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Dr. Richard W. Dodson,
327 River Ave.,
Patchogue, L.I.,
New York.

Dear Dick:-

Several of my friends, including a few physicists and mathematicians, have been suggesting that I start a new series of yarns, now that the Lensman series will be ended with First Lensman, instead of writing side-stories in the Lensman universe; as some other fans have been asking.

I have got to write enough more "Storm" Clouds to make a book; but after that nothing definite has been scheduled. And the only thing I have discussed---and that only with a few fans---is a monster story, also in the Lensman universe.

Today, however, I got a letter from Alastair Cameron (don't know whether you ever met him or not---a physicist in the Deep River end of the project). He has been just about as severe a critic of my inertialessness as you are---yet he DEMANDS that I start a new series, says that main-line work is more stimulating, etc., than side-issues (in which he is absolutely right), and writes about four pages of astronomy and so on in favor of it.

I have just written to him---and the idea occurs to me that you, as well as being a friend of mine and a fan of sorts, are also the possessor of a brilliant and analytical mind.

Hence the question---How would YOU go faster than light if you were writing a story?

For I have been thinking about a new universe and a new series for some time---and I can't figure out any other good way of kicking our old friend Einstein in the teeth!

I've got to have four fundamental quantities. 1) A physical universe, 2) A necessary and sufficient fundamental conflict, 3) A remotely physically possible faster-than-light drive, and 4) A remotely physically possible method of communication between alien races.

One and Two I can handle. Three has me stopped. Four I have solved after a fashion---but any ideas (I can't use anything like the Lens, since that would throw the story into the deus-ex-machina plot and therefore practically back into the Lensman universe) better than mine I will accept with thanks.

Please excuse the effrontery of asking help---but you yelled so about my inertialessness that I can't help it! Can you think of anything else that is not actually WORSE than inertialessness?

Sincerely and hopefully yours,

