



Silly asses

Naron of the long-lived Rigellian race was the fourth of his line to keep the galactic records. He had a large book which contained the list of the numerous races throughout the galaxies that had developed intelligence, and the much smaller book that listed those races that had reached maturity and had qualified for the Galactic Federation. In the first book, a number of those listed were crossed out; those that, for one reason or another, had failed.

Misfortune, biochemical or biophysical shortcomings, social maladjustment took their toll. In the smaller book, however, no member listed had yet blanked out.

And now Naron, large and incredibly ancient, looked up as a messenger approached.

"Naron," said the messenger. "Great One!"

"Well, well, what is it? Less ceremony."

"Another group of organisms has attained maturity."

"Excellent. Excellent. They are coming up quickly now. Scarcely a year passes without a new one. And who are these?"

The messenger gave the code number of the galaxy and the coordinates of the world within it.

"Ah, yes," said Naron. "I know the world." And in flowing script he noted it in the first book and transferred its name into the second, using, as was customary, the name by which the planet was known to the largest fraction of its populace. He wrote: Earth.

He said, "These new creatures have set a record. No other group has passed from intelligence to maturity so quickly. No mistake, I hope."

"None, sir," said the messenger.

"They have attained to thermonuclear power, have they?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, that's the criterion." Naron chuckled. "And soon their ships will probe out and contact the Federation."

"Actually, Great One," said the messenger, reluctantly, "the Observers tell us they have not yet penetrated space."

Naron was astonished. "Not at all? Not even a space station?"

"Not yet, sir."

"But if they have thermonuclear power, where do they conduct the tests and detonations?"

“On their own planet, sir.”

Naron rose to his full twenty feet of height and thundered, “On their own planet?”

“Yes, sir.”

Slowly Naron drew out his stylus and passed a line through the latest addition in the small book. It was an unprecedented act, but, then, Naron was very wise and could see the inevitable as well as anyone in the galaxy.

“Silly asses,” he muttered.

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Ce raze di stupits!

Naron dal popul milenari di Rigel al è il cuart de so cueste incargât di tignî i registris galatics.

Al à un libri grandonon là che al segne i nons des plusôrs razis che vie pes galassiis a àn disvilupât une forme di inteligjence, e un librut plui piçul cu la liste des razis che a àn jonzût la maturitât e i requisîts par jentrâ te Federazion Galatiche. Tal libri grant, in cualchi câs, a son stâts tressâts vie chei popui che, par cualsei reson, a son lâts al mancûl; par vie che la sfortune, lis mancjancis biochimichis e biofisichis o i scuilibris sociâi a àn scuedût il lôr dazi. Tal librut piçul, invece, no si à mai vût scancelât un non.

E cumò Naron, maestôs e antigon, al à tirât sù il cjâf par cjâlâ il messazîr che i ven incuintri.

“Naron,” al à dit il messazîr. “il Mirabil!”.

“Bon, bon, vonde compliments. Ce âstu?”.

“Un altri complès di organisims al è rivât a maturitât”.

“Benon. Benon. A vegnin sù a la svelte, cumò. Sì e no che al passe un an prime che al salti fûr un gnûf. E cui sono chescj?”

Il messazîr i à dât il codiç de galassie e lis coordenadis internis dal planet.

“Ah, sì,” al à dit Naron. “O cognòs chel planet”, e cun grafie fluente, cjapade note tal prin libri, lu à trasferît tal secont cul non doprât de plui part dai siei abitants, come par ordenari.

Al à scrit: Tiere.

Al à dit: “Chestis creaturis gnovis a àn stabilît un primât. Nissun altri popul al è passât de

inteligjence ae maturitât cussì di buride. O speri che nol sedi un erôr.

“Nissun erôr, missâr” al disè il messazâr.

“Ma àn discuviert la energje atomiche, no mo?”.

“Sì, missâr”.

“Benon, al è chel il criteri” al à dit Naron cuntun rideç “E in curt lis lôr nâfs a tacaran a esplorâ e a contataran la Federazion”.

“Par vêr, Mirabil”, al à dit il messazâr, restîf, “i osservadôrs nus disin che no àn ancjemò conquistât il cosmi”.

Naron si è sbarluffit. “Propit par nuie? Nancje une stazion spaziâl?”.

“Ancjemò no, missâr”.

“Ma se a cognossin la energje atomiche, dulà àno fats i esperiments e lis detonazions?”

“Tal lôr stes planet, missâr”.

Naron si è dreçât par ducj i siei sîs metris di altece e al à businât: “Tal lôr stes planet?”.

“Sì, missâr”.

Cun lentece, Naron al à tirât fûr la pene e al à scancelât la ultime vôs segnade tal libri piçul.

Al è un fat cence precedents, ma Naron al è un grant savi e nissun te galassie al è bon di previodi l’inevitabil miôr di lui.

“Ce raze di stupits!”, al à murmuiât.

Conte dal 1958
dal scritôr rus diventât merecan, Isaac Asimov
Voltade par furlan
di Pablo Gortan