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Captain Quest Meets Zandor and Tandor

By Barbara Hamburger

Captain Quest is a space ranger. He and his space ship, the Vega 2, belong to the International Space Corps whose job it is to explore, patrol and protect interplanetary space.

Today, Captain Quest's mission is to investigate an asteroid that is threatening to collide with the earth by tumbling into its orbit.

Captain Quest arrives at Mission Control to receive his orders. Two repulsion missiles are loaded into the Vega 2, which will be used to bombard the asteroid and push it out of the Earth's pathway.

Captain Quest climbs into the Vega 2 and sets the destination control compass to a point on the asteroid. The countdown begins: 10 - 9 - 8 - 7 - 6 - 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 0. Blast off! The Vega's powerful rockets blast out fire and smoke. The space ship rises, slowly at first, then gaining speed it breaks through the clouds and races toward space. The earth looks like a bright blue-white ball below.

When Captain Quest arrives at the asteroid he circles around it several times to make sure the control compass has chosen a level place to land. "Ready for landing," he calls back to Mission Control. He slows the rockets down and lowers the Vega 2 gently to the surface of the asteroid.

Captain Quest puts on his space suit and steps out into a strange unearthly world. The land is pitted with craters and loose rocks. As he begins to explore he hears weird noises. Turning, he sees two strange figures moving toward him. They are about three feet tall and are covered with an eerie green skin. They look like robots, yet they have a startling resemblance to humans. One is round and the other is square.

Lifting his hands and using the universal language of the galaxy, Captain Quest shouts, "I am a friend. I bring you greetings from the planet Earth." The two approach cautiously. "I am Zandor," says the square one, "and this is Tandor. We are astrophysicists who have come here to study comets of the outer solar system. Our home is Xanador, a far-off planet many millions of light years away. But, who are you? And what brings you to this desolate outpost?" Captain Quest tells them of his mission and says, "You must gather your equipment and leave as soon as possible." "Alas," replies Tandor, "a terrible meteor storm and great waves of iridium dust have destroyed our space ship and all our instruments. We have been stranded here for weeks afraid we were doomed here forever." "You must return with me to Earth," says Captain Quest, "and we must leave immediately." The two agree.

All three run back to the Vega 2. Zandor and Tandor climb in behind Captain Quest who calls, "Ready for take-off!" "Ready Captain," they reply. Captain Quest opens the throttle wide and the ship zooms up into the darkness. Circling high over the asteroid, he turns back and, leveling off, fires the two repulsion

missiles. It is a direct hit! The burst scatters fragments of the asteroid in every direction and it sends it hurtling through space to the outer edge of the galaxy. "Mission accomplished," he reports. Now, he sets the control compass for Earth.

The return trip passes quickly and the descent to Earth goes smoothly. Everyone at Mission Control wants to hear about the expedition. Captain Quest introduces Zandor and Tandor to the other space rangers. They gather around curious to learn more about these two strange creatures.

Captain Quest is tired. He slowly walks back to his quarters. "Well," he says, "another Vega 2 adventure is over."

END.