Warming Phenomenon," stating that the world would heat up excessively adding to our community's demise.

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I believed him, not because he was a professor and I a student, but because like me, the government have already decided that he is right. They Of course after first taking guidance from other experts, but mainly I think because of his determination to ram doom and gloom down the throats of anyone that would listen to them. Along of course with the simple fact that the evidence supported his hypothesis, supposedly; so that was why I believed in him.

As I have stated, at the time I was nine years old and a student researcher in my own right. I, for reasons I did not understand but later became grateful for, decided that I might as well keep an active journal on the present and future developments to our world. Not because I do not believe that others were not doing so, or that I could do better than them. I wrote because I thought it might be informative for me in later years to be able to look back on what was said then, and to read my own descriptions of events, of which only actually written at the time documentation can provide.

Hence, and for you the later readers, you will gain a clarity and therefore an understanding unparalleled and without too much Tech jargon padding it out. I should also explain that it is this, my journal, that I am reading to myself in my allotted cabin. It is long after the survival pod I travelled away from my home world in, has made safe touchdown. Our new world at least does not quiver much, not like the last from which we all departed from on this on our great adventure of colonization, but it does have some oddities of its own.

Being able to flick back through time at the turn of a page is indeed a fascinating experience, and one that I should now do, if I to re-read the saga of our escape in any sort of order.

Page three of my notes would be a good place to start reading from, as earlier was an introduction to the events, as you already know, and was the real beginning for me.

2020, year one. (I am aged 10 now).

Things have moved quite quickly, decisions have been taken and the concept moved forward from drawing board, into reality. Already the minerals needed for the construction are being gathered, and factories dedicated to producing necessary components out of those minerals, are already completed structures.

Year two, saw production accelerating, and the first framework of the craft to be called by popular vote, The Survivor. A slightly tacky name for the whole destiny of our world to be contained within if you were to ask me, but that is what the people wanted and got, The Survivor it is.

Year Three,

My notes went on like that for another ten years, most of which relate to the construction and selection of historical data and necessary archiving of samples. It was year thirteen that first grabbed my attention.

Year date, 2033.

I am to be one of the lucky chosen, I am to travel beyond the light, passing out of our world and head towards a new, and I am told beautiful destination, along with twelve thousand others of course.

The coincidence of the day of notification of my flight place is that it was also my twenty third year of my birth, and now I had two things to celebrate. It took nearly two days to recover from the series of celebrations, mainly because of the generosity of a long line of relatives, who it seemed to me, all wanted to ply me with toxins in the form of liquor. Or to be less formal about it, I was smashed out of my brain on booze!

It was to be three long years before I set my eyes on my allotted cabin. Amazingly each of the thousands of passengers selected for this trip would have their own individual compartment, each would be fully fitted out to make the trip as comfortable as possible for the occupant. A few, and I was one of them, would be awake, and working hard to make absolutely certain that the vessel made a safe landing on our new to be home world. As for the rest of the occupants, those not actually involved in the flight of the space craft, they would enter into hibernation and only be awakened once safe insertion had been achieved.

In a way I felt more sorry for them, as they unlike me, would be entering into the unknown. They would be stepping away from their previous lives and families, they would voluntarily risk everything to become the main bulk of our new colony. They would not know anything of the trip, anything of any hazards passed and if we fail, then they would never re-awaken, which seems to me to be quite a brave thing for them to accept. At least I would know what happened, and as the Second Science Navigation Officer on board the vessel, I would know exactly what was likely to happen, and probably before it actually occurred. That meant that should we fail then I would at least be partially responsible for the extinguishment of all of our passengers lives, but at least I would know why, even if I did not want too.

For the next two years prior to launch I spent nearly every waking hour inside of the vessel, working to ensure that every function did exactly what it was intended to do i.e. function. That time passed very quickly for me, it usually does I have noticed, when I was kept busy, and I was being kept very busy as there was so much to be fitted, checked, and then rechecked in multiples.

All around me the ship expanded, as new modules were added to ensure the best possible outcome. Safety features were constantly being improved on, again for obvious reasons. The days blurred for me as I work, my personal notes suffered because of that exertion. Sleep became the driving desire for me whenever work did not demand my attention. So that was the first part of my story as best as I could remember it. Eventually the day set for departure appeared on the horizon. The day that we would all put our faith in the science and technologies fitted inside of The Survivor. Even the name of our ship began to grow on me, it somehow seemed poignant, a sort of testament to our achievements and our ultimate aim, the survival of our race.

2035 & 9 sectors.

The day of our intended launch had arrived; all of our passengers had been boarded and await insertion into hibernation. Crowds begin to gather all around the launch track quite early intent on ensuring a fine view, all were eager to cheer and wave us off on our epic journey. Dignitaries gathered on a stand purpose built for them, they would probably also wave, but first they would as always insist on making speeches to all that might listen. We, the crew would be stood in front of them and all wearing our best uniforms, trying hard not to look bored, and to hide our desire to be aboard and underway.

The more I thought about what was due to happen prior to the launch, the more I wished that I could sneak on board and ignore the hype going on outside. I knew that I was not the only one in the crew thinking that way. Probably I believed, most if not all of them could well do without the pointless plaudits of the politicians. The scientist who designed the craft would be sitting in little rows of seats sucking up the applause and enjoying their moment of glory, assuming that the launch when it finally happened goes according to their plan. I was certain that they would enjoy the show, after all they do not have to sit tight and be blasted from their home world like we inside of the craft do.

I closed my notes and put my head back against the wall, that was all so very long ago for me now, and so much has happened during the many years since that day. Admittedly mostly good, after all our ship did mimic its name and survive. Our landing, though not as planned did occur safely and in the roughly the area targeted by the scientists, and our people are continuing to thrive. Outside of the ship our first city has expanded, the birth rate is acceptable, but still there are things that I feel could be better. I twitched slightly to get more comfortable and ignored my notes in favour of using my memory as I think back to that day.

We all lined up before the stands, the politicians were already in place and had been for a while, before we were marched out to stand before them as the heroes of the day. Or as I preferred to think of us, people to be used by them to justify the massive expense and the need for our race to expand into new worlds. Also of course it was a day for the politicians to bask in the glory of the day that they had created, and to suck up the crowds pleasure at their wondrous deeds. And not to forget the most important aspect for them, today was the perfect day for them to glad hand, though from a safe distance, the populous at large. All just nicely in time for the up coming elections, scheduled so conveniently if I remembered correctly, for three sectors after our intended launch.

Every time I talk to other colonists about that day they all seem to ask the same question, that of. Why set the launch day three whole time sectors prior to the election, why not nearer? To which I always point out, and to a response of. "Oh I See!" That three time sectors, allowed plenty of time if something went wrong with the launch to reschedule all before the populous gets to vote.

Turning my thoughts back once more to the day of departure I pictured the line up. We were all there, presented like perfect little toy soldiers, all standing in perfect straight lines, me and all the crew, including our eminent Captain. I remember looking up and there he was, sitting on a slightly too small for him chair, looking out over our gathering. The great professor had deemed to leave his lab, something he rarely did those days because of his great age and poor health, but he was there for us to see and for him to witness his project take off.

I watched as he levered himself from his seat and then shuffled forward, up to the large microphone, there to make a few brief comments, his words not mine. I knew him better; he does not know how to be brief. I was wrong that day, he was brief, perhaps too brief, he wished us well on our voyage. He said that he looked forward to receiving our signal that all was as it should be, and that the new colony was thriving, then he turned away from the microphone and shuffled again, back to his seat, looking very old to me.

He was replaced by one of an endless stream of politician each eager to hog the microphone, all of them to my way of thinking made the same claims, all sought votes from the populous whilst offering us their congratulations. I wondered which of these eminences would still be in their position of power in four sectors time. Perhaps none, or though it seems more likely that most would be. As they all knew how to control a vote, after all they have done so many times before just to get to where they were.

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Thankfully we were dismissed to our vessel before the main body of politicians addressed the crowd. They believed thought that we might be a distraction for the populous from their messages of pleading, so they got us out of the way, then they began talking in earnest, whilst begging for votes.

Looking at my notes I read. **â The launch went well exactly to time and planâ .**

Clearly I mused, as I looked at the entry I had written for that day, about the launch, I was not a very good scribe at that point!

I turned my memory back to that day and there I was sitting in my launch seat before the consol that was mine to command. Well sometimes only, because during the launch it wasnâ t mine, it was my bosses to command. He was sitting exactly where I would have liked to be sitting, and wasnâ t. At least the Captain had accepted my request to sit in on the launch, and my immediate senior had agree that I might just learn something if I did. So there I was watching and supposedly learning, despite the fact that I had run through the coming procedures hundreds of thousands of times in practice.

As my boss haughtily informed me; â this is not a practice. This is the real thing. Now shut up and learn!â I shut up, though I did not actually learn anything, as everything went exactly to plan, and therefore exactly as I had practiced it so many times before. It was very exciting all the same, which in my practice after the first few times it had not been.

In all honesty and as a defense of my rather brief entry, I would admit to myself that the launch did go perfectly. As countdown reached zero minus one, the first engines thrust shook the ship with a rather satisfying throb. The tow vehicles designed to start the huge craft moving, did their job exactly right and pulled the huge beast into motion, as slowly the engine thrust increased.

Exactly as predicted the tow vehicles disengaged at the first marker and we were committed to flight or crash. There was no margin for another attempt or to abort our takeoff, the craft was just too huge for such niceties as options. The second launch engines ignited at marker two increasing. No, doubling the thrust, and we accelerated along the takeoff track perfectly under the captains control. I even remembered feeling the exact point when the ship overcame our home worldâ s gravity, and went light.

Then it had occurred, we were finally, after years of planning, followed by even more years of hard work and expense, airborne. The Captain announced take off, and then I watched as the chief scientist pressed the green button, he then as planned had lifted a cover cap and flicked the single switch beneath it from the Off position into the On position.

All over the ship I knew that sleep inducing gasses would already be being pumped into each compartment, ready for the long flight that lay ahead.

It had been decided not to anaesthetise the passengers before take off, just in case of a crash. The experts had decided that though it would be unlikely in a crash for anyone to escape, it was just possible that some of the passengers might survive the impact and so be able to escape the damaged ship, but not if they were all anaesthetised.

The flight went exactly as planned, the craft lifted higher with each passing second, the monitor before me drew a red line on a screen, which indicated our actual flight trajectory. That line was overlaid on a green line, which the scientists estimated to be the ultimate home world exit trajectory. Much to my pleasure both lines ran perfectly, not only were we on target, we were following the exact trajectory that many of our greatest scientists had labored to induce.

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Leaving behind the dense upper atmosphere of our home world was one of the three abiding memories I carry to this day.

The ship approached the **Crustial** layer, this was a make or brake, literally speaking, point in our launch and ongoing flight plan. The vessel needed to have obtained sufficient impetus to thrust through the upper layers of our home world, and at the same time not be traveling too fast at impact point one, lest the impact crush the vessel and we tumble from the sky to our deaths.

The scientists insisted that punching through the outer layer was quite possible. Up front the captain readied the dis-impact or missiles as I called them. Soon he would be ordering their launch, the plan or rather the hope was that the missiles would penetrate and then explode inside of the outer crusted layer, weakening it sufficiently for the craft to blast through the last barrier into the outer atmosphere.

Up until that point of exit from our home world and assuming we survive the impact, there had never been any attempt to exit from home world. There had never before been a need to leave our home world, now we were the test, we were the guinea pigs, the questions being; would it work and would we survive the impact intact.

There was a theory being bantered around, mostly by the ignorant that punching a hole through the upper atmosphere would cause it to collapse, and allow the outer space to enter into our world, killing all who remain behind us. The theory is poo pooed by most experts, they say that the size of the hole needed to eject our craft when taken into consideration with the considerable mass of the upper level, was such that it would be an infinitesimal puncture, one which should heal itself quite quickly. I did not know the right or wrongs of that argument, I just knew that we would be the needle that punctured that envelope, and behind us the remaining populous would discover whose theory was right, whilst we venture on with our mission.

â Engage full thrust, fire dis-impact.â The captain stated in a very calm controlled voice, as though he fired weapons at our upper atmosphere every working day of his life. The streaks of flame and smoke accelerated away from us. The missiles formed up into a diamond pattern which showed on the screen next to mine, I could not resist looking at the flight pattern. It appeared as four dots blasting away. Up front via cameras mounted into the vessel's outer skin, I knew that the captain would be watching the flight and impact. I wondered, but never in fact asked him if he was praying? I know that I was and as hard as I could be.

The missiles formed up perfectly, four tiny burning stars of deadly fissile material, each targeted at a specific point, which had been carefully calculated to shatter only a single chunk of our atmosphere, a hole just big enough to allow us to force our way through and out of home world. The explosions when they arrived were felt as ripples throughout our ship. I didn't see them on the screen as explosions, instead the fire brands just ceased to exist on the screen. I did feel the power of their destructive force being unleashed as vibrations through our vessel. Like every person still awake or so I believed, I prayed even harder that the plan had worked and that a hole awaited our vessel, a hole big enough to allow us to exit through safely. The thought of tumbling fully conscious to the ground so far below was terrifying, but then death and especially a slow burning death always is, terrifying I mean.

The ship had shuddered then hesitated for a split second or at least that was how it felt to me, as we forced our way through the newly created hole. Apparently I later learned, only three of the four missiles had detonated so the hole was slightly too small, but we made it through alive and free. A cheer went up and filled the control room once it was realised that we had escaped from our home world, and were now the first explorers to be out in the area called unknown space; heading away from our previous homes and lives. Dedicated survivors the **saviors** of our race, home worlds people going out to discover, conquer and hopefully establish a new world, a new colony.

The flight through the brightness was long, tedious and excessively boring. You do not know of the brightness and it is remiss of me to not have explained, so I better correct that situation or you will never understand.

Our scientists had some how I do not know how, divined that once our craft had exited our home worlds upper atmosphere, that beyond it would be a light area, one so bright that to look on it with our naked eyes would blind the looker. The vessel had been built with deep space travel in mind and therefore was fully equipped with light restrictors, so the blindness was easily averted. Our scientists had discovered that out there was filled they said, with possible landing sites. Worlds abounded they insisted to our government, and as we were to later find out they were right. Worlds did abound, our sensors detected their residue or out put of gasses, but we would target just one of them. The travel coordinates had been pre-programmed into the ships computers, all of the maths had been worked out for us, they had even allocated the correct amount of propulsive energy units for the trip of two thousand time units.

I was on duty according to the roster for about four hundred of those time units, and it came to pass that I was on duty at the exact moment that it became obvious that something had gone terribly wrong.

The flight had been well underway; we had traveled for nearly one thousand five hundred and two time units, when something terrible occurred. The light had vanished! We were no longer pulsing through the brightness; our computers indicated a massive increase in ship speed and a great divergence from our planned route.

Panic was not a word that I would care to banter about lightly! We did not panic as such; we were all professionals, each responsible for the lives of thousands, so panic as such did not occur. I believe mild hysteria or perhaps a deep but visible concern occurred. The ship filled with the screaming out of orders, the demanding of answers, and a deep feeling of failure was running rife, but not panic as such. Only it is possible, I had accepted in hind sight, that we might have exceeded towards a near panic situation. I am not going to be the one to devalue our crew's professionalism so let's call it desperate concern.

The captain was most definitely concerned; he issued orders with the regularity of a propulsion emitter. The crew acted professionally and obeyed the captains orders, well tried to anyway. Nothing, not one slight little thing any of us did had any effect on our unplanned diversion, or even provided a suitably or acceptable explanation for the current situation.

A week into the new and unexpected space, locked in the pitch of blackness, the vibrations began. The ship jerked as though it had been lifted up and dropped a foot, this began to be the irregular but concerning effect we were subjected to. Every so often we could conceive of no pattern to the event, the ship lifted and lurched then dropped, this carried on for unit after unit. The dark according to the external scanners surrounded us with an unequaled pitch of blackness. There was no light source detectable anywhere to us, only the dark. Forward motion continued but occasionally a bump altered our direction. We never could explain the bumps.

The captain decided that was the way of things and he ordered the crew to accept the situation, and to man their posts. With little to do but fly we obeyed of course, and for two more units life continued.

The first spiral, when it occurred, killed four less fortunate members of the crew, instantly! I was one of the fortunate; I obeyed standing orders when I was on duty. I wore my restraints just in case, exactly as the hand book stated. The four dead did not, so when the first of many spirals occurred, they were hurled from there

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positions into the ceiling and then tumbled back to the floor, smashed and dead. A fifth crew member was injured by one of the tumbling bodies, as the ship rotated through a full rotation. In other words we spiraled like a ball rolls! The ship inverted a further three full rotations in the first event, and on one other occasion it spiraled for nearly twelve rotations. Making everyone including our illustrious captain feel very sick, and completely disorientated. All the while we tried to analyse the cause, and failed, just like we had failed with the drops.

The ship dropped massively and without warning, the pressure of the drop blacked out most if not all of the crew, including myself; so when we returned to functioning it was to discover that we were no longer flying. Our propulsion system had shut off, the engines clogged and the jets extinguished by compacted material. We were held tightly surrounded and encased, prisoners to the event no one could describe, or even remember. The world, our world had been altered.

Four units later the ship moved and we felt ourselves lifted, the surrounding force moved us of its own violation and with us still firmly encased within it.

Need I say any more? For the accuracy of history contained within my journal, I should state that we eventually decided that as movement had finally ceased, we would awaken the crew and keep secret that we had not arrived where we intended. The captain ordered that to passengers we should claim that we had arrived as planned, thus turning our failure into a success. The captain's idea worked well, the passengers set too developing a new world, and so began the extending of our reach out from the ship.

Now we were a new civilization, one with everything that we might require of a new and younger, I was informed, home world. We discovered that the surrounding material was not as solid as we initially had expected, and that vast caverns existed with good atmosphere into which our people moved. Life seems to be progressing well. Long live the new colony.

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â Well I say!â Exclaimed Miss Myrtle Hofferington; she repeated herself vocally as she watched the man walk away from her, totally ignoring his responsibilities.

â In all my years I have never seen the ignorance he just portrayed, what about the children!â

She often talked to herself, as most people could not understand her insistence on keeping everything perfectly, and especial if like now, there were young children playing near by. She eased her ancient weary bones of the park bench and slowly using her stick, and being careful not to allow Snookie her dogs chain to wrap around it, her stick or her legs, she hobbled towards the unsightly mess. A mess that he, the disgusting man had left, well not him really but his dog.

One of those short legged, wide necked type, the dog not the man, the sort that she could never remember the breeds name, but always seemed to be favored by a certain type of person. She reached her intended point and having made certain that her stick was suitably placed to assist her, she reached into her coat pocket and removed a plastic bag, which she fumbled her hand into prior to picking up the dogs mess. She scooped the excrement up, wrapped it tight in the bag and then hobbling over to a dog-waste bin; she deposited the bag and its un-civilized contents into that dog- waste bin. Her duty to her society and her piece of mind sated. She was totally disgusted by the casual leaving of excrement; the young man must be either selfish or mental to not consider the safety of others, especially the children she thought.

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Our new home world turned upside down! Areas collapsed inwards, the main tunnel got squashed as did the occupants, as the long lasting feeling of falling threw people around and injuring many, but not as many as could have been injured. Then everything stopped, the ground beneath our feet took a squishy feeling impact, then silence and stillness reined in our new world as it seemed to have settled down once more. Life in the dark caverns of the brown caves continues, now as it has done for the last twenty-five time units and I hope it will continue un-shaken, un-stirred foreverâ !

Miss Myrtle Hofferinton left the park with her little dog Snookie thinking, she would very much would have like to have been able to give the young man a jolly good telling off for letting his dog foul the park. She though what with her arthritis and her stick knew that she had very little chance of catching him.

â Time to go home Snookie, at least you do not leave little packages scattered all over the place, who knows what might live in themâ !

The End.

There are those readers that will take great delight and considerable trouble to inform me that this story is a pointless, stomach churning, perhaps even a shaggy dog tale!

ONE: To this bunch of well meaning critics, I would say two things. One, no one really likes critics, do they? As we all like to believe that our lifeâ s work is almost always, at least quite good.

SECONDLY: I would say look at the only named character, Professor Ado. G. Slife, or as you might prefer to read his name, â A Dogs Lifeâ ! See, I have to agree with the critics, though reluctantly I might say. The evidence of this being a â shaggy dog taleâ is irrefutable, but it was fun to write and I hope entertaining all the same.

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