

The Garden

By JH Wear

The garden is pretty much ruined for this year. Not that I'm big on cultivating vegetables anyway, but they would be better than what was now rotting in the wet soil. That day, and it was a Monday of course, started badly when I noticed bits of concrete in my driveway had chipped off from the use of deicer during the winter. For those who live in the warm climates down south, deicer is basically a salt that melts ice; very useful on sidewalks and driveways during the winter. Unfortunately it sometimes weakens the concrete if used too much. On the plus side, it saved the world that day.

The day was warm and sunny and I decided to stay home to enjoy it. I'm the boss, so I can make those executive decisions. Thus I was sitting in the backyard of my acreage when a blue-coloured spaceship plopped itself by the garden. It wasn't big, about the size of a school bus but shaped like a football. A door popped open and out came two aliens- check that, two ugly, bright pink aliens. They slid out of the spacecraft on a multiple legs while waving four arms each at me. Like their spacecraft, each was shaped like a football, an ugly football the size of a cow.

This was rather disturbing and I stared at my rum and Coke, wondering if the alcohol was responsible for this odd vision. I took another long drink but the vision of the two aliens remained. I repeated the experiment one more time, draining the glass. The aliens were still there, though now at least they now looked a little out of focus.

They used a translator device that caused their squealing voices to sound like Barbara Walters on steroids. I wasn't particularly keen on conversing with them but it was hard to ignore two large, pink slugs with arms. I poured myself another rum and Coke as I listened to them.

The Pinks, it turned out, were scientists collecting soil samples before initiating an experiment. I was suspicious; if they were scientists where were their white lab coats? However, they explained they were trying reestablish life on the sun's fourth planet, Mars.

“You see,” chirped Pink One, “the planet used to have life all over it, teeming with life. Then it began to cool down a little.”

Pink Two took over. “Turns out it was a natural event and eventually it would warm up again. But we believed we could speed things up a little, make it stay warm. We began to pump gases into the atmosphere, hoping to keep things warm.”

“It didn't make any difference, it kept getting cooler.” Pink One eyed my Coke as it spoke. “Then we tried to shift the winds to warm the land. That failed, too, and even worse, we killed many life forms. We even tried to change the path of the ocean currents, but all that resulted in was a lot of dead and smelly fish.”

Pink Two was slowly easing an arm towards my Coke. I casually moved it out of reach.

“So,” I asked as I gripped a hand around the rum bottle, “does that mean you had to give up warming up Mars?”

“Oh no. Our scientists are not afraid to help nature along past the cooling period. We initiated thermal warming upward effects from under the surface of the planet.”

“Upward what?”

“Volcanoes.”

“I guess volcanoes would warm things up.”

“They did, but unfortunately things got a little out of hand.”

“What happened?”

Pink One sighed. “We blew away our atmosphere. It destroyed all life on the planet surface. We retreated underground and created large caravans we now live in.”

“So that's how you live now? All life forms are under the surface of Mars?”

“Yes, but we believe we have discovered a method to warm up our planet without doing anything on the planet at all. You see, we noticed your planet is warming up and you're all concerned about greenhouse gases and silly stuff like that.”

I frowned. “What else could be causing the planet to warm up?”

“The sun, stupid one! It is the sun that is warming up your planet. So obvious.”

“Okay, maybe you're right. How does that help you?”

“Oh simple. We are going to use a few well-placed gamma lasers to make the sun produce more heat. It will warm up our planet nicely. It will destroy a lot of life here, of course. Rather unfortunate, but it is for the greater good of Mars. We are here to take some samples to compare it to after the sun doubles its output.”

I got up, bravely leaving the Coke and rum unattended as I walked to the garden shed. “When do you propose to do this sun warming?”

“Next week. You may want to buy lots of sunscreen.”

I took out the two-gallon container of deicer and walked back to the pinks. “I can't allow you to do that.”

“Ha! How can simple life form like you stop us? We have massive weapons and great technology.”

For an answer I threw the deicer on them. The salt had an immediate effect on the giant slugs and they writhed and then died after rolling around in my garden.

Now I have the problem of a ruined garden. I wonder what kind of bids I may get on eBay for a used, flying-football-shaped spaceship?