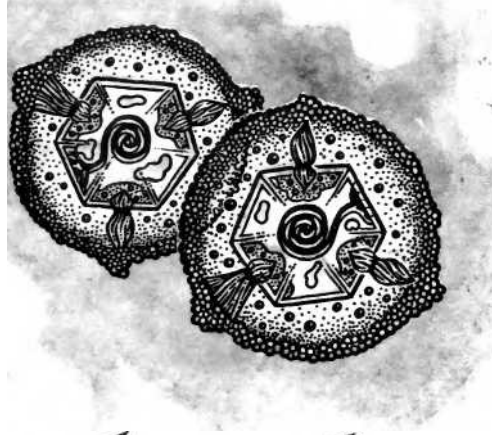




STARSEED

A Psi-Phy Comet Tale

Transmitted from
Folsom Prison by
Dr. Timothy Leary



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"Kohoutek will have a pale blue and yellow tail stretching out for somewhere between 75,000,000 and 100,000,000 miles —the yellow portions of it in the shape of a scimitar. It will first be seen by the naked eye in mid-November and will look dull. But since it will be approaching the Sun at 250,000,000 miles an hour, it will brighten and from mid-December to Dec. 28 the peoples of the world will have the finest Christmas star ever."

How about that, Chump? Do you still believe everything out there "just happened by accident."

—From a "memo to a friend who is an atheist" in Bob Considine's September 16 column in the San Francisco *Examiner & Chronicle*. The quoted paragraph is from a release by the American Museum- Hayden Planetarium.

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THIS SIGNAL IS BEING TRANSMITTED from a cell in Folsom Prison, which is the Black Hole of American society. A Black Hole is a dense space with a heavy gravitational pull. Matter which falls into a Black Hole fades from view and disintegrates in the stress of gravity. Given sufficient time, its radiation becomes too feeble to be detected from without. Although the matter of the Black Hole cannot re-escape as matter, some of it may manage to escape in the form of feeble red radiation. Some cosmologists suggest that Black Holes are the link to another realization of matter. They may be passageways to another universe, just as the manholes of Paris lead to a world beneath the street. Well, the maximum-security prison is a fine place from which to scan the universe. It's beyond pure, undiluted bad. As good as good can be.

Out here, beyond good and evil, one sees America in pain; injured nervous systems propelling robot - bodies in repetitious, aimless motion along paths labeled rights and wrong. I watch hardened criminals watching Ehrlichman on television protesting that his personal rights have been violated.

Sri Krishna Prem, the wisest man in India, sat on the floor of his little mountain-top ashram showing me pictures from medieval alchemical books. He pointed to the design of a man standing naked with devil on one shoulder, angel on the other. He said, "When you understand that, you can go on to the next lesson."

The next lesson was a parable about a great castle that was separated from shore by a swamp. Pilgrims, searchers, warriors seeking the castle disappeared into the marsh because each rock they stepped on sank from view. The Hero and his mate sat on the bank and watched for days. Then He rose and held his hand to Her. He whispered the instructions that Sri Krishna Prem transmitted to me: "Leap from rock to rock more swiftly than they sink. The trick is simple. Have courage and keep moving."

Each spot we stand on crumbles beneath us, becoming a launching pad for the next stride.

From the far future, I transmit these messages back to planet earth. Beware of the Hindu trap. It's anti-sexual. The guru, God, and the swami universe is a soft, sweet custard mush. Undifferentiated unity. True unity is contacted through increasing precision of differentiations. Psi-phy. Philosophy of science. The universe is not chaos ruled by casual chance. The Second Law of Thermodynamics is pessimistic nineteenth century fraud. Tensile structures emerge and lawfully evolve because of the underlying magnetic charging. Positive-negative. WoMan.

Life is an interstellar communication network. Life is disseminated through the galaxies in the form of nucleotide templates. These "seeds" land on planets, are activated by solar radiation, and evolve nervous systems. The bodies which house and transport nervous systems and the reproductive seeds are constructed in response to the atmospheric and gravitational characteristics of the host planet, the crumbling rock upon which we momentarily rest.

Evolution is concerned with nervous systems and the sexual attractive efficiency of bodies, the expansion of consciousness.

The human being is the robot carrier of a large brain, conscious of being conscious. A robot designed to discover the circuitry which programs its behavior. The nervous system

is the instrument of consciousness. When mankind discovered the function and infinite capacities of the nervous system, a mutation took place. The metamorphosis from larval earth-life to a higher destiny. The person who has made this discovery becomes a time-traveler. A Psi-Phy entity. When Astronaut Mitchell saw the green jewel of earth against the black velvet expanse of interstellar distance, he became Psi-Phy. Ecology is a low-level distraction. Psi-Phy boy scouts picking up trash. The genetic goal is communication. Telepathy. Electronic sexuality. Reception and transmission of electromagnetic waves. The erotics of resonance. The entire universe is gently, rhythmically, joyously vibrating. Cosmic intercourse.

This is a message of hope and interstellar love from the Black Hole. Irrepressible optimism. Yes, it is true that repressive pessimists now control planetary politics. This is a larval phase. Life has been evolving for three and a half billion years and has just reached the half-way point.

This message of neurological resonance can be censored, imprisoned but cannot be crushed because it comes from within, from the DNA nucleus inside each cell, from the evolving nervous system. The Higher Intelligence has already stepped on planet earth and its script is writ within our bodies, emerging in every generation.

In 1963, I began searching for a spot on this planet where a station could be set up for time experiments. In that year, I was expelled from Harvard, from Mexico, Dominica, Antigua. No crimes alleged or committed. Just too much energy transmitted. Blew out the local fuses.

In 1966, G. Gordon Liddy led several midnight raids, helicopter assaults on our center at Millbrook, New York. We were literally under siege. No evidence of illegal activity was found, but I was forced to leave the county. G. Gordon Liddy went straight to the White House on the basis of this harassment. The relentless web of Karma. Thus I helped to create Watergate. Howard Hunt was a White House narcotics expert, directing the campaign of surveillance, raids, and arrests, which eventually drove me to exile in Algeria and Switzerland.

Too much energy. Keith Richards and Anita reported the same problem. Exiles on Main Street. The only solution seemed to be a boat. A new society of timeships, sailing the high seas. The Noah myth. Premonitory preparation for the emigration from planet earth. Load the boat with transmitting equipment. Radio Free Earth.

Imagine looking at a map of earth. Scattered around the oceans are a hundred little golden spots, clustering in the Caribbean, moving through the Indian Ocean, the South Pacific. Timeships carrying the first global citizens. A moving transient community of mutants who form a new nation, who transcend their former nationalities. How do they support themselves? They are the wisest, strongest, best-endowed. Mutants have to be.

Joanna and I were at St. Moritz for Christmas. She was born there in the Palace Hotel. Chancellor Kreisky

of Austria had invited me to come to Austria to make an anti-addiction film. We had sent probes to Ceylon and Bali to look for a boat. We were offered a three-story ambassadorial house. They wanted us to help them bring Austria into the twentieth century. Why didn't we stay? Poutzi in St. Moritz said, "Now that you've found each other, you must slow

down." Something kept us moving.

We flew from Vienna to Beirut where we stayed with the son of the ex-president.

At the Kabul airport the official from the American embassy grabbed my passport illegally and the Afghan police busted me for not having a passport. We were kept under armed guard for three days and driven to the airport. The Afghani policeman wept and the Army Major told me the pilot of the airplane would return my passport.

Armed American narcotics agents escorted me back to prison. Dumped in a solitary confinement cell for four months I wrote *Neurologic*. At the escape trial I testified under oath that I felt like a man from the 21st century being boiled in a pot by superstitious savages. Now is the time in the SCI FI books for the cosmic intelligence agency to send the extra-planetary rescue ship.

The first time I visited the Folsom Prison library I picked up Lovell's book on outer space. The last

chapter presents a drawing of the remnant of a living organism found on a meteorite. A nucleic acid molecule. The first signal from extra-terrestrial life. Help is on the way. Prisoners began to etch the design on silver pins and leatherwork handcrafted in the hobby shop. We called it STARSEED. The symbol of Psi-Phy.

In early July the New York *Times* carried a story about a newly discovered comet entering the solar system. Unexpected. Named after its finder, an East European astronomer, it would be visible during the fall of 1973 with a brilliance greater than the full moon.

Here was the greatest astronomical event in recorded history appearing right on schedule. We named it Starseed, new light, new life, bright reminder of our extraterrestrial origin and future. Symbol of freedom. Joanna began telling the story on radio and television and to everyone she met. Paul Kantner and Grace Slick offered to write a song heralding the new coming.

As the weeks went by a curious fact emerged. There was no more publicity about Starseed. Nothing in the scientific magazines in the prison library. No one else had read about it. I wondered if I had dreamed it out of longing anticipation. Mysterious. Why so little publicity about the greatest light in the sky? Since returning to the United States many other

mysterious things had happened. Watergate began to leak two days after my incarceration. The United States began to sink in the swamp. The dollar collapses. Food shortages. Energy crisis. Even the King of Afghanistan took a dive. Was it possible that the American government had kidnapped me back to help out? The worst thing to observe was the mental depression, the cerebral pollution. No one was speaking clearly about what was happening. No new solutions. A glum stagnation. A damp nostalgia. A frivolous melancholia. Prison provides a clear perspective. I sat in the dim light of solitary confinement and wrote a complete systematic philosophy: cosmology, politic, epistemology, ethic, aesthetic, ontology, and the most hopeful eschatology ever specified. I keep telling other prisoners: society can't take care of itself, so it can't take care of us. It's up to us to provide the vision. It always happens this way. New light from the Black Hole.

And nobody said anything about the comet.

Then Paul Kantner sent in a report.

On March 7, 1973, Dr. Lubos Kohoutek, a Czechoslovakian astronomer, at Hamburg Observatory, Bergedorf, West Germany, discovered a new comet. As with most modern discoveries, this one was made photographically. Later, a predisccovery image plus numerous subsequent ones have enabled astronomers to compute the comet's orbit with considerable precision.

During July through September, it will be too close to the sun's direction for optical observation, but in mid-October, at a distance of about 168 million miles from the sun, its brightness should increase to a magnitude of between 8 and 12. From then on it should brighten quickly and is expected to reach naked eye visibility about mid-November. It will then be in the morning sky, in the south-east, about two hours before the sun (from San Francisco).

It is not possible to predict with precision what form the comet's tail will take nor what brightness it will attain, but indications are that it will exceed that of Halley's comet, last seen in 1910 and not due again until 1986. There is a possibility that its magnitude at perihelion (closest to the sun—only about 13 million miles) may approach that of the full moon, making it one of the brightest ever seen by man.

This confirmed the coming but renewed the question: why the silence, the lack of interest? The newspapers were filled with stories anticipating the advent of the football season. Another sign of the times. The philosophic perspective has been lost. There exists a repression, a taboo about facing the implications of the recent scientific findings which compels a total revision of our concepts of life and of human nature.

Einstein's equations. Nuclear energy. The revelation of DNA code as literally a code to be deciphered, Neurological imprinting. Anti-matter. Mankind clings to the old myths, avoiding the new truths.

It happened before.

"Towards the end of the sixteenth century, Giordano Bruno aroused the groggy world, asking it to fling its mind far beyond the planets. He speculated that the cosmos extended to infinity.

"This in itself was not so shocking; but Bruno went considerably further—he postulated a multiplicity of world: suns and planets with life, unseen companions for the race of man. He toyed with man's conception of himself; for this, and for magical claims and political entanglements, he was burned in 1600." *The Discovery of Our Galaxy*, Charles Whitney.

"Shortly before Bruno's death, in 1600, Tycho Brahe made the first announcement of a 'new' star in the sky. A few years later he observed a comet, and proved that it moved among the planets; thus he shattered the crystalline spheres which had been supposed to carry the planets and stars about the heavens."

Tycho's star set off excited controversy because it forced a change in the cosmology. Current theories held that the stars were fixed. But the new evidence was there flashing in the sky. The stars moved. Cosmology is not a peripheral hobby, specialty of scientific experts. Every aspect of human life is based on the answers to the cosmological questions: where did we come from? Where are we going? Tycho's star appeared exactly when Christendom was unsettled by the Reformation. Luther's challenge to the immovability

of Catholic theology. You could get busted those days, as Galileo discovered, for advocating the idea that the earth moved.

Joanna came to the visiting room of the prison with the next round of information. Joanna is a star. She suddenly appears in the sky brilliantly transmitting radiation. Supernova. All-out energy, high fidelity. She turns Her electron-telescopic girl eyes on you searching for the signal. She was asking people she met: what's your cosmology? Never mind your sexual need, your bread problem, your ideas on Watergate. What's your cosmology? How did you get here? The seven days of Genesis? The chance play of amino acids heaped up aimlessly like bricks? Does God play dice with the cosmos? If not, what's the master plan?

What's your cosmology? One young man smiled and said he was a graduate student in astronomy at Stanford. No one, he said, was certain about the path of the comet Starseed spinning into our solar system. It might come dangerously close to planet earth. Might even collide.

Joanna and I are sitting in the visiting room of a maximum security prison logically computing the possibilities, while in the sky above, Sky Lab circled the globe, telescopes trained on the sun. Why hasn't Sky Lab mentioned this flying object hurtling into view, until now? There are two alternatives: 1. The comet means danger to earth; or, 2. It will pass through our system with spectacular inoffensiveness.

Alternate one. It may be dangerous. It may disrupt the earth's atmosphere. It may smash into the earth's surface. If this were known, would it be announced by the men who control America and Russia? The Soviets have chosen Mars as their planet of choice. If the comet were to hit earth? Enormous tidal waves? Destruction of civilization? Who would survive? A weird Sci-Fi Noah's Ark horror story. Who would end up in the safety caverns dug deep, by the joint chiefs, into the western mountains? The grim significance of the Cold War takes on another dimension. We knew about it all along but it was never talked about. The very men who bomb Cambodia, provoke the Russians to accelerate the missile race, are the ones who have designed and built the secret hide-away caverns. How many cases of whiskey and tons of steak are deep-frozen in the bomb shelter cities? Who gets to get saved? The president and his family? The military, of course. Is Agnew on the friend list or the enemy list? Does Bebe Rebozo get saved? Does Ellsberg?

We recall the irritation of the Air Force with U.F.O. reports. The negative finding of the Condon report that no extra-terrestrial sightings had been confirmed, was not surprising. What disturbed was the obvious emotional bias, the fact, and this is the crucial experimental datum, that the Air Force didn't want people thinking about extra-terrestrial intervention. Just as the Catholic hierarchy and its Scholastic philosophers four hundred years ago didn't want people thinking that the stars might move. The ancient, basic cosmological fears and hopes. If you start speculating about Higher Intelligence visiting planet earth, a galaxy of embarrassing issues gets raised. What would the celestial visitors think of how we are running the planet? Whose selfish securities and biased superiorities would be threatened?

The Air Force U.F.O. study included, indeed, emphasized a factor which infuriated the "flying saucer" partisans. A team of psychologists studied the personalities of those who

reported the sightings. How clever of the Air Force to suggest that those whose cosmologies, however vague, included the possibility of extra-terrestrial intelligence, were themselves "kooks." In wider perspective, we can only endorse the Air Force psychodiagnostic attempt. It may be that the contact with extra-planetary intelligence, the discovery of the master plan will not come via radio telescopic contact. And certainly the anticipation of "saucers" transporting humanoid bodies is naive. It is more likely that extra-planetary contact will be received by the instrument which was designed over three and a half billion years ago to pick up electro-magnetic vibrations. The human nervous system itself. The Air Force psychiatrists might have done better if, instead of administering Rorschach personality tests, they had performed intensive neurological examinations, brainwave studies on the wild-eyed "saucer-sighters." Maybe some of the kooks carry nervous systems more receptive to electro-magnetic impulses.

I am standing in the main yard at Folsom Prison talking to a group of inmates about the Starseed conspiracy story. There is enthusiastic laughter about the Psi-Phy possibilities. We are being watched from five gun-towers by guards armed with high-powered rifles, who scan the yard with binoculars. They are especially worried when a group of convicts clusters in conversation.

Every prisoner has, during long lonely night hours, scanned the liberating possibilities of catastrophe. Folsom is near the San Andreas fault. What if nuclear war is declared?

Johnny James, a tough guy, clubs down hope.

"The guards have instructions. In case of catastrophe the orders are to lock inmates in their cells and abandon the prison." Folsom is half a mile below the Folsom Dam.

It is agreed that I should send out a message posing the Starseed questions. Could there be a secret conspiracy to censor extra-planetary contact? Thoughts of Dallas, Sirhan, Martin Luther King, My Lai, Cambodia, Liddy, Hunt, Haldeman, and Ehrlichman run through the computers. Many inmates are convinced that Hunt will never live to testify; that "they" are planning to have me killed if I start broadcasting any messages.

Walking back to the cell-block Chaslon says, "Do you know that the odds on your getting offed may have just jumped a hundred times?"

Michel-Gustav Hauchard, French swindler extraordinaire, my protector-sponsor in Switzerland, friend of J. Edgar Hoover, and admitted CIA contact, used to muse aloud: "The simplest thing would be for them to kill you." "No, mon ami, the technique now is to say the dissenter is crazy. Anyone who opposes the monolithic system must be crazy."

Joanna said, "If there's only four months before holocaust everyone should be tofl. Stop everything and finally learn all-out fulltime love. I'm not afraid of dying. I know we'll be together. But I want

to be on the same side of the wall with you. ..." The second alternative: comet Starseed flashes into our view and leaves. Each person who reads these words will, in the coming months, stand on earth looking up at this spectacular sight. Will it leave us transfigured? Lift our eyes up to universal perspective?

The comet Kohoutek, Starseed, can mean nothing or it can mean everything. It can be a reminder that this planet is just a brief crumbling stepping stone in the voyage of life across the galaxies. That the Higher Intelligence has already established itself on earth,

writ its testament within our cells, decipherable by our nervous system. That it's about time to mutate. Create and transmit the new philosophy.

Behold a great light appears in the sky. The offer is made. The signal is flashed. Resonate with it or die eye-ground and bored.

Bob Hyde, the strongest, wisest man in the prison system, who has sold a lot of used cars in his time, scanned this print-out and shook his head.

"Too general and inspirational. Thousands of years from now they'll point to your Starseed signal as the only factual item coming from the twentieth century. But right now people are confused. They want to be told what to do. Something to give their time and money to. Like Ralph Nader.

"Ralph Nader is a monster. A puritanical, moralistic, efficiency robot. We gave them the first true, hopeful cosmology in history. That's bread and dope for a thousand years at least. We gave them their nervous systems. More practical and useful than the wheel. We gave them a sign of rebirth in the sky and a Starseed symbol and showed them how to activate and hook-up their circuitry. We liberated them to ecstasy."

"Not enough," said Hyde, who once sold two hundred repainted Philadelphia taxis in Holyoke, Massachusetts. "They want everything, but they want to pay for it. Your mistake was to give it free. They want to be told what to do."

"Let's try again," I said.

SHINE LIKE STARS! ENERGIZE, ELECTRIFY EVERY WORD AND DEED!

Cosmologist Hyde now suggests that creation emerges, not uniformly throughout the universe, but in regions of high density and intense activity, such as a developing Black Hole. Contractions and expansions take place at scattered points within the universe. Astronomers used to think that the radiation which energizes the universe originated from one Big Bang. Now it seems possible to explain creation as the product of Black Holes.

The old menopausal-Stoic view of galaxies as quiescent swirls of stars, gas and dust is giving way; signs of creative upheaval are everywhere. Stepping stones in the pool of time popping up and disappearing. When Black Holes find their places in cosmology (and local politics), neurologicians will have written the most complete revision of the creation story since the days of the first ancients.

Bob Hyde, Leo, strongest man in the prison, smiled gently and tried again. He'd like to believe that I'm the wisest man who ever lived. He's an impulsive man of action, who has learned patience in the Black Hole. There's all this violent power here, crushed together, waiting to explode in the next cycle of creation. He's learned to talk Psi-Phy.

"Look. The energy is there. You're the only one that knows how to organize it. Like every genius, you are blind to the reality. Money and power."

Hyde presses hard because he knows he'll never get out of prison until the whole system changes.

"The alchemy of power takes time," I said. "Neurological politics. The wizard does as little as possible. The organization is already there. It just takes the slightest move at exactly the right time to turn it on. Connect the wires. The alchemist and his mate wait,

sometimes for thirty years, disclosing substances, boiling elements, breathing fumes, and blowing on the

flames. Praying. And then, when the elements are in order, the stars are in position, the heart's love pure: it happens. Transfiguration. Now is about time. Starseed is the signal."

All the signs whispered it. The time had come. Strange how everyone feels it, the dissolution of the old structure, but no one can get the perspective to see it. Americans are too close to read the portents. Superstitious is good. It means to stand above. Back away from it, climb above it for a moment and see it as a Shakespearean epic or a Greek tragedy.

There is this throne of ultimate power. The lethal crown of world empire. The Curse. Roosevelt dies. Truman retires in disgrace. Ike immobilized into grinning idiocy by a heart attack. Kennedy killed. L.B.J. ruined. Bobby slain. Wallace crippled. Muskie wept. Eagleton crumbled. Teddy's hopes drowned. Nixon and Agnew revealed as criminals. Form focuses energy. It is the institution, the two hundred year old structure, that is wrong. The horse-and-buggy American political system, pre-technological design, can't handle the energies released in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The White House should be museumed, replaced by a towering glass pyramid, visible, shining, hooked-up by two-way electronics with every neighborhood in the land.

It is time for prophecy. The omens are obvious. The moment of spiritual reckoning approaches. Karmic plague sweeps the globe. Scan the headlines. Drought. Famine. Shortage. Pollution. Malaise. Disorder. Tyranny. Espionage. Watergate is the American word for a world-wide epidemic of government illegalities. Torture in Greece. The new repression in Russia. Israeli air piracy. Libyan mania. Every week another country captured by its own military police. The Higher Intelligence scanning these developments from the high perspective of time sends a signal.

Bob Hyde walks to my cell with a newspaper clipping. Third Sky Lab will study Comet.

"N.A.S.A. beat you to the media. They'll try to co-opt the comet. The human interest angle for increased space appropriations. Cute little comet like the cute little spider. You better get your Starseed essay out."

Timing is important in energy alchemics. Maybe this message is too late.

Well, here it is. The comet Starseed comes at the right time to return light to planet earth. The structure for the new way is already here. Starseed will turn-on the new network.

In the next transmission we shall describe how the new organization will unite us in joyous communication. Isn't that what you really want?