

PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES



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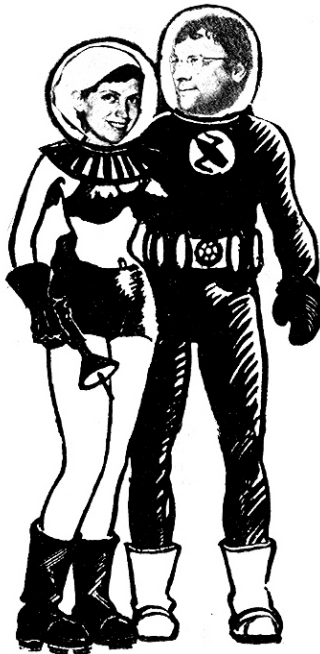
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Charles Rice Goff III

FORWARD

Welcome to my adventures through the *SPACE AGE*. In this booklet I have collected a number of quotations, photocopied directly from sources which were first published during the rocket-powered 1950's and 1960's. Each quote is illustrated with a unique visual interpretation of its contents. The quotes are very loosely organized. Each page should be experienced individually, as one would experience poems in a book of poetry. My intention for the overall effect of this booklet is to give the reader an entertaining, somewhat surreal lesson in human history. Otherwise, it makes a great coloring book. Enjoy!

PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES is dedicated to:

*my friends, especially Karen, my newest partner in exploration
my family, especially Charles Jr. and Marie
everyone who supports my craziness*



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Always, there is the simple, rational explanation. The history of science is full of simple, rational beliefs: The atom is a hard little particle like a marble, but unbelievably small. Light and other radiations are carried by the ether. No man can travel more than 12 miles an hour and survive.

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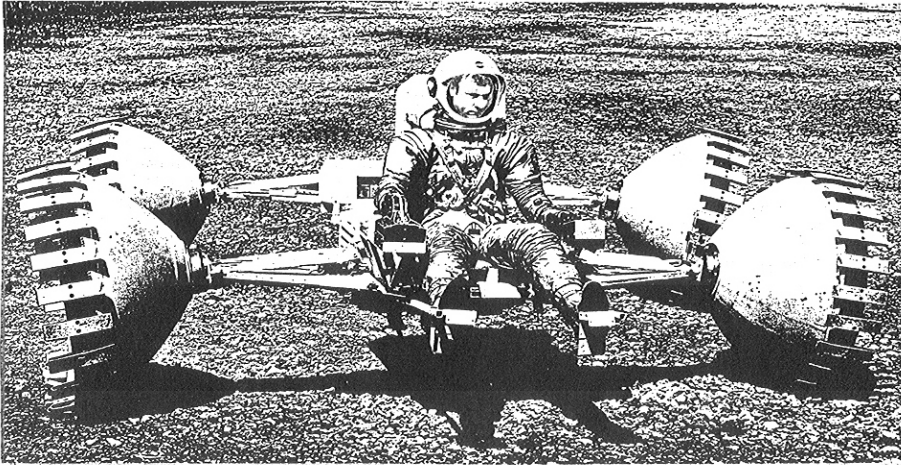


Earth is the cradle of the mind, but one cannot live in a cradle forever.

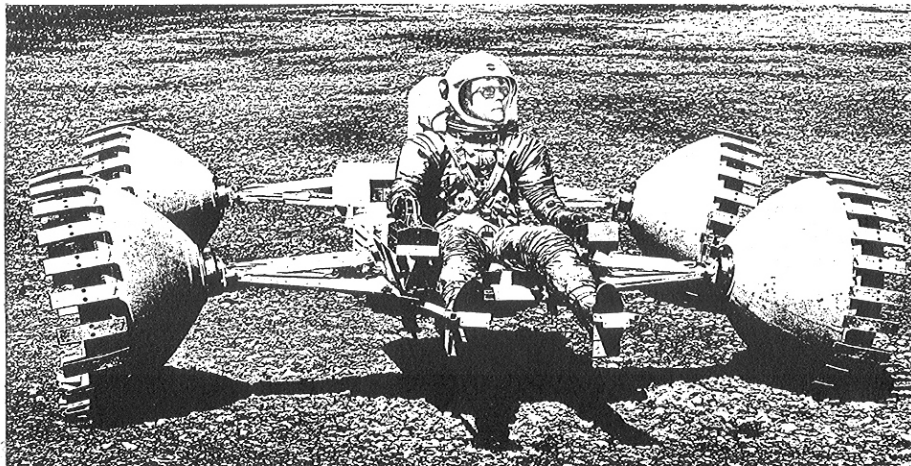
Konstantin E. Tsiolkovski
Russian rocket pioneer



A handful of angry Turkish farmers in January of 1969 marched into Ankara carrying baskets of rocks and threatened to stone the American and Russian embassies unless they were compensated for recent flood damage. Their complaint: The two nations' spaceships "tore holes in the sky, and the floods poured through these holes."

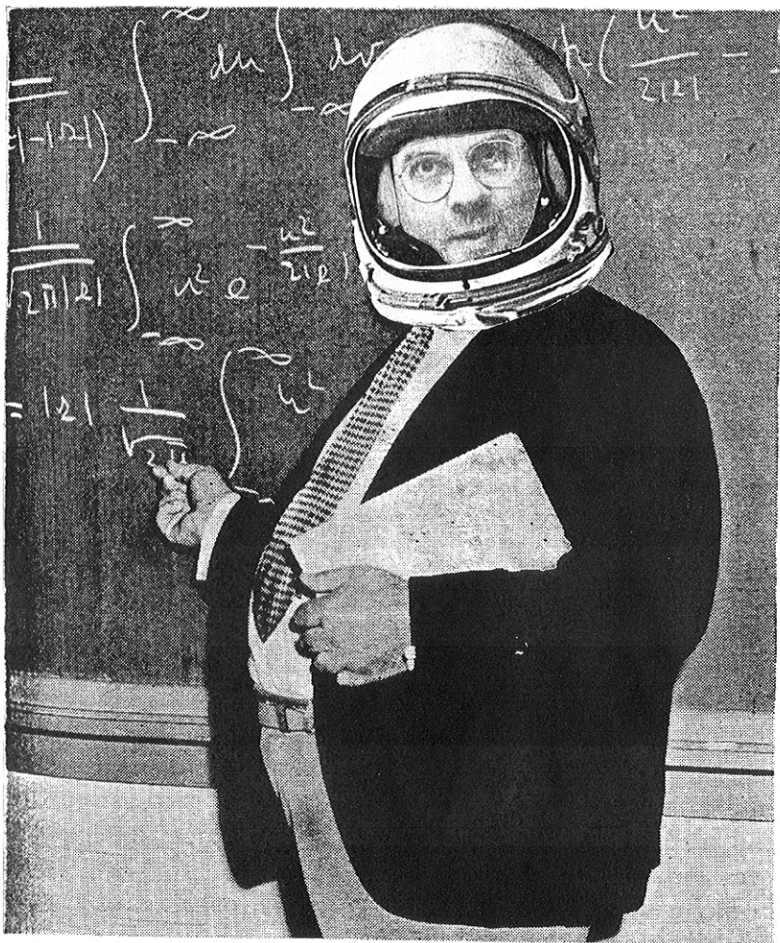


A space agency official confessed that he had doubts about how much "space science" was really being absorbed in American classrooms. "A young boy who is a neighbor of mine was given a pop quiz in his science class last week," he said. "One question was, 'What is a galaxy?' The boy wrote his answer, 'A Galaxy is a Ford automobile.'"



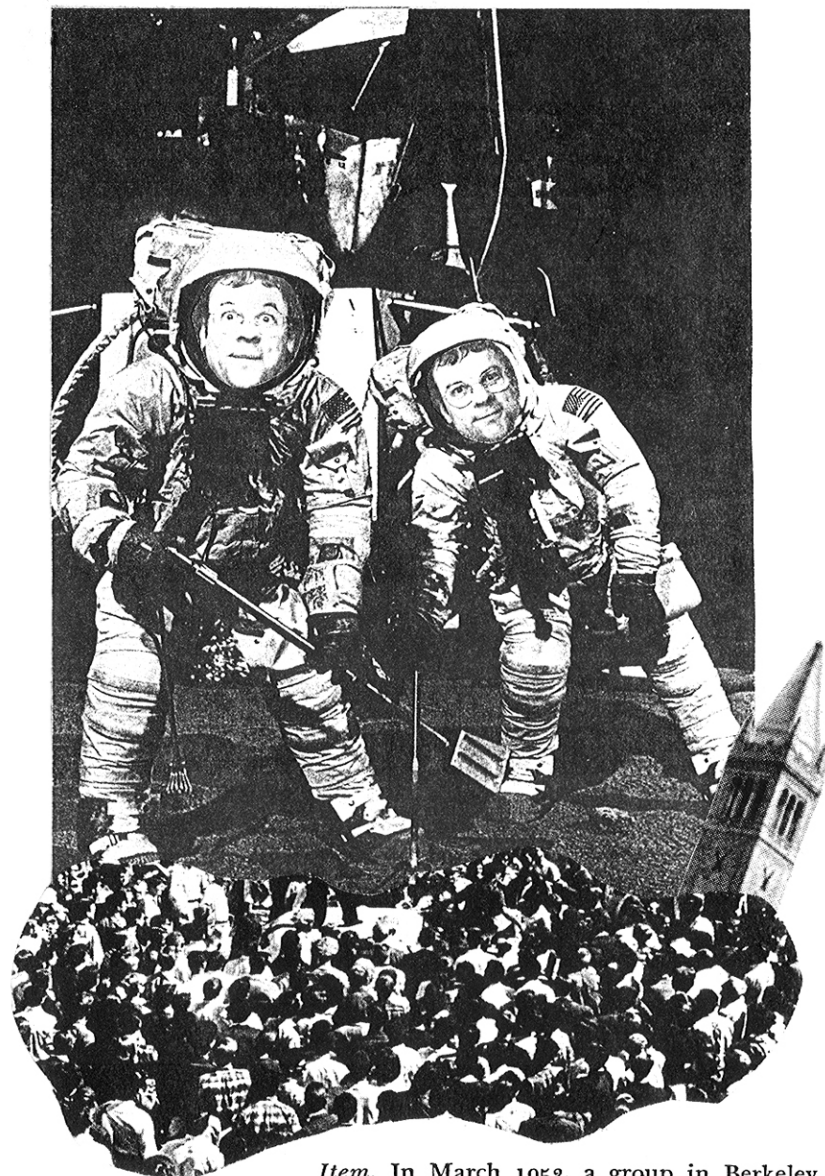
Weightlessness cannot be produced on earth for long periods. In a jump, fall, or special airplane maneuver, a person may be weightless for brief seconds, or for as long as a minute, but this is not long enough to reveal anything significant.

The effect of weightlessness on the human mind is unknown. It would certainly vary according to the individual.

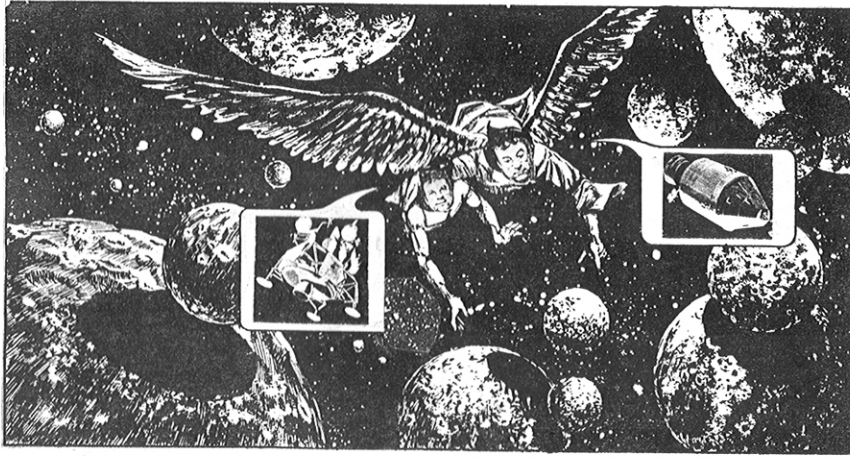


*There's a wonderful family called Stein;
There's Gert and there's Ep and there's Ein.
Gert's poems are bunk, Ep's statues are junk,
And no one can understand Ein.*

The excellence of Gert's poems and Ep's statues is a matter of personal taste, but the part about Ein is not correct. Enough people grasped his theory to open up vast horizons in science.



Item. In March 1953, a group in Berkeley, California, wrote the United Nations, claiming mining rights on 2,250 square miles of the moon. The group called itself the Elves', Gnomes' and Little Men's Science Fiction Chowder and Marching Society.



Astronauts exploring the moon may someday land in Hell. That's a small lunar crater named after a prominent seventeenth-century Jesuit astronomer and director of the Vienna Observatory, Father Maximilian Hell.



Most scientists felt that the few odd things which did not conform to mechanical laws were the result of man's ignorance, not the inadequacy of dynamic principles.

The transmission of light and other forms of radiation, for instance, presented problems. Obviously light traversed empty space: men could see the stars. Yet it was equally obvious that light must have a medium of some kind through which to travel. So science invented a medium called the ether. This pervading substance could not be detected or measured, yet it was everywhere.





If the commander of the space platform project thinks he's going to leave paunchy old Colonel Bayfront off the crew, he's mistaken. The Colonel designed the frassenstat that made the space platform possible, and besides, his brother is chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

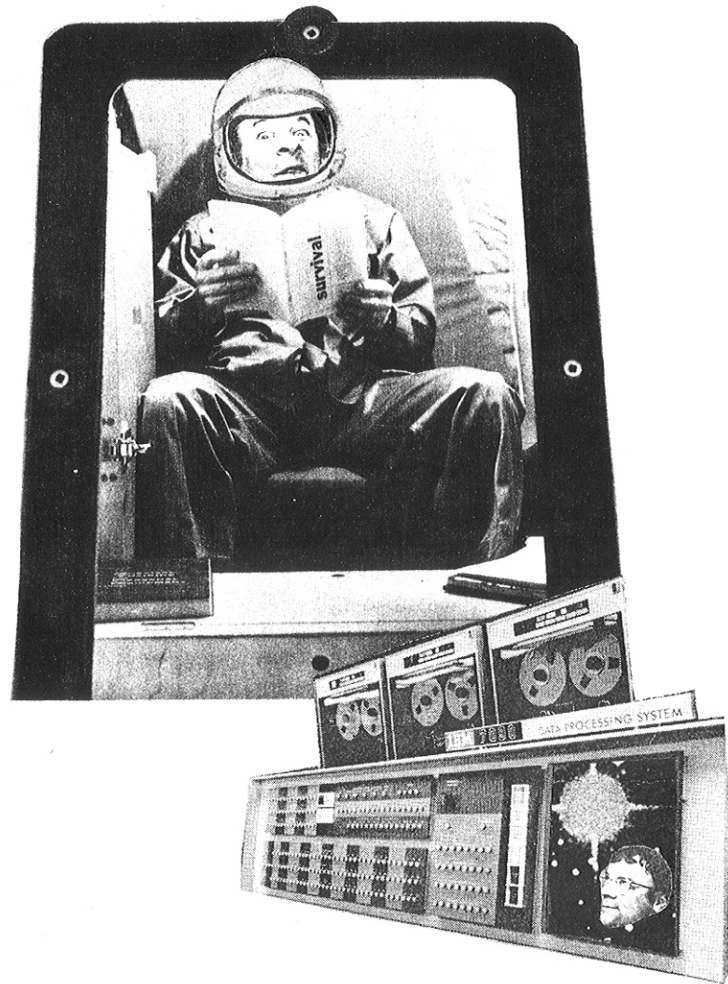


When a freshly used urine collection bag split open during their fourteen-day Gemini 7 flight, Astronauts Frank Borman and James Lovell had to drop everything and try to snare the globules of liquid floating weightlessly inside their spacecraft. They never quite managed to clean up the mess.

So when Lovell was asked later by a reporter to describe the flight, he replied: "Have you ever spent two weeks in the Men's Room?"



If Astronaut John Glenn's head had begun to swell from the adulation heaped on him after his historic Mercury orbital flight, it was deflated to normal size when President Kennedy introduced his daughter Caroline to the returning hero at Palm Beach, Florida. Shaking hands with Glenn, the youngster queried: "Where's the monkey?"



"I just kept looking around at all those dozens of instruments in front of me and remembering that every single one of them was supplied by the lowest bidder."



The body must be kept clean, too—a fact which offers some interesting possibilities for weightless living. A shower is a fine invention in a gravitational field; so is a bathtub. The space equivalents are not now being manufactured. Such minor problems as these can be solved; our technical ingenuity is more than equal to the task.



American television viewers complained bitterly when networks interrupted programs on the night of March 16, 1966, to give news reports of the near-fatal Gemini 8 orbital flight of Neil Armstrong and David Scott. A small rocket thruster had stuck, causing their spacecraft to spin wildly out of control and raising fears that the astronauts could not be brought down safely.

So, while the real-life drama unfolded, which TV program did viewers complain the loudest about missing? The fictional "Lost in Space."

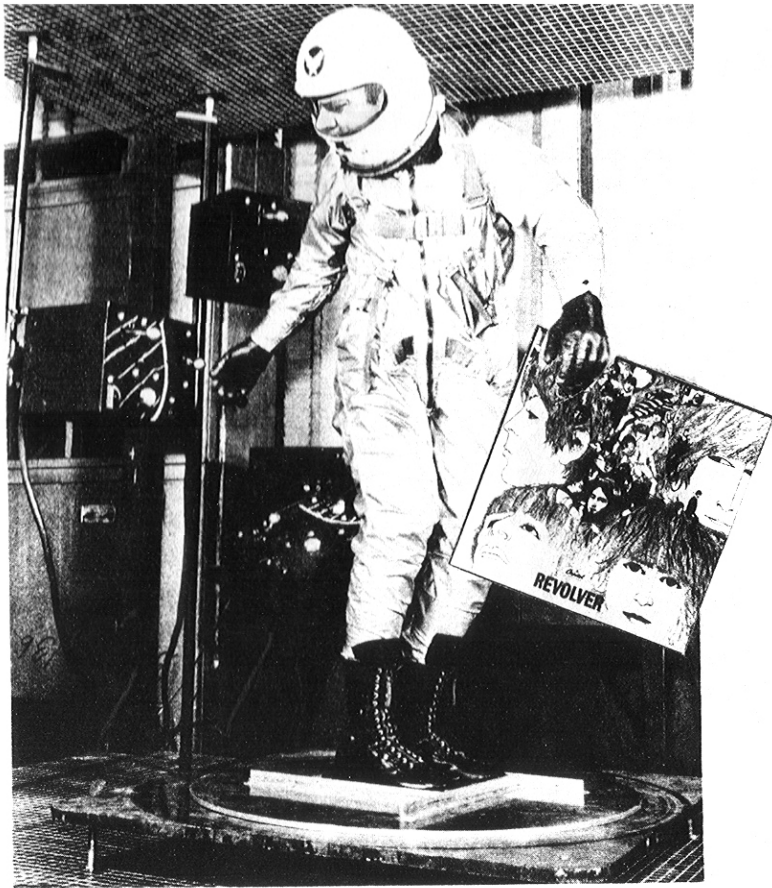


Dr. Wernher von Braun recalled that an intense woman of the If-God-Had-Meant-For-Us-To-Fly-He'd-Have-Given-Us-Wings school of thought once upbraided him for advocating the exploration of space by man.

"We should not tamper with the universe," she declared. "We should stay home, mind our own business, and watch TV as God intended!"



Item. In January 1954, two officers at the Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland, worked out a device for soothing young surgical patients. Their method is to equip the patient with a plastic spaceman's helmet, then fill the helmet with anesthetic gas. Once the fledgling spaceman is groggy the helmet is removed, ether is administered, and the operation proceeds.



Mounted on "air" bearings, this semiweightless turntable revolves in the opposite direction when he turns to reach for the switch.

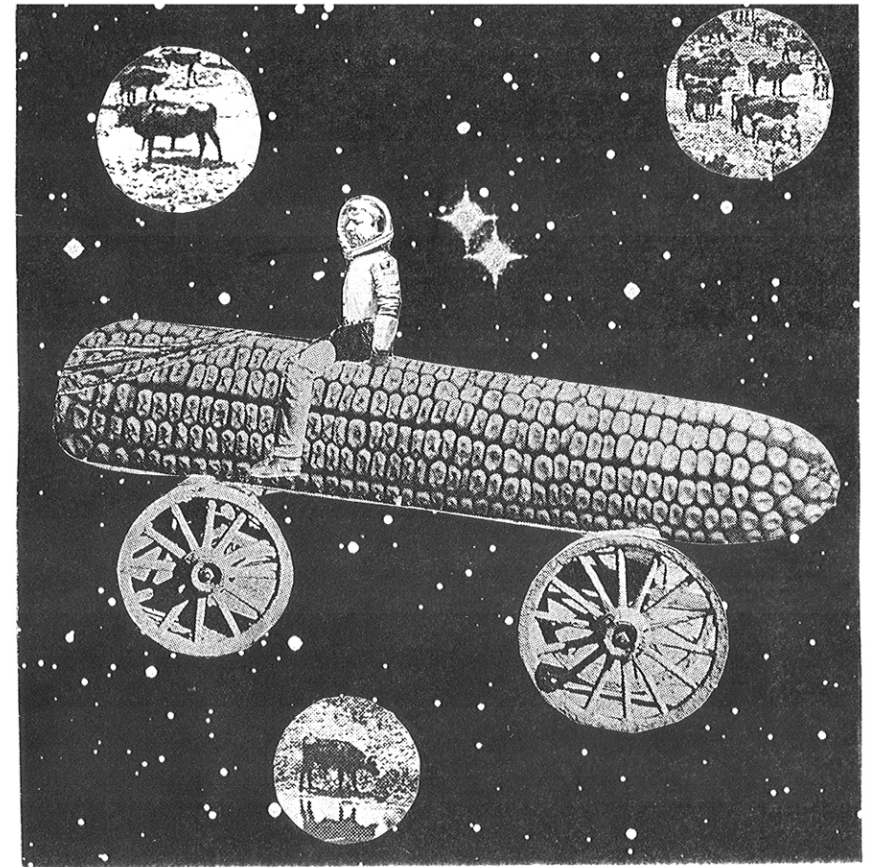


Premier Nikita Khrushchev always took great pride in Soviet space achievements and obviously relished the spectacular celebrations staged in Moscow for returning cosmonauts. After the three-man crew of Komarov, Yegorov, and Feoktistov reached orbit in their Voskhod 1 spacecraft on October 12, 1964, he happily talked with them via radio-telephone, congratulated them, and described the fine reception he would give them when the flight ended.

The crew returned safely to earth, and there was indeed a fine celebration. But in the meantime Khrushchev had been deposed and declared an "unperson," and the official greeters were Brezhnev and Kosygin.



"Bourgeois statesmen," Khrushchev told a Polish audience in 1963, "used to poke fun at us, saying that we Russians were running around in bark sandals and lapping up cabbage soup with those sandals. They used to make fun of our culture, the culture of a people considered, so to say, to be the last among the civilized Western countries. Then suddenly, you understand, those who they thought lapped up cabbage soup with bark sandals got into outer space earlier than the so-called civilized ones."



What is required here is something special which might be termed a "space herder." A Texas cowboy with experience in keeping a contrary bunch of critters together could be equipped with a space motor scooter in lieu of a horse and instructed to ride herd on the platform's odds and ends. When perturbations moved them too far away, he could go after them and haul them back into position once again.



Everything went pretty well for the first three days. Then the airman started "seeing things." On the fourth day, he told the ground crew in an alarmed voice that the television screen was beginning to melt. He said it was throwing out so much heat he was afraid it would explode. One of the observers peeked into the isolation chamber through a hidden peep-hole. He saw there was nothing wrong with the TV screen.

"Your screen isn't melting—it's O.K.," came the next message to the airman. "Put your hand up close to it and you'll feel it's not throwing out any heat." But by this time the airman's panic had increased. "I don't dare!" he shouted back. "The heat is burning me even from this distance. It's going to explode!"



He stops his rapt examination of the sun for a glance at his companions. One look is enough. He knows complete mental and physical disorientation when he sees it. He turns away, back to the port. The disk of the sun attracts him again; and, half hypnotized, he lessens the polarity of the port and stares into the flaming center. Unconsciously he starts to sing to himself, about the lucky old sun that has nothing to do but roll around heaven all day. He gives a little jump and floats gracefully to the cabin ceiling. "Me too," he says, and chuckles.

Here is the first case of space madness.

