

Kal-Telon-Suu

by Tim Lacey

It was near the time of Kal-Telon-Suu when the being from another planet landed on my world. Landed, I guess, is not the right word. For his arrival was a fluke of nature--or was it? As my instructor told me and the others, "It was not a fluke of nature. Rather, a new lesson sent to us by the Supreme Being. A lesson in the on-going cycle of life." My instructor is right of course; everything happens for a reason. And we either accept or deny the challenges that are sent.

It started for me (my name is Pchel) on a warm evening in the fourth cycle. Several of my friends and fellow apprentices in training had finished instruction for the next two days. We were looking forward to our days off from training. Going up to a lake that was on the same land as our temple of instruction, we looked forward, after an intensive day of training, to cool off. Taking our white and blue uniforms off, we jumped into the clear cool water.

Flashes of light soon appeared in the sky. This lasted for several minutes. It was followed by a loud bang. A few of us thought it was one or two of the more advanced students playing up in the sky. However, when Xec, one of my close friends, floated up for a look, he didn't see anyone.

I sensed a ripple in the area. It was a form of ripple I have never encountered before. And I sensed great pain. Several others also felt the ripple. Curiosity grabbed us. We climbed out of the lake and got dressed.

Our senses told us that whatever happened was close by, near a grove of trees. Two trees we came upon had been burnt right down to their roots. I was trying to figure what might have caused this, when one member shouted, "Over here." Joining our friend, we saw him pointing to a small creature that was slumped over. It was so small, I thought, at first, that it was a toy. It was real. It resembled us, except for its small size and its tiny ears. We all encircled it so it could not escape. The little creature stood hunched over turning around looking up at us. I didn't think at the time we would have been frightening to the hurt creature. We didn't think we would seem like monsters to the creature. As far as we were concerned, we were just teens.

Member Kochel said, "It looks in a bad way; we should try and help it." Kockel started to move for the tiny creature. Scared, the little thing darted between his legs heading for another tree that had also had been damaged. The creature was heading for this tree, when a cracking and ripping sound commenced. The top portion of the mighty tree had broken off. It was falling in the direction of the tiny creature. There wasn't much time given us. I felt for a moment the creature's pain and anguish. I applied one of the nature practices that our instructor had told us about. Riding on the front of a lightning bolt, I glided for the tiny creature. I could feel the heavy weight of the tree on me. Grabbing the creature with my two hands, I shot upwards with all my will.

My members did not see me shoot up into the sky and thought the tree had fallen on me. It was foolish of me, but I could not resist. I kept myself above the tops of the trees. When they all were bent over the fallen tree, I softly landed behind them. "What are you all looking at?," I said. They all turned around in a start.

"What happened to the tiny creature?" asked one member.

I pulled the tiny creature from out of the top of my uniform. Seeing it crumpled up in the palm of my hand, I realized how frail it was. And saw our duty to help it.

Part Two

I saw the little creature was bleeding. Taking my blue head band off, I tore off a small piece and

wrapped it around the tiny creature's chest. The other members wanted a closer look. The tiny thing was passed carefully from member to member. My friend Xec excels in calming the life energies of living beings. He placed his forefinger on the top of the creature's head. This took away, for the moment, the being's pain and fear.

We all then rushed back to the temple. Master Tokichu was at the top of the stone stairs. His arms were folded. I had the impression he was waiting for us. And he was. "How is your little friend?" he asked. We were all surprised he knew.

"I guess," said one younger member, "that is why he is the Master."

"Even in your youthful eagerness to examine the fallen being, you still sought to save it. Even though in your hearts, you feel superior because of your much greater size, you still sought to save it. I am very pleased with you all," said Master Tokichu.

"Can you help him Master Tokichu?" asked a member.

Another member slapped the other member in the arm and told him, "Of course Master Tokichu can. What kind of question is that." That member's face turned red.

Master Tokichu came up to me. "Pchel. I sense you have a concern for the creature. The little being's life is now yours."

"M-Master Tokichu? I'm not advanced enough." The Master just smiled at me. He turned and walked away. The other members followed him. I stood alone on the white marble stairs for a few minutes. When I left, I brought the creature to my room. I knelt on the floor and placed the creature on my floor pad. I sat back on to my heels. I didn't know if I could save this creature. I felt a gentle breeze behind me. I knew it had to be Nofukel. Turning around and looking up, I saw him floating on a small mist. He cut quite a figure in his dark red and blue robes. His massive chest busting through the opening to his tunic. His strong arms. The red waist and head bands fluttering in the wind. Nofukel is everything I wanted to be. A great Kal-Telon!

He floated down to the floor and knelt down next to me. He picked up the creature. The little thing was lost in Nofukel's huge hands. "Such a tiny and frail being."

"I sense it's intelligent. I heard a few of its thoughts."

"Hmm," said Nofukel, who rubbed the bottom of his chin with his hand. "There is a chance it can make it. If its fear doesn't become the best of it. It comes from a world of fear." He handed the tiny creature back to me. Standing up, Nofukel slapped me in the back and left my room. I looked down at the creature in my hand. My heart started to beat faster, when I saw the tiny eyes re-open. It opened its mouth and backed up near two of my fingers. Part of me wanted to chuckle seeing this miniature being moving in my hand. I thought, "I'm lucky to have this tiny creature." I had to fight that thought. For this was a being like me. It took a lot of will on my part, not to see it as a new found pet.

The first thing I did was assure the tiny creature with the sound of my voice I wasn't going to hurt it. Taking it over to my washing bowl, I filled a small cup with water. I dipped my little finger in it, till the water was warm. The dried blood had caused the clothes to stick to it. Slowly, the warm water released the clothing. After gently rinsing it off I applied a piece of sanitizing cloth to his wound.

I re-wrapped the tiny thing in clean cloth. It tried to speak. I lifted the hand that I held it in up close to my ears. I couldn't understand the words. I sensed however, it was asking me where it was. I moved my hand from my ear and to the center of my forehead. I saw a strange land populated with these creatures. Again, one of my first thoughts were, "My friends would love to catch these tiny things. And what a great gift one would be for my younger cousins."

Fighting those thoughts off, I saw objects that flew. Travel over and underwater. All sorts of dwellings. I saw his images of a great shaft of light and speeding beyond the stars. This poor tiny thing must have been affected by a fissure. A fissure that joins, for an instant of time, two areas of space. Master Tokichu would insist it was all in the great plan of the Supreme Being, the Prime Mover of all things.

I entered his mind with images of my world and when I first saw him. There was fear in him. And as Nofukel had said, this creature comes from a world of fear. Sammy's fears were ebbing. I removed my hand and the tiny man from my forehead. I was excited. I found out what he is called—Sammy!

If I was reading his feelings properly, he was around 126 cycles. In his terms, I think that would make him twenty four. I found Sammy to be of average intelligence. Still tired and weak, I stopped my probing of him. A bell rang for dinner. I was going to leave him in my room. I sensed he still was fearful. Instead, I placed him in the inner pocket of my tunic. I rushed off to the main dinner hall. I could feel the slight weight Sammy made in my pocket, as it brushed up against my chest. I felt rather powerful, of having another but smaller being in my pocket. I scolded myself for thinking such vain thoughts. If I were in his position, I would hope the giant being would be fair.

The entire temple population, the two hundred of us, sat at our assigned places. As I was sitting listening to the prayers before meal, I started to feel depressed. I felt cold. I felt somewhere and nowhere at the sametime. I wanted to cry. And I did not know why.

Master Tokichu, after the prayers were done, asked me, "Member Pchel what is the cause of your sadness." Everyone's eyes were on me.

I stood up and said, "Master, I do not know."

"Think Pchel. There is a reason."

I calmed myself. I found that I wasn't sad. I was feeling the inner and deepest feelings of the tiny being known as Sammy. I removed the tiny being known as Sammy from my pocket. At first, I thought it was a mistake. Would being with so many giants increase his sense of alienation? I tried as best I could to channel the vast amount of my fellow members' presence in a way Sammy felt part of, rather than separate. I failed. I could not gather a strong enough presence. "A wise and good try, Member Pchel," said an elder Master, named Abwalg.

This elder master, asked all of us younger members to try in unison. A light green mist appeared around tiny Sammy. It was the thoughts of all us younger members. I felt Sammy was becoming more at ease.

Master Abwalg. Very good," said Master Tokichu. "Our young members have entered into another being's feelings.

One younger member blurted out, "Ouch!!" He looked at his chest and rubbed it. "Sorry for my outburst. I felt his pain in my chest."

"How about you Pchel. Do you feel Sammy's pain?" asked Master Tokichu.

"No, I feel a sense of giving over."

"Very good Pchel. And very good to all of you. You see my young members, any place can be a time of learning and growth. But now let us strengthen ourselves on our food before it gets cold." Master Tokichu smiled, "It would not be nice to those who prepared this food not to enjoy it at its best."

Part Three

For the next several half cycles, Sammy seemed to be adjusting. Still, I did not know what he felt in the deepest part of his soul. It must be hard to be in a land where people tower over you.

My close friend Xec also grew to know my little friend, though Xec was rather disgusted by several visions he had of Sammy's world. He thought the society Sammy came from was diseased. And gave itself over to judicial revenge. I told Xec not to judge the society or Sammy, whom I found to be a fair minded soul. I must confess there were images of Sammy's world that did shock me. The one that shocked me the most, was those souls hiding behind the name of the Surpreme Being to commit acts of violence for their own gain. This I found most sickening. I felt those beings were uncreating themselves and cutting themselves off from their creator. To be fair to Sammy's world, my world, too, had its period

of darkness. I ask Master Tokichu to help me understand, why people would commit acts that would bring such hard consequences on themselves and others. Master Tokichu told me, ("When man's only concern is in preparation for defense against himself, he is not prepared for the unseen.") But, let me now change the topic, it is better not to dwell on such matters or creatures of darkness.

While I could grasp much of Sammy through my sense of him, I knew he still had trouble understanding us. I gave him a child's beginner's book on our language. Mistress Mar-ry-betha, who teaches young children the way of our culture, had been spending a day each half cycle with Sammy. Her wisdom flows from her like a morning mist. A mist that wets the mind, yet doesn't drench it.

It wasn't long before Sammy was able to, in simple sentences, speak my tongue. I took him more and more to my classes. I would place Sammy on my shoulder. To get a better look, Sammy would climb up my hair and sit on that part of my ear that stuck out of my hair. Sammy told me, he thought my manner of dress reminded him, of what he called Oriental.

Many of my fellow members also took an interest in Sammy. One member, Pungpo, a rather advanced student, sent Sammy flying about the classroom on a lightning bolt during a training class. It brought many laughs from the other students. Master Tokichu was present and I thought he was going to rebuke us. For we did take unfair advantage of Sammy. Instead, however, Pungpo got on to his knees before Sammy, which I thought was very humbling of him, since Sammy was barely the length of his middle finger! Sammy told him and this is in his words, "No sweat, man. I knew you weren't going to waste me. And, I can say, I am the only one of my kind to ride on a thunderbolt." I looked over to Master Tokichu he was silent. I could see that sparkle in his eyes, when he is pleased. I think we all were humbled by Sammy's trust of us.

After Sammy had mastered more of my tongue, Mistress Mar-ry-betha invited Sammy and I to one of her classes down in the valley. It was a rather hot day, so I kept Sammy on my shoulder. He asked me, "Pchel, what is this Kal-Telon-Suu I have heard you and your friends talking about?"

"Kal-Telon-Suu, is the initiation into the cosmic cycle."

"Say what?"

"It means, we are considered adult enough to acquire the forces of nature."

"Get out of my face."

I was puzzled by what he said, "Sammy, I'm not in your face."

"No, I mean. You're joking? The powers of nature? How can you. Some things can't be attained."

"I see what you mean Sammy. No, we don't have power over creation. Just able to use the forces of nature we can see."

"I'm losing you. But, if you say so. I believe you, my big giant friend."

"Thanks Sammy. Your trust of me is really something special."

Sammy pulled on one of my strands of hair and told me, "I wish you could come to my world after you acquire your powers. Maybe you could help my world. Scare some people into doing what is right."

"You have the words given to you by the manifestation of the Supreme being among you. If your own kind won't listen to their religions, why should they, then, listen to a giant alien teenager."

"Yeah, I guess you're right."

"It would be cosmic, to be able help the children of your world. Make sure they have food, shelter and guidance. And be protected from who you call, 'Blank ups.'"

We then came upon the gold and white temple. Sammy was in awe, he told me. The three waterfalls that stood behind the temple. The five gardens. He thought this was heaven. Upon entering the temple, I told

Sammy, I want to surprise the children with him. He hid himself in my hair. The room was filled with fifteen children. When the children are young, the classes are both male and female. When we enter into young adulthood, training is separate since there are many aspects to our emotional and physical growth that can be distracting. Thus getting in the way for true and positive growth. It is after this period when we can mix again. We celebrate and honor the differences that are in both of us. And, when we are join as one, that mircle of life occurs.

Mistress Mar-ry-betha told her charges, "Today we have a surprise. A rather small one."

The children came and surrounded me; several pulled on the sash around my waist. And several of the boys asked when they will be able to wear a head band. I said, "Ok, calm down and sit down." They all sat on the floor with their big and attentive eyes. "I have a friend I would like you all to meet. He is small, so be kind."

"How small?" asked one little girl.

"Small enough to fit in my pocket."

"You joke with us," replied a boy.

"Really. So small can hide in my head of hair. I will show you." I took Sammy from my hair. He stood up in my hand as I passed my hand in front of the children. Several of the children thought he was just a toy. I placed him on the floor, where he walked up to the base of their sandals. I kept an attentive eye on the kids. They were well behaved. But, a quick and eager hand could have a crippling affect on a tiny person.

One child, who's eyes was transfixed on Sammy asked, "Can it speak?"

Sammy walked over to the little boy's right sandle and shouted up to him, "Of course I can speak."

"Why are you so small?" asked the boy.

"Where I come from, we all are my size."

The children were "floored" as Sammy would say. Many of the children asked Mistress Mar-ry-betha if they could go to the place where Sammy came from. She smiled and told the children that wasn't possible. They all said they wanted a tiny person. I could only imagine what chaos would be released on Sammy's planet, if a group of giant children came to visit.

Sammy started to say something. At first, they couldn't hear him. However, when they realized he was talking, they all turned their attention to the tiny man. "I may be small, but I am a person. Just like even though you are big, you still are people." The children became puzzled. Sammy went on, "What I am saying-- if people much bigger than you came here, would you want them to treat you as toys?" The children told him they wouldn't. Sammy then said, "I think you are good children, right?" They all replied yes. Sammy asked again, with a smile, "What? Are you good children?"

With big smiling faces, the children screamed, "Yes we are!" The pure volume nearly knocked Sammy over.

Sammy nodded his head and shouted back to the children, "Yeah, I think you all are good kids too!"

Part Four

Sammy had a really good time with the children. And the young ones also enjoyed Sammy. After class, Mistress Mar-ry-betha invited us to come again. I very much feel we will! She did tell us of one child who was very sick and confined to bed. This was going to be the beginning of a special adventure for Sammy and I, let me tell you.

His name is Protogahialchulaa, though eveyone called him Proto. I called Proto's parents up and

explained the situation-- mainly, would her son enjoy seeing an alien from another world. His parents agreed. I did have to get permission first, of course, from Master Tokichu. He granted me permission and asked me to send his blessings along to Proto. Master Tokichu did say something to me that puzzled me: "A decision made with thought and compassion for another, is not wrong."

The next day, after I put on my light blue tunic we left the temple, Sammy asked me why I was wearing a different colored tunic. I explained to him, since I was going off the temple property, I had to wear the colors of a junior member. The visit gave Sammy the opportunity to see a suburb, as he called it, of my town. Even with the vast amounts of people, Sammy was surprised to see so much nature. He loved the forests and colorful gardens that surrounded my town and the many dwellings. Sammy mostly enjoyed how my people floated around. We have little need for machines.

Proto's house was simple, a one floor dwelling. It was surrounded by red flowers with a small waterfall in the backyard. The parents greeted us at the door and, as in the tradition of our culture, I lighted a candle in honor of the ancestors of this family. The parents lighted a guest candle in honor of my ancestors also. They were, at first, surprised when they saw my tiny friend. I placed Sammy in the inner pocket of my tunic, to surprise Proto.

I knocked on his door. A feeble but sweet sounding voice asked me to enter. At first, I was shocked. I had no idea how sick Proto was. He was very pale and thin. I could see his young life was slowly leaving his body. It pained me. He should be outside with his friends learning and having fun. Still, within this frail body was a beautiful spirit. "You're a member in training aren't you!!" he said, with such an energy, I thought he was going to fly out of his bed mate.

I knelt down next to him and said, "Yes I am. God willing And my name is Pchel."

"I always admired you all. Look at my walls." On Proto's bedroom walls were posters and artwork of the members from different parts of history. On the wall, shined behind glass, was a tunic of the highest order of the Kal-Telon.

"Proto?" I asked; "Where did you get the tunic of one who had attained the highest level in the members."

"My great grandfather was a member. I wanted to be a great member, a Kal-Telon Master." His face went sad. And he was silent. Proto's face lighted up again. "I thought there was going to be two of you?"

"There is." I reached into my tunic pocket. When I opened my hand, Sammy stood up. A look of surprise and joy crossed Proto's face.

"Is he real. I mean, a living being?"

"He is, Proto."

"Hi Proto. I'm Sammy from the planet Earth. Ever hear of it?"

"No, but I am still pleased to meet you--err--Sammy is it?"

"Yep."

Proto looked to me. "Can I hold him Pchel?"

"Why not ask Sammy?"

"Can I hold you Sammy?"

"Sure."

Sammy walked off of my hand on to Proto's bony fingers. "You say you're from another planet. Are all your people as small as you?" Before Sammy could answer, Proto added, "Oh, I hope you don't think I'm making fun of you cause you are tiny."

"No way. And, yes. My people are all my size, more or less."

With a weak finger, Proto touched the top of Sammy's head and gave him a gentle poke in the stomach. "I felt a tingle when I touched you."

"Maybe it was static electricity," replied Sammy.

For the next two hours (Sammy's time) we talked. Proto also showed us many of his things. Sammy, standing on Proto's knee, did imitations of famous Earth people. Sammy told us that they're very funny imitations. He did his imitations. Without any reference, it wasn't funny for us, other than hearing him try and change his voice. And the funny sight he was making, with the strange movements there on Proto's knee. We did laugh, so not to hurt our tiny friend's feelings.

About lunch time, Proto's mother came in with lunch for the three of us. After his mother left, Proto asked me to go to his closet and bring over a small gray box. After I brought it over and handed it to Proto, he opened it up. "This is Belnic. To be drunk with friends."

"What is it?" asked Sammy. "It smells like wine."

"Proto," I said; "Aren't you kind of young to have this. It is for when you are much older. Then you can share with it with your friends."

Proto, in his very young voice, told me with straight candor, "Who are you trying to fool. Not me. I know I will not make it to adulthood. I know it is not long till I pass."

Sammy slid down his knee and ran up to Proto pulling on the waist band to his night clothes. he told Proto, "Don't talk like that. Since I have been here, I have seen many wonders. You can be helped." Sammy turned to me, "Right, Pchel."

I was stumped for words. There was nothing that could be done for Proto.

"Right Pchel." Sammy's words became softer, "Right?"

Proto reached down and picked up Sammy. He tickled Sammy in the stomach. After giggling from hearing Sammy's tiny laughter, told him--us, "Don't be still and somber. I know I will die soon and nothing can be done."

Proto put Sammy down in his lap and said, "So, won't you join me for a toast of friends."

I was in a bind. I am not suppose to drink wine, as Sammy calls it, only when I am at the temple. I thought about it and looked at Proto. I then remembered what Master Tokichu told me the night before.

"Yes, my young friend--I will."

"So will I," squeaked Sammy.

Proto didn't have anything small enough for Sammy to use. He poured a tiny bit in his hand. "I hope you don't mind drinking from out of my hand. But my hand is clean."

Sammy climbed on to Proto's hand, knealt down, and, cupping his hands, submerged them in the wine.

Proto raised his small plastic cup and said, "May our friendship be of warmth to us as this drink. Salukelna."

"Salukelna," I repeated.

Lifting his cupped hands, Sammy too repeated, "Salukelna."

The three of us, in unison, coughed. It was strong. "Boy do I feel mellow," said Sammy. This "wine" must have had a real effect on Sammy. He started to stagger around the top of Proto's bed. He stumbled a few times. Proto took him up in his hands, where Sammy fell fast asleep. Proto had such a happy and peaceful look on his face, as he gazed down at the tiny person in his hands.

I found it strange to think I had been talking with a very young boy. At times, I felt I was talking with an adult. Maybe, it is because he is close to passing on from this world, back to the Supreme Being. For a moment, as I looked upon Proto and my tiny friend, who was still sleeping in his hand, the two appeared as one.

Soon Proto fell asleep. I let the two sleep. I stood up and looked at the tunic of the Kal-Telon Master. I thought how sad it was young boy like Proto had to die. And Sammy, as much as I enjoy having him with me, must find it hard. He had told me he feels at peace with me and my world. Can anyone really be sure what a person really thinks in their heart?

Turning back toward the two sleeping people, I saw a dream or vision. I don't know which. It could have been the wine affecting me. I was in a field. A golden field that stretched for eternity. Running side by side in the field, was Sammy and Proto. Sammy started to lag behind. Proto kept running toward a distant mountain. Sammy stopped. His face was white and sickly. His eyes dark and sunken. I reached out to him. "Sammy, what's happening?" I asked.

"I'm running on," was his reply.

The vision or dream faded. Both Proto and Sammy were waking up. Proto had more color in his face than he did when we had first arrived. Though, he was tired. He thanked us for coming. And I told him we would come again.

Sammy and I went back to the temple.

Part Five

Sammy was still groggy from the wine. I held him in my hand, on the way back to the temple. A couple of times, children would want a peek at what I was holding. One child said, "That's the tiny person I have heard about." Tired as he was, Sammy would always engage the child or children in conversation. And be as entertaining as he could.

I told Sammy, "You have a nice way with children. Now, you told me you weren't bonded to anyone. And had no children?"

"Right, though I had looked forward to being a father someday."

"Was there a special girl back on your world?"

"There was---Helen. We were a ways from getting married. But we would have in time."

"Why didn't you get married. Why were you waiting?"

"We both were finishing up our education. We both were pursuing a degree, which is considered a high level of learning on my planet. We figured it would be best to accomplish this before getting married and having children. We made the decision, that we wanted to spend as much time as we could with our children. If we were going to bring life into the world, we wanted to do right."

"Hmm, sounds logical." I then asked, "Sammy, are you real sad that has been taken away from you?"

"Yeah, at times it does bother me. And I do miss Helen. Crying over it won't change anything. To be honest, Pchel, I'm not as accepting as you are, that there was a purpose behind all of this, other than dumb luck."

"You're entitled to feel that way. All I can say is, stay open minded. And even though it is not the same, you have a family in me and the others at the temple."

"I guess you're right. I was feeling like that pet of the temple. But that seems to be changing."

When we returned to the temple many of the younger members wanted to know if anything had changed

outside. You see, members in training aren't suppose to venture outside. Only on rare occasions. I sensed some jealousy from a few members. I was glad to get back. And I was glad too, that we brought joy to Proto.

After checking in with the dorm master, I handed over Sammy to Member Ruun, who wanted to teach Sammy more of our culture. I then went to see Master Tokichu. "Well, my young apprentice, back from your mission of goodwill."

"I wanted to tell you, Master. I had drunk wine."

"Oh? How was it?" asked Master Tokichu, his eyes sparkling with inner-wisdom.

"It was all right. Made me feel strange. I wanted to tell you. Because, it does break a rule."

"I am glad you told me. And yes, rules are to be followed. As you know Pchel, rules are there to help us attain what we seek and give us self-control. Or you can see rules as being the banks of a river. Without those banks, the water would spread eveywhere and be of no servive to man or nature. Rules are our river banks. It keeps us on the path from wasting time and what we need to do. However, we were not made for rules. Rules are to serve us. I'm not talking about finding loop-holes around them." Master Tokichu stopped. He saw I was lost. "Remember what I told you about a decision based on thought and compassion?"

"Yes."

"My young member, that is what I mean, when I say rules are to serve us, not be our master. In that situation, it was better to step aside of the law for a greater good. Namely, to strengthen that sick boy's heart."

"I think—yes, I do see master." Master Tokichu's face became hard and I thought I sensed a sadness. "Is everything well Master?"

"It is. As a Master, I sometimes wish I could spare my young members certain hardships. Sadly, to do so, would not be of service to you all. Now off you go. You have a busy day full of training." I bowed and left. Member Ruun brought Sammy back. Sammy and I didn't talk much that night; he was still tired. He also didn't look well. This concerned me.

The next day was one of physical training. First was Tembelal class. Each of us were paired with another student. We had long sticks. The object was to remove the other's stick. Sammy didn't understand why we were doing combat training as he called it. I tried to explain it was to control our base desire to conquer others. And it was to help us become one with our physical form. I confided in Sammy, I loved this sport. Even though it could be painful at times.

Getting into our red tunics. Class prepared for training. Sammy asked me why these tunics are so short. These tunics only went as far as our knees. I told Sammy, because the freedom they give, when doing such physical labor. Sammy said, "This room is all padded. Is it that brutal?"

"No, it isn't brutal. You will see my friend."

After we were given our partners, the fifteen of us lined up across from each other and bowed. With the thunder of our clashing sticks, class was on. The member I was sparring with, made several admirable leaps and turns. However, I made a few moves which surprised my partner. I could sense Sammy's wonder, as he saw me walk up the side of the class room, then fly above the head of my opponent. I was feeling proud of myself, that Sammy was in such awe of me. I became though, distracted and found the stinging pain of my opponents stick against my backside. My opponent jumped over me, as I was turning around. He landed and using the very hand of his stick, knocked my stick from out of my hands. He won. I thanked him for a good lesson. The lesson being that a puffed up ego leads to a sore bum.

All of us took towels from several very young members, who also served us water. I had entrusted one such memeber to look after Sammy, while I was busy in class. Standing up in the young members hand, Sammy told me, "Never saw anything like that in my life. Except in a movie."

"What is a movie?" asked one student.

"A form of entertainment on my planet. We take moving pictures and add things to them. We can make it look like a person is in space, underwater. I have a friend, named Bob, who can make people look like giants or tiny people."

The next class was, Outer Control. I told Sammy, as I placed him on my shoulder as I walked to class, "We will be bending certain parts of nature." He was looking forward to it. This class took place in a circular room that had no ceiling. There were fifty of us this time. Today's lesson was to float objects around the room. One student whispered to me. He suggested using Sammy. I recalled Sammy telling me how he loved dreams, where he was floating. I asked the instructor's permission to use Sammy. And I asked Sammy. He agreed. Sammy was placed before us students. Directing my thoughts with the help of my fellow students, we started to float Sammy around the room. I sensed his joy. Several students had him making swooping motions and turns.

Something went wrong. Sammy floated up and away from the class. Even the instructor couldn't bring him down. When he had floated out of sight, I willed myself up. The teacher said, "Pchel, get down here at once. We will find your friend."

"He is my friend. He trusted me," I replied and floated up after him. Several other students, including the one, who suggested using Sammy, came and joined me. The teacher yelled for us to come back. There was twenty five of us in the air. I could see Sammy ahead of me, bouncing off the tops of trees. I tried to increase my speed, as I glided over the trees. What a sight we were. In our red tunics, screaming to Sammy, from on high, telling him we would get him. Soon we were over the town. The town's children ran down the street, staring up at us.

Sammy started to lose altitude. He was falling right for the road below. I tried. I really tried, with all my might, to swoop down to him. It looked like he was going to hit the hard surface, when my instructor from class, glided in under Sammy and caught him in his hands. Once on the ground, I ran to my instructor and plucked Sammy from out of his hands. "My friend you ok?"

"Yeah. Man, what a crazy scene," he replied. I placed him, in my inner-pocket. On the way back to the temple, I kept patting the pocket, to assure myself that Sammy was safe.

We all were brought before the Masters of the temple. My instructor talked first. He told them, he had agreed to let his students use Sammy in their lesson. He afterwards apologized to Sammy for his bad judgement. Sammy, in turn, told the temple Masters, he also had agreed.

The Masters, understood mine and the others desire to help Sammy. Though, they did not approve of the recklessness of it. Even in a dire situation, calm action is required. All of us, who left the classroom, had to write a twenty page report, on the importance of calm. And on the virtue of not being cavalier about our studies, when it involves a living being.

Part Six

I had three days to write the twenty page paper for Master Tokichu. With that and my other homework, my eyes were getting pretty sore. On the final night, I was getting near the end, when I spotted a meteor shower. I asked Sammy, if he would like to come out and observe it with me. He told me he would like to see it. Not far and still on the temple grounds, was a grazing field for our small herd of cattle.

The sky was clear that night, making the meteor display all the more impressive. The field was flashing from the celestial show. The glory of the cosmos!

As I was moving to a higher elevation, I slipped on some wet grass. Sammy, who was on my shoulder, fell off. He was unharmed but the poor fellow found himself stuck in a pile of manure. My tiny friend was up to his neck in it. I passed part of my tunic over the wet grass, then I pulled out Sammy. It was rather an unpleasant feeling. It felt like cold, wet mud. With a stink! The manure made a gushy suction sound,

as I pulled out Sammy. After removing him, with a final pooping sound from the odious pile, I ran the portion of my wet tunic over Sammy's face. Sammy told me, "I have in the past been told I'm full of it. But not covered with it."

"What does that mean Sammy?" I asked.

"Never mind," he replied.

I ended up having Sammy take off his clothes and wrapping him in a piece of my tunic that I tore off. This wasn't a fun night for him. We went back to the temple.

I gave Sammy's clothes to one of the members who does the laundry. He told me he would bring it to my room later. Then it was back to my studies. When I finished the last page, I leaned back in my chair and gave out a sigh. Sammy was sitting on the edge of a book, swinging his legs. A knock came to my door, it was the member with Sammy's clothing. "You want I should repair your tunic Member Pchel?"

I looked at my tunic. It did look shabby with the tear in it. "Thanks for your offer. It's late, Member Josecl. I don't want to keep you from your free time."

"Can't go to instruction like that tomorrow. I'll do it," said Member Josecl. I gave Member Josecl a deep bow. I took off my tunic and handed it to Josecl.

When I returned to my desk, Sammy was back in his own clothing. Sammy walked to the edge of the desk and said, "Thanks for pulling me out."

"I wouldn't leave a friend stuck in the muck."

"Ah-ah I know that Pchel. I-I am touched that you ripped up your tunic to clothe me. I know what it means and represents to you."

"If I couldn't help a friend in need, than my tunic would mean nothing. Or the person wearing it."

"Now, don't fling wise at me," said Sammy, with a grin.

"Ok, you had enough manure on you for oneday, without me trying to sound like a master." We both laughed. I saw a puzzling look cross his face. "What is it Sammy."

I could see he was searching for the right words. "Well, seeing you more bare to the world lets say, I see how young you are."

I was puzzled. "What do you mean?"

"What I mean, in a normal life I should be the older person helping the younger. Instead, I'm the older person being taken care of by the younger. I wish I could do more for you. Help you in your studies or other training."

I directed my gaze at Sammy. I sensed his heart. "You're hurting cause you want to be a father. And seeing me, as what I'm, a teen reminds you of a calling you feel--yes?"

"Yeah."

"I can't remove your feelings. I can tell you it's not your fault you found yourself on a planet of giants. Small or not, you're still my friend. And this giant friend feels there is a purpose, even if you can't see it."

Sammy said, "Yeah, don't mind me."

My heart was heavy, for I couldn't remove my friend's pain. Later, Sammy told me, "Hope you don't get me wrong Sammy. I love your world. And I am glad in having a friend like you. Put it down, as an adjustment, of a tiny person on a giant world."

"Sure." We then went to bed for it was very late.

In the morning, which came all too fast, I pushed myself to Master Tokichu's room. "Very nice, young one," said the master.

Sammy, who was in my pocket called up to me. He had a question for the master. After placing Sammy on the desk, Master Tokichu asked Sammy what he would like to know.

"From the country I come from Master Torkichu, we use to have slavery."

"So, slavery in your world has ceased?" Master Torkichu asked.

"No, it's still there."

"Hmm," said the master. "Slavery can take many forms. Not just putting a person in chains or irons. But, I sense that is not your question."

"Even many years after slavery in my country had ended, that area that had the slavery and supported it, still hates, or some do, the race of the former slaves."

"Sammy, one hates what one has wrong," said Master Torkichu.

"I-I'm a little lost."

Master Torkichu folded his hands in his lap and replied, "To keep hating means to keep from looking at the truth. And it also means to keep from moving on in one's life of growth. Slavery is a sin against humanity and our creator. It is a very dark sin. To take another life and force it against its free will, which is a price-less gift of the Supreme Being is wrong. To come and realize what you have done, or your ancestors have done, would be a painful, if not a burning awareness."

"Master Torkichu?" I asked, "The person or persons still can move on. Even if they had sinned, they have a choice to go on and live their life anew."

"Correct, Pchel. However, many people are too afraid to face the consequences of their actions and the pain they brought to others. So, they remain full of hate towards the people they had enslaved. They find a reason for the hate in order they may not feel compassion toward the other person. You see, my two novices in life, if you can demonize another person or race, you can do anything to hurt them. Or simply not forgive or sadly—love them. I hope I made sense."

"You did Master Torkichu. Before I found myself here. A group from another race of people on my planet, killed thousands of innocent people. They said we were all evil."

"Yes, they demonized your people, in order to talk themselves in committing this act, which is an act, against the Supreme Being. I hope your world can survive."

"I hope so too," responded Sammy.

I was proud of Sammy, asking such a question. And reveling a darker part of his world to us. A sadness did enter me. All those people who died, because of violence. To think such disgusting behavior even happens, is beyond my understanding. Later, Sammy told me, "I don't want you to think I'm from a planet of whackos or demons. There are countless more good, than evil."

"Still," I asked Sammy; "With a history like that, why would you miss or want to go back to Earth?"

Part Seven

Once I said what I did, I knew it was too late. The words hit their target. Not that I was wanting to hurt Sammy's feelings; I was upset at thought of slavery and destruction. Sammy's face turned white.

My friend Xec had just walked in the room as I spoke my words. "It does sounds like a dark world indeed. It would be a disgrace if they decide to explore deep space," said Xec, with disdain in his voice. Sammy, speechless, looked up at us. He reminded me of a child lost among strangers. Except we aren't

strangers. We are friends.

It was hard for to tell, if he had the look of sadness on his face or if he was suddenly scared of us. A cold thought ran through me. Would it be possible, he thinks we would inflict harm upon him because of what my friend and I said about his world? Xec sensed this too. "Sammy," said Xec. "We like you. Don't think what we said reflects on you."

Xec meant what he said. However, telling someone their world isn't worth to return to, isn't a complement. Sammy, after the uneasy silence, spoke, "I'm glad you two are disgusted with some of the deeds of my planet. And you should be. Most of us on Earth feel the same way. I will tell you both, again, there are many more good people. Before I found myself here, I met a really cool soccer player. That's the name of a sport. He is young and small, but very skilled, so size doesn't mean anything. You both would like him. And he is one of many more. My people have done really great feats. WE have gone into space. Sent probes about the human race into deep space. We are learning so much everyday. It's true, we also have to fight the evil everyday. I guess, that is how we prove ourselves, to keep on fighting evil. To be more than just the simple creatures that crawl around. And, I'm impressed that you care what a tiny person thinks. I also know, you both would see, to judge a race too harshly, is to head down the not so nice path of vanity."

"Hmm," I said, as I gave Sammy a shrewd look. "Now who is the master?"

Xec added, "The giant teens get a lesson from their inches-high friend. Very good Sammy."

"Master Tokichu's wisdom must be rubbing off on me," said Sammy, who gave us a comic bow.

My time for Kal-Telon-Suu was getting nearer. I could feel the excitement in my stomach. Sammy was looking better too. After his visit with Proto, he seemed weakened somehow. As our custom, a week before the great Kal-Telon-Suu, the members who had gone through it last season, take the upcoming members out for a day of fun. I would be the only one taking it this season. A lot of the fun is also at the expense of the novice. It is done with fraternal respect. I did insist Sammy come with us. They agreed.

Master Tokichu gave us his blessings. One of the senior members kept Sammy with him. When we reached the gate leading to the outside, a rather large senior member, clearing his throat, told me solemnly, "Pchel, this is the start of a custom that has been carried on for many generations. I hope you appreciate this fact."

Speaking to the group, who formed a circle around me, I replied, "I do and..." Before I could finish my words, I found myself at the end of a lightening bolt, shooting about the sky. I could hear the members below laughing. Next, I found myself shooting between trees. After I cleared the trees, tearing my tunic in the process, I shot up again. Meanwhile, the senior members below were running, as each took a turn moving me about. I was flying over a lake. I thought, "They're not going to dunk me, I hope." They did. I went splashing with a thud into the icy water. I scared a school of fish that were passing by. One fish, annoyed by my presence, kept biting me, as Sammy calls that region, in the butt.

When I thought I hadn't any air left in my lungs, I exited the water. The senior members kept me elevated in the sky—all the way to town. I was wondering how Sammy was doing, when the member, who had Sammy, sent him up to me. "You ok?" he asked.

"A little wet," I responded, as I spat out bits of sand and lake flowers from out of my mouth. Sammy and I floated the rest of the way to town. A crowd of town folk had gathered below. The seniors brought me and Sammy down amongst them. I placed Sammy on my shoulder. The adults threw many colored flowers on me. The children formed a circle around me and started singing songs. I spotted Proto's house. Coming weakly toward us, was Proto! I was surprised to see him able to walk by himself. He still looked gravely ill. Proto gave me and Sammy several pieces of candy his mother had made. It was good to see him again. And I know Sammy felt the same way.

The senior members then moved me on. I was taken to a public dwelling used for special events. When we went inside, I couldn't believe what I saw. On tables were food of every kind. "Better enjoy the food, Pchel. After tonight, it is water and meskia till after your passing," said one senior member, named

Ivlon.

Sitting down on large floor pillows, we took our bowls of food and started to eat. Sammy was on my lap with great contentment, eating his food. After a few minutes he asked, "After tonight, you go on a strict diet of food till after the ceremony?"

"Yes. This is done so the body and mind will be pure as I enter into this solemn passage."

"Is this a passage into adulthood?" questioned Sammy.

"In part it is. It is the passing of the individual into a life of service to the Supreme Being, a passage that I can, with an enlightened mind, serve, and worship my creator. I am passing into Kal-Telon, which means, one who acknowledges him or herself as a creation and child of the creator. Do you have anything like that on Earth?"

"In my faith, when we are in our early teens, we have a ceremony called; Confirmation, which comes after years of study. Another religion, has what they call a; Bar-mizvah."

Before Sammy could continue, the senior member lifted a bottle filled with a red drink called Costuchi. The contents of this bottle was poured and served in a very large ceramic goblet. The senior member, chosen by the master as the leader, drank from it first. He then passed it to the next. I thought there wasn't going to be any left. I was wrong. There was plenty. And I was expected to finish it. One of the senior members, picking Sammy up by his shirt collar, placed him on the rim of the goblet. Bending over trying to gather a handful, a senior jiggled the cup sending poor Sammy into the red drink. By this time I was feeling the affects of the drink. I felt warm all over. For some strange reason, kept laughing. I did manage to pull my friend out of the goblet. Sammy started to burp.

The rest of the evening is a blur. I however, seem to recall dancing and singing. The name Elvis pops into my head. I think, it was Sammy, who told me about this singer, who I tried to emulate from my tiny friend's description. I do remember also, Sammy on my lap babbling on endlessly about something, while he dangled his legs over the side of my leg. Sammy later started to cry, as he told me how he thought I was a great kid and if he was ever to have a son, he would want him to be like me. This, if my memory is correct, caused me to start crying, as I told him, that was the nicest thing anyone has ever said to me. What a night!

Part Eight

When we returned to the temple, I was looking forward to bed. Several masters, including Master Tokichu, were outside the door to my room. I wondered if I was in trouble. The smiles I saw on their faces put that thought to rest. One master said, "Hmm, our little novice looks like a dried betian reed ready to break." He gave me a vigorous hug.

Another said, "Our young sprout is soon to blossom into a mighty zeckrura."

Master Tokichu was silent, though his eyes spoke with such wisdom. He got onto his knees and removed my sandals. From a side pouch, he had on his long golden sash, the master removed a wet cloth. He wiped my feet with it. I bent down to him, "No master, please. It should be I washing your feet."

The two other masters told me to be silent. When Master Tokichu was finished, he said in prayer, "I wipe the feet of a child. Wipe clean of childish concerns. Clean to walk in the ways of adulthood. An adult ever mindful of the joy; that he is a child of the Supreme Being. Walk straight his path."

Master Tokichu stood up. And the three masters stretched out their hands and prayed over me. Sammy, who was on my shoulder was silent. After they had prayed over me, the masters gave me a hug and went back to their rooms. It was lovely, though I wished I hadn't felt so tired from the food and drink." I went into my room and sat down on my bed mat. "I didn't know there was going to be a ceremony," said Sammy.

"I didn't know either."

Sammy gave me a tiny punch in the arm with his fist, as he told me, "My giant friend, you are on your way to Kal-Telon-Suu." Sammy, excited for me and still dazed from the drink, fell off my shoulder and on to my bed. He was ok. He just laughed. And so did I. It was hard for me to believe: in a matter of days I would be entering into Kal-Telon-Suu. I stretched out on my side and watched as Sammy stood up. I felt a cold wind. It only lasted a moment. I shrugged it off. My head felt heavy. I settled back on to the mat. Sammy came and joined me. We slept.

I found myself walking. The land seemed unfamiliar. Yet, somehow it was familiar. A gray mist hung low about me and this land. The air was dry and there was no scent. It was as if the land were devoid of life. As I walked, I heard sharp crunching sounds. I was stepping on sharp brittle objects. The low light caused by the mist, prevented me from seeing what they were.

The gray mist started to dissipate. I could make out shapes. Shapes of all sizes. They were square mostly. Soon, as the mist cleared, I could make out detail. I was standing on a large model. Each building was detailed from windows to tiny doors and outside signs. The roads that ran between and around these models were also of the most precise detail. This was, however, no structures I had known. They were alien. I started to move again amongst this display of alien habitation.

The crunching sound commenced as I did. Down at my feet were tiny skeletons, of beings not unlike myself. As with everything else on this vast model display, they were of minute detail in every way. The skulls, chest cavity legs—everything. It was scary. And they felt like real bones. I wanted to leave this place. Trying to avoid the tiny skeletons, I heard movement. Scurrying and falling over the bones were tiny people. There was four of them. They were in rags. I stood there motionless. I wanted to see what they would do. They came up to the base of my foot. They seemed oblivious to me. One tiny person ventured to climb my toes. It tickled. The tiny person must have realized what it was on. It quickly jumped off my foot. It tripped over the bones. I reached down and picked it up. I could feel it struggling in my grasp. I opened my hand up. The tiny being quivered in intense fear. I tried to talk to it. I wasn't going to hurt it. The others ran off. "Wait!" I shouted after them; "I'm not going to hurt you."

Dust and a foul smell suddenly appeared and came from behind one of the derelict buildings. Covered in dirt and what looked like decaying meat was another person who was my height. His long dirty beard was covered with a dark substance that glistened under the sparse light. Between the matted strands of the beard was bits of bone. Tiny bone. The sight of this "thing," that stood erect and faintly resembled a being as myself, frightened and repulsed me. He lifted up his filthy fist. He was holding something. He opened his fist and removed with thick scarred fingers, a tiny figure. It was one of those tiny people I had seen.

The "thing" held the tiny man by the end of his arm. The beast shook him wildly. I could hear the high pitched screams of the tiny man. I was afraid the beast was going to tear off the man's arm. I stepped closer to the beast. The stench was terrible. I gazed upon the tiny man. To my agony of heart, it was Sammy! I wanted to help him. The beast kept shaking him mercilessly. Until, flinging Sammy violently to the ground. I screamed and ran for the ugly creature. Shoving him into a building that crashed beneath our weight.

I looked into its dull brown eyes that raged with hate. Its breath smelled like a thousand graves opened up at once. Several small pink objects passed in front of the horrid face. I looked over to my side. I saw a tiny boy and girl flinging flower petals at me. I moved off of the fallen terror, which was cold and silent. Slowly, I stood up and went over, and kneeling down before the boy and the girl. I rested a giant hand besides them. The boy came and rested his head on a finger, while the girl continued to shower me with her tiny flower petals.

The girl stopped. She grabbed her brother by the shoulder. They started to back up in fear. "What is it?," I asked. They kept backing up. Turning around, I saw that horrid face coming right down on me.

I woke up.

I could see the things of my bedroom, bathed in the clean blue light of the moon. I looked down and saw Sammy. I picked him up and placed him close to my chest, still shaken from my dream.

End Of Part Eight

Part Nine

by Tim Lacey

When the rays of a new day hit my eyes, I was glad the night had passed. The dream that I had, however, lingered. The images of such destruction and chaos curdled my blood. Those two children and the little girl throwing the fresh flower petals amongst the landscape that had become corrupted with filth and decay, what were they? The children seemed to trust me. Even in their trust, the fear of the horrid creature was too much for them.

The light in my room grew as did this new day. I couldn't help but continue to wonder about the children of my dream. Had children on this world of Sammy's, turned to adults for protection, only to find their trust and hopes shattered? Only a debased and diseased culture would permit such a deed.

For a moment, I had a cold and dark feeling. A sweat broke out on my face. I wanted to crush such evil people—make them feel the pain a hundred times fold. What were these Earth people? Tiny toys of destruction? "No!" I thought to myself. "I must not think that way. Sammy is good and so are many of the people he had told me about." This thought, in itself, was evil. I rejected it.

Sammy was sleeping soundly at the base of my pillow. A drop of sweat that fell off my brow woke him up. "Is it raining?" he asked, still in a groggy state.

I wiped it off from his face with a finger and told him, "You're just dreaming."

"Oh. Well—anyway, good morning, young novice in training."

"Good morning to you my friend. And what a good morning it is."

After we cleaned up Sammy and I went to the dining hall. Young Proto's mother had made for Sammy some tiny plates and cups. So now he doesn't have sit on the edge of my plate and eat. During breakfast in the temple dining hall, Master Tokichu announced the members could have a morning henk ride. Sammy tapped me on the finger and asked, "What's a henk ride?"

"A henk is an animal that people can ride. They sometimes are used to pull carts."

"Hey, that sounds like what we call on Earth a horse."

Sammy also asked, "Will you be going on the henk ride? Or do you have to stay behind, since this is your final days before Kar-Telon- Suu?"

"I will be allowed to go."

When we were through with breakfast and was outside waiting for the henk to arrive, Master Tokichu said a few words. "My young members soon, Member Pchel will be making Kar-Telon-Suu. I thought a morning ride in honor of the occasion and a break from training was in order. And to you young member Pchel, this is also in honor of your fellow members, who soon you will becoming a senior among. May you Honor them with an upright life."

I gave everyone a bow.

When the henk arrived, I asked Sammy, who was sitting on my shoulder, "Does this look like what you call a horse?"

Sammy replied, "Sort of. But our horses or henks, have only four legs not eight."

"Only four legs. It is, as you would say, freaky man."

Sammy laughed. He told me, "Hey, Pchel, you really are picking up on my people's lingo."

It was a great morning for the ride. The sky was a deep blue. All the trees were full and tall. We took a small dirt road that ran around the edge of the temple property. At one point, we saw several girl members from the female temple, coming down the other way.. Xec, who was sitting behind me, gave me a shot in the arm and said, "That girl with the pink and blue tunic is staring at me. She must have never seen such a manly work of art as me."

Sammy stood up on my shoulder, turned and said to Xec, "Don't want to bust your bubble, but she's staring at Pchel."

I don't think Xec heard my friend. My friend and fellow member was lost in himself. I must confess, as the female members drew closer, I loosened my tunic, so I could puff my chest out a bit. All the recent training had increased the bulk of my upper-chest and shoulders. Sammy grabbed a hold of my hair and worked himself around to the back of my head. Hanging on to one long side bang, with only one arm, he waved to the female members. They smiled and waved back. I loved watching their cute smiles. I heard a deep cough, it was Master Tohicku, we all, including Sammy, returned our minds to the ride. I wondered if this was planned by the master. To have us run into several female members?

Later, back at the temple, I had classes to attend. At break, before dinner, I stretched out on my bed mate, with Sammy sitting on my forehead. I told him, "Those female members were sure lovely. It gave such a warm feeling. Also an energy that---well, I think you know Sammy."

"I do."

I went on. "To be in love must be, and is compassion, how we are in the image of the Supreme Being."

"Hey," said Sammy; "Love is a great gift! When you are in love, it makes you feel like a star. It can make a winter seem like spring and each year have twelve Junes. Aah, yes."

I could feel the smile on my face, as I thought about the female members. My smile must have been from cheek to cheek. "I want to, Sammy. Find a girl whose heart beats with mine. And I want to take her where no other could. There's that feeling again. It's so overwhelming."

"Ok, my young buck, calm down. You have your Kar-Telon-Suu. Pchel, have you or do you feel free enough to tell Master Tokichu, when these, aah, swells of emotion enter your mind."

"I do. He says they're normal. Master says without passion we are like the markers over graves. He says, it is when our passions become self-indulgent, that we lose control and destroy the beauty of the passion and the beauty of our soul."

"Sounds good Pchel. Very good." said Sammy, who I could hear give a muffled sigh.

I took Sammy off my forehead. I wanted to make the finger-long friend that I held, happy. I started to make funny faces and noises. When Sammy smiled, I felt better. Still, I knew my friend was in need. I pressed him up against my chest. I could feel the beating of my heart pass through him. I entered into his pain, a friend. I then placed him in the inner pocket of my tunic, where he could calm his heart in the warmth of a friend.

The bell for dinner went off soon after. As Sammy and I were going down the hallway, I saw Proto and his parents with Master Tokichu.

Part 10 (conclusion)

Proto raised a weak hand up and said, "Greetings, Member Pchel."

"Greetings to you, young Proto."

Proto was still thin and looked weak. There was a glow about him, I felt. I was really hoping a cure had

been found. I felt a stirring in my pocket. I reached in and brought out Sammy. A big smile appeared on Proto. His body, emaciated from the ravages of his illness, gave Proto the appearance of a smiling skeleton.

Sammy extended his hand to Proto, who gently shook it. "What brings you folks here?," asked Sammy.

"Sammy and Pchel will you join us in the guest quarters," said Master Tokichu.

Sammy and I didn't know what was going on. When we arrived at the temple guest quarters, there was another person—a doctor. Master Tokichu had the doctor address us. "I detected an alien microbe in Proto's blood. It had temporarily reversed the decline of his physical body. It was then, Proto's parents told me about the contact of their son with an alien being."

"What can I do to help?" asked Sammy.

"Your cells contain a signature mark that attacks the strain that is weakening Proto's immune system."

Sammy replied, "Do you need some of my blood to make an antidote?"

"No, the infection is too impregnated in Proto's system. I would need to do a gracpethral." The doctor moved closer to Sammy. "What it is Sammy, you would give part of your living force to Proto. That is, the energy that binds your physical form."

"I can't ask Sammy to do that. He could die," said Proto to both the doctor and his parents.

The mother spoke, "Yes, we don't want to end a life to save a life."

"I see no other option. I can't promise that Sammy would survive. His size and most importantly, his alien struture excludes anyway I can make a judgement. It had never been done with an alien before. And of course, Sammy is the only one who can decide to take the risk or not."

"Doctor, can you make any assurance that you could find a cure for Proto?" asked Sammy.

"No. There is no known cure. And I give Proto a quarter of a cycle of life left to him."

"Then it is clear. I will take the risk."

My heart fell. Yes, I wanted to see Proto saved. I also didn't want to lose Sammy. I however, kept silent. Sammy had to make the choice. And with no distractions.

"Let me do several preliminary tests."

Sammy asked, "When would you do this, doctor? Could it be after Pchel goes through Kar-Telon-Suu?"

"Yes."

Master Tokichu suggested that he and I should leave and let the doctor start his tests. I was thinking about all that had taken place when another master came to Master Tokichu and I. "Sammy's planet has been located from the information he had given us."

Master Tokichu said to me, "What should Sammy do? And what does your heart tell you."

"Both are the same. Aren't they Master?"

"Are they Pchel?"

I told Master Tokichu. "It does seem the risk is worth taking. I do think Sammy should know his planet has been found. His choice must be an honest and pure one."

"What do your feelings tell you?"

"That he wouldn't have to go through this. And I would always have him safe and well in my pocket. I was going to make him an adoptive brother after the Kar-Telon-Suu. I don't want to lose my tiny friend.

I know though a greater choice has to be made."

"Now Pchel, with the new information about the location of Sammy's Planet, what should he do?"

"Since, the only hope rest with him, he should take the chance and help Pchel."

Master Tokichu put a hand on my shoulder, "As Sammy's friend, what do you think he will do?"

"I think he will do it. And Master, what were these questions for?"

"My young member, I walked you from your mind to your heart. And brought the two together."

"It still hurts, Master."

"I know it does. And I hurt with you."

A commotion broke out behind the closed door. The doctor came out and told us, "Proto has had a relapse. I have to do the gracpethral now."

We went inside, the parents had the boy's limp body in their arms. Sammy was standing on a table. I was wondering if I should even tell Sammy about his world. I felt I had to. "Sammy, our people have located Earth."

Sammy was taken back at first. He then asked, "Could your people send me back if I wanted to."

"Yes."

Sammy's face became focused when he answered, "Makes no difference right now. I'm going to help Proto."

"Sammy, I---I want to tell you. That---well---because of who you are, Earth is a favorite planet of mine."

"Pchel, whatever the outcome, I am thankful to have known you and to call you friend. And more."

Proto's parents came and thanked Sammy. The doctor took Sammy and placed him on the floor with Proto. The doctor placed each head to head. He placed his hands over Sammy. The doctor told all of us to stand back.

At first it seemed nothing was happening, until I saw the sliver of light forming above where the two heads met. The light traveled in two directions. One over Sammy's body the other over Proto. Both Sammy and Proto, turned into a glowing bright light. It was so intense, I had to turn away. As the light decreased, I turned back. In the light, I saw Sammy's birth. I saw stages in his development. This was also true with Proto. The images of both came together.

When the light had vanished, there, side by side on the floor, were Proto and Sammy. Proto was no longer thin and frail. He was a healthy youth. And Sammy was no longer tiny. Proto opened his eyes first. He was too weak to talk though. His parents wept with joy over him.

I went over to Sammy's side. I took his hand into my hand. His hand was big and strong looking. His eyes slowly opened. "You did it Sammy." I helped Sammy sit up. So he could see how great Proto looked.

At first, Sammy couldn't comprehend he was my size. In fact, he was bigger! He stood up on uncertain legs. "My giant, how young you look. And how grand."

"It's the tunic it makes me look that way."

"No," said Sammy; "Its what is underneath that makes it so grand."

Proto's parents came and hugged Sammy. They both kissed him.

Sammy started to fade out again. The doctor and I took him to a guest room. The doctor told me Sammy needed rest. I asked, "Will he make it?"

"I don't know yet, Pchel. It's too early."

It was a long day and night. Still, there was no news on Sammy. I was told to rest. I went to my room. I could not sleep. It was just before break of day, when Master Tokichu came and got me. The doctor told me and it was what I had feared, Sammy was dying. "Can I see him?" I asked the doctor.

"Yes, you can go in."

I asked the doctor, "How is Proto?"

"He is in the room with Sammy right now. He is doing well. Thanks to Sammy."

I was about to go in, when the doctor took my arm and said, "I have to warn you, Pchel— as Sammy dies, his body will shrink back to its original state."

Entering the room, I saw Proto whispering something into Sammy's ear. Proto moved from the bed. When he turned, I could see the tears of grief. I told him, "No grief, joy."

Proto said, "Joy for two people. I owe it to Sammy from here on end." He then left the room.

Master Tokichu came in behind me, I asked, if I could be alone with Sammy, he agreed. Master did pray over Sammy before leaving.

I went over to Sammy and once more took his hand into mine. Sammy said in a weak voice, "Strange, I'm seeing all the things I have done and haven't done."

I said, "Master Tokichu says, before a soul meets the Supreme Being, it must face the good and evil it has done. And also, what it did not do with the life it was given." I tried to crack a smile, when I said, "We are being taught, right up to the point we meet our creator."

"Right now, my young friend, you appear God like. Growing into adulthood," he said. His eyes, seem to be looking beyond me to some other place.

My heart grew cold and my eyes filled with water. Sammy's hand was getting smaller. "I love you Sammy." I wanted to say more. I couldn't.

Sammy squessed my hand with his shrinking hand and replied, "I love you." A look of puzzlement crossed his face. He asked, "What does Fater et cum vonelat mean. Proto said that to me.

"Sammy—it means, one who is a father."

Sammy started to breath faster and he was shrinking even more. I kept holding on to his hand. Soon I was holding on with several fingers.

Then—it was over.

DAY OF KAR-TELON-SUU

As is tradition, I climbed the scared mountain of Kar-queal. I had wrapped Sammy's body up in my head band. Once at the peak, I sat in meditation until sunset. I built a fire and put the remains of my friend on top of it. I placed along side Sammy's body, a candle that Master Tokichu had blessed. I watched the smoke, orange from the fire rise up into the night sky.

I sat down. I was tired, hot and missed my friend. A short time later, a mist came— it was cool. It released a small amount of rain. I felt relieved. When the mist had cleared, the first rays of dawn appeared. A new day was starting. Where had the night gone?

I stood up. I walked to the edge of the summit. I looked off into the horizon. At the top of my voice I shouted, "Sammy my friend. You are still with me!" From out of the distance came a gental rumble of thunder.

THE END

By Timothy Lacey