

The Lost Race

May 20, 1950

[episode 7 of 50]



William Fitzgerald Jenkins wrote engaging and topical science fiction under the pseudonym Murray Leinster. His short story *The Lost* was adapted and dramatized for radio by Ernest Kinoy, a script writer whose career in Hollywood spanned 50 years and multiple mediums: radio, television, film, stage. Murray Leinster's short story was renamed for radio and became *The Lost Race* for its Dimension X debut. This story brings us into a future world in which space exploration has uncovered evidence of a lost race who settled numerous planets across the galaxy before mysteriously disappearing.

DIMENSION X
The Lost Race
May 20, 1950

HOST/NARRATOR: (drum roll) Adventures in Time and Space told in future tense. (cymbal crash) Dimension X - x - x - x - x (trails off and blends with sound of repeated gong) When man first crossed the vast distances of outer space to land on strange worlds, he found that someone had been there before him. The ruined canals of Mars, the smashed cities of Titan and Centaurus Two and Three -- all these were evidence that one hundred thousand years ago, a race of intelligent beings built their cities across the galaxy. They knew space travel, atomic power, astrophysics, and engineering. And then they destroyed themselves, completely, so that, of all the cities on a thousand worlds, only dust and rubble remained. Why? Why did these beings obliterate all record of themselves? That is the mystery of the Lost Race.

music with theremin and organ

HOST/NARRATOR: The freighter Carilya, bound out of Earth for Cetus Alpha Two, came into normal flight after one hundred three days in overdrive. The stars were unfamiliar; the constellations known on Earth had disappeared but there was a yellow sun off to port, and about it revolved three planets.

musical transition with theremin

FX: engine

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What do you make of it, Briggs?

BRIGGS: It isn't on any of the star charts, Captain Wharton. I checked through.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: One and Three are dead, all right. Have to take a closer look at Number Two. Turn up the vision scale.

FX: click, click, click, click

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Hmmm, polar ice caps. She's green around the belt. Let's take her down to a five-mile orbit, swing around her for a look. Alert for deceleration.

BRIGGS: Aye, sir.

FX: alarm bells

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Throw in the manuals.

FX: click, click, click, click

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Power room?

DANTON: Power room. Aye?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: (TO DANTON) We're going down to have a look at something. Give us just enough power to keep her under control. (TO BRIGGS) All right, Briggs, hang on to your stomach.

FX: whoosh of ship descent, click of hatch opening

HOWELL: You sent for me, Captain Wharton?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Come in, Mr. Howell.

HOWELL: I, ah, do you mind if I, agh, sit down?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Freefall sickness?

HOWELL: Well, I'm afraid I'm not an old space hand. Oof!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: We'll level out in a minute.

HOWELL: Do you want something?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Yes. We've come out of overdrive smack in the middle of a new planetary system. Briggs says it's unreported.

HOWELL: Well, that's rather good news, isn't it?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Depends. First report's pretty common. Well, we'll stake a claim on her, in case there are any mineral discoveries.

HOWELL: Why, I meant the possibility of archeological finds.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: I'm afraid I'll leave that to you, Mr. Howell. You're the expert.

BRIGGS: Coming up five, Captain.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Level off. Hang on, Howell.

FX: grinding gears, buzzer

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Power room, hold her steady as she goes. We'll orbit at slow cruising speed.

FX: buzzer

CAPTAIN WHARTON: All right, clear the scope, Briggs.

BRIGGS: Aye, sir.

FX: buzzer

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Hmm, nice-looking piece of real estate. Well, the Space-Guard requires I check her for radioactives, gold, and Lost Race ruins.

HOWELL: You're landing?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Landing? I've got a schedule to keep, Mr. Howell. I can't set down on every lump of dirt I run into. We'll do a spectroscope check and I figured you'd spot any ruins.

HOWELL: All right. (pause) Wait a minute.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Hm?

HOWELL: There, in the lower quadrant.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What?

HOWELL: That bald spot in the vegetation. Those are ruins, all right!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Are you sure, Howell?

HOWELL: Yes! I've seen the Lost Race rubble on Centaurus Two. There! You can see it plainly. Dust and rubble.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Ohhh, that's what I get for calling in an expert. Briggs, stand by to take her down to five thousand feet.

BRIGGS: Aye, sir.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Of all the stinking luck. There goes my schedule.

musical transition

FX: engine

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Seen enough, Howell? This is gonna set me back five hours.

HOWELL: Interesting. (pause) Wait a minute.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What's wrong?

HOWELL: I -- I don't believe it. Marvelous. Incredible.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Stop sputtering, Howell. What is it?

HOWELL: Look over that rise in the ground!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Hm?

HOWELL: It's a section of the city still standing!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Hey, you're right.

HOWELL: That hill must have shielded it from the blast. Captain, you've got to land.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Land?

HOWELL: You've got to. This is the first Lost Race site that's ever been spotted. Of course you'll land.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Howell, we get a thousand-dollar bonus for every day under par for the run.

HOWELL: But you don't understand. It's the biggest find in the century.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: We can chart it and you'll have to get back somehow.

HOWELL: But--

CAPTAIN WHARTON: That's all! I'm not setting down to rake over old dust heaps.

HOWELL: Captain Wharton, I'm on commission to the Space-Guard. You may have to answer to them.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: I'll think up one. Look, Howell, strictly speaking, you're a passenger.

HOWELL: But you've got to land--

CAPTAIN WHARTON: You don't belong on the bridge. I'm not landing down there and that's that.

FX: explosion, alarm sirens

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Briggs?

BRIGGS: Emergency, from the power room. Something must have blown.

FX: buzzer

CAPTAIN WHARTON: (TO DANTON) Power room? Power room? Danton, what's wrong down there? Danton? (TO BRIGGS) He doesn't answer.

HOWELL: Anything serious, Captain?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: If it reaches the fuel locker that five pounds of bessendium will go and kick us right out of space.

FX: alarm sirens stop

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Danton? Danton?!

DANTON: Power room. Aye?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What happened? What blew?

DANTON: Main tube coupling. She's secured now.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What's the damage?

DANTON: The main tube's burned out, the bearing, the coupling, the injector valve, and the needle gauge.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Can you make repairs?

DANTON: Not in flight.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Can you raise enough power to land?

DANTON: I don't know, Captain. The wiring's shot. Spat like a tomcat. I might be able to get something from the deceleration auxiliaries.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Get a jury-rig on her. We'll try to set her down.

DANTON: Aye, sir.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Briggs.

BRIGGS: Yes, sir?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Alert for crash landing.

FX: buzzer

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Signal room. Signal room.

LANGSTON: Signal. Aye?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Langston? Get off a position fix, an SOS standby.

LANGSTON: Aye, sir.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Well, Mr. Howell, I guess you're going to join your friends in the Lost Race. I just hope it's not permanently.

musical transition with theremin

FX: engine, repeated beeping

BRIGGS: Leveled off now, Captain.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Turn her up a point. (pause) That's it.

BRIGGS: She's bucking bad.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Five more minutes and the hull plates'll shake loose.

FX: buzzer

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Power room? Stand by for bow-blast on signal.

DANTON: Power ready.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: I'm gonna try for that clearing.

BRIGGS: Too narrow.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Two to one, for a dollar. All right, hang on.

FX: beep, buzz, crash, skid

BRIGGS: That's it, Captain!

FX: whoosh, thump

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Briggs? Briggs?!

FX: breaking glass

BRIGGS: (GROAN)

CAPTAIN WHARTON: You all right?

BRIGGS: I hit my head on the panel.

HOWELL: I -- I seem to be all assembled.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Well, we're down. Guess our luck hasn't run out yet.

FX: buzzer

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Calling power room.

DANTON: Power room. Aye?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: All right down there?

DANTON: Yeah, I'm all right.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Danton, I want a complete damage check and repair estimate. Get up here as soon as you got it for me. (TO BRIGGS) Briggs, you all right now?

BRIGGS: Yes, sir, I guess so.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: As soon as we get Danton's report, get a detail aft; help him with repairs.

FX: click of hatch

LANGSTON: Captain Wharton?

FX: quick footsteps

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What is it, Langston?

LANGSTON: My speaker line's out. Sending circuits blew.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Spare tubes?

LANGSTON: That was a pretty rough landing, Captain. They're gone. I can't replace 'em this side of Lunar Space Station.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: I see. Well, the SOS ought to do it. When the Space-Guard monitor reports our position--

LANGSTON: They aren't going to, Captain.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Why not?

LANGSTON: Sending circuits went out when the blast went off down there. I didn't get the SOS out.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Thank you, Langston. Get back and see what you can salvage.

FX: footsteps, click of hatch

HOWELL: Does that mean ... bad news?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: We were in overdrive, Mr. Howell. It would take forty years to search the distance we've traveled in one day. Consequently, when a ship doesn't make port and doesn't transmit a position fix, they forget about it.

HOWELL: Oh. I see.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: And with the radio out, we blast off on our own power, or we don't get off.

FX: click of hatch

DANTON: Got yer damage report, Captain.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Well?

DANTON: Here.

FX: paper rustles

DANTON: It's on a B-Twenty-Three checklist.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Hmm. That bad?

DANTON: Worse.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Danton, uh, how long will it take you for repairs?

DANTON: I don't know.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: An estimate.

DANTON: I ain't no Gypsy fortune teller.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: How 'bout the lifeboat?

DANTON: For deep space? What are they teachin' at Sands Point now, basket weavin'?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Danton, I--

DANTON: Lifeboat couldn't lift a half a light-year off this here mud heap.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Danton, I'll take just so much--! (INHALE)
Look. Can it be converted to bessendium drive?

DANTON: The converter links were mashed when we came down.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: How long is it gonna take you to repair the
main drive?

DANTON: Look, Captain, I got two hands. You want me to hold a
lug wrench in my teeth?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: See here, Danton, I--!

DANTON: You see here, Captain! The whole lousy crew's been
spittin' all over me ever since we blasted off! Now ya can all
wait on me!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Who do you think you are, Danton?!

DANTON: The only power man on this ship, that's who! If ya ain't
satisfied with the way I'm workin', go hire yourself another
boy. The woods are lousy with 'em. I'll take my own sweet time.

FX: footsteps, click of hatch

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What's the matter with him? Got a bug in his
ear?

BRIGGS: Space fatigue, Captain. He's been locked up in the power
room four days.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Oh, we don't have enough trouble. Briggs?
Remind me to slug the psycho-technician when we get back. Don't
tell me nobody gets into deep space who isn't emotionally
stable.

BRIGGS: What are you gonna do about him, Captain?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Nothing. Stay off his back.

BRIGGS: Oh, but you can't--

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Danton's the only man who can get us out of
here. If we want to hit the cradle at New York Space Port again,
we've got to keep him happy.

HOWELL: Captain Wharton, as long as we're landed and we do have to wait for the engines to be fixed, I suppose we can explore the Lost Race ruins. I'm particularly--

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Look, Mr. Howell, I can't spare the men. We are now stuck tight until Danton gets those engines fixed. And if he can't, which is entirely possible, we are stuck period.

HOWELL: Oh, I-- Oh.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Briggs, I want you to keep a careful eye on the men. Space fatigue is nothing compared to what we might run up against now.

FX: click of hatch, footsteps

LANGSTON: Captain Wharton? Captain, I've got it.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: The sending circuits?

LANGSTON: No, uh, no, sir. But I picked up the incoming video band.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Well, that's something. Ah, can you get the mail call through? The men could use a little lift right now.

LANGSTON: Well, the scheduled one-way personals are due at Twenty-Three Thirty, Greenwich.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Good! That ought to help morale. Langston, uh, rig the receiving booth.

LANGSTON: Aye, sir.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Howell, this is a break. Seeing the folks at home may be enough to keep everybody on an even keel. I know I'll be glad to see that kid of mine.

musical transition

FX: murmur of crew

WILLIAMS: Mr. Langston? Get Hanson out of the booth. He'll wear the glass right off the tube.

LANGSTON: Now, take it easy, Williams. Everybody gets three minutes.

WILLIAMS: Hey, Kelly, I bet that dame of yours burned up the circuits, huh?

LANGSTON: How'd you know it was his girl? Ya can't tell through the booth.

WILLIAMS: Who else would call that ape? What'd she say, Kelly?

KELLY: Oh, nothin'. She don't have to. She just stands in front of the pickup tube and -- oh brother! (LAUGHS)

WILLIAMS: (LAUGHS) I can just see that.

FX: click of hatch

HANSON: Hey! Hey, it's a boy!

KELLY: A boy?

HANSON: Alice had a boy! They're gonna show him to me in the circuit tomorrow!

KELLY: Congratulations!

WILLIAMS: That's marvelous.

CREW: (MURMURS) Congratulations!

WILLIAMS: Who's next, Mr. Langston?

LANGSTON: Ah, the last call's comin' through now on ticker. It's for Williams.

WILLIAMS: Well--!

DANTON: Hey, wait a minute, Williams.

WILLIAMS: Hey, let go of my arm there.

DANTON: What happened to my call?

LANGSTON: Uh, no call today, Danton.

DANTON: You're a liar, Langston!

LANGSTON: Hey--

DANTON: My girl calls in every scheduled circuit. That must be mine.

HANSON: Aw, let go, Danton. Maybe Janie was busy waitin' tables in the lunch room.

DANTON: What do you know about her, Hanson?

KELLY: You kiddin'? She's a swell kid. Everybody at New York Space Port knows her.

DANTON: Yeah? I've seen you hangin' around Jane, too!

WILLIAMS: Now, wait a minute, Danton--

HANSON: Take it easy, Danton.

DANTON: You and Williams made this up between ya, didn't ya? You're gonna take my call, huh, Williams?

WILLIAMS: You're space happy.

DANTON: You used to hang around with her before I cut you out.

WILLIAMS: Now, listen, Danton, you were lucky enough to get her. Let well enough alone.

DANTON: You bet I got her, all right, and you're not gonna steal her back! Williams, I'm gonna--!

FX: slap, scuffle

WILLIAMS: Are you crazy? Danton! Get him off of me!

DANTON: You lyin' four-flusher!

BRIGGS: What's going on in here?

KELLY: Let 'em fight!

DANTON: I'm gonna kill ya, ya double crossin'--!

KELLY: Let 'em fight!

DANTON: --behind my back!

BRIGGS: Grab him, Hanson! Get his arm.

DANTON: Let go o' me!

HANSON: Nobody took your call; now calm down, Danton.

DANTON: All right, chumps! I'll fix all o' ya!

LANGSTON: Look out, he's got a wrench!

DANTON: (GRUNT)

FX: scuffle, grunts, shattering glass

BRIGGS: Danton!

KELLY: He's nuts.

DANTON: Now nobody gets a call! Nobody! How do you like that, Williams?! Ya ain't gonna hear from Janie no more! How do you like that?

FX: running footsteps

BRIGGS: After him! Kelly! Hanson!

FX: click of hatch

BRIGGS: The airlock. He's left the ship.

HANSON: Let him go; the jealous screwball.

BRIGGS: Sure, but that's the only man who can get us off of here.

musical transition

CAPTAIN WHARTON: I warned you, so help me, Briggs. I warned you to keep an eye on Danton.

BRIGGS: Well, I didn't think he'd go off this way.

WILLIAMS: Well, it's that girl o' his, sir. He's crazy jealous about her.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Any reason for it, Williams?

WILLIAMS: No, sir. She's a good kid. Too good for Danton. I guess he's just so afraid of losin' her to some other guy, he-he's gettin' psychopathic about it.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Well, we've gotta get him back. I want every man equipped and ready for search parties immediately.

WILLIAMS: Aye aye, sir.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Williams? Rig some portable searchlights, and issue hand blasters and radiation tickers. Kelly?

KELLY: Aye, sir?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: You have the second party. You find Danton, send up a signal flare.

KELLY: Aye, sir.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Unless we do find him, we'll be on this planet until the next freighter stumbles on us, maybe ten thousand years from now.

musical transition

FX: echoing footsteps

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Hold that light up, Hanson.

HOWELL: This is amazing, Captain. Lost Race buildings actually standing.

HANSON: Hey!

FX: background footsteps stop

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What is it?

HANSON: Oh. It's nothing. A shadow.

BRIGGS: This place gives me the willies.

FX: footsteps resume

HOWELL: To be able to find out so much about them: their science, art, what they looked like. Perhaps even why they destroyed themselves.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: I'm beginning to wonder about that, Howell. You sure they destroyed themselves? Maybe they lost a war to another race.

HOWELL: Mmm, the winners would have left traces. Genghis Khan, the Mongol emperor, left a pile of skulls as a monument after he destroyed his enemies, but there's been nothing like that found.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: No clues at all, eh?

HOWELL: Nothing. When they decided to wipe themselves out, they did a thorough job. But why? That's what we've been asking for fifty years. They wanted to end like that.

HANSON: Captain, there. There's a rise ahead.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Keep going. (pause) Anything on your side, Briggs?

BRIGGS: No, sir.

FX: pfew/zap, hurried footsteps

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Hanson? What is it?

HANSON: I don't know, sir. Funny kind of a glow. I-I guess I shot without thinking.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: (TO HANSEN) Don't get trigger-happy. (TO HOWELL) Howell?

HOWELL: Yes?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Where do you think the light is coming from?

HOWELL: Down there. It's an amphitheater. Stone seats and a hood.

FX: footsteps continue

CAPTAIN WHARTON: It looks like a bandshell.

BRIGGS: What's up, Captain?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Wait a minute.

FX: footsteps stop

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Well, Howell?

HOWELL: I don't know. That's the Lost Race sign on the hood.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: The what?

HOWELL: A sort of hieroglyphic. The only thing we'd ever found before. One in each ruin.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What does it mean?

HOWELL: Some kind of a warning, I think.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Come on. We're going down there.

FX: slow footsteps continue

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Careful now.

FX: scrambling footsteps

CAPTAIN WHARTON: There's a platform of some kind down here.

BRIGGS: Looks like a lecture platform, doesn't it?

HOWELL: Or an altar. This might have been a temple. Perhaps the Lost Race sign had a religious significance.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Looks like a throne to me.

FX: slow footsteps stop

BRIGGS: A throne five feet high?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Briggs, climb up there. See if there are any controls for this machinery.

BRIGGS: Aye, sir.

FX: climbing scuffle

BRIGGS: This wasn't meant for any man to sit on. (pause) There's a lever up here! Shall I try it?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Sure, go ahead.

FX: squeak of lever, machinery hum

BRIGGS: Hey! What the--? What's that mist? Like a steam bath. I wonder if Kelly and Williams ran into anything like--

WILLIAMS: Hey, Kelly, hold that light up.

KELLY: Shut up and keep lookin' fer Danton.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What?

HANSON: Look there! In the hood.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: It's Williams and Kelly.

WILLIAMS: That crazy jet jockey. When I find him, I'm gonna beat his brains out.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Briggs, pull the lever.

FX: squeak of lever, machinery hum stops

HANSON: You could see 'em. A three-dimensional image.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Some kind of television. Get down, Briggs.

BRIGGS: Aye, sir.

FX: climbing scuffle, footsteps

BRIGGS: Did you see it, Skipper? I was just thinking about him and there he was.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: We all saw it.

FX: climbing scuffle

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Out of the way. I'm gonna try it. If this thing can pick up Earth, it'll replace the receiver Danton smashed. Just throw the lever, eh?

FX: squeak of lever, machinery hum, piano

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Why-- That's my son! I'll be darned. His music lesson. Say, it reaches Earth, all right. Why, imagine, television without a transmitter!

HOWELL: Looks like the Lost Race was ahead of us in more ways than one.

FX: piano fades, squeak of lever, machinery hum stops

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Go up and try it, Howell.

FX: climbing scuffle

HOWELL: It's amazing, amazing. Television without a transmitter. This--this machine may be the clue to the mystery of the Lost Race. (pause) I'll try it.

FX: squeak of lever, machinery hum

FATHER: Mary, I've told you. I like my paper first in the morning.

HOWELL: Wh--What?

FATHER: If that youngster wants to know how the Tigers did, let him wait until I am--

FX: squeak of lever, machinery hum stops

HOWELL: My father in Detroit. Remarkable, Captain! You could see the whole room clearly.

HANSON: Say, how 'bout me, Captain? Let me get up there. I'd like to see my baby. Alice told me all about--

FX: clunk

HANSON: Ouch!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What's the matter, Hanson?

HANSON: I kicked something. A wrench.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Hold it up.

FX: swipe

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Wha--? It's Danton's. That means he's been here. We're on his trail, all right. Come on, Howell; let's go.

HANSON: Yeah, but the baby--! It wouldn't take a minute, Captain.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Later, Hanson. We've got to find Danton first. All right now, let's get moving.

FX: distant signal

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Hold it!

HOWELL: What's that?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: The recall flare. Kelly and his men have found Danton. Oh, I hope that crazy fool is in one piece.

FX: quick footsteps

BRIGGS: We start back now, Captain?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Yes.

FX: footsteps, dull explosion

CAPTAIN WHARTON: That came from the ship!

HOWELL: Another flare?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: No, that was an explosion. That's all we need now -- something more to happen to the ship!

musical transition

FX: running footsteps

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Ohhh, it's the main jets, smashed flat.

HANSON: Of all the stinking, rotten--!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Briggs, check through the ship for further damage.

BRIGGS: Aye, sir.

FX: scrape and scuffle through debris, and footsteps

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Oh, look at those plates. Crumpled like an accordion.

KELLY: Captain?! Oh, Captain?!

HANSON: Here comes Kelly's party!

KELLY: We got him! Got Danton!

FX: stumbling footsteps

KELLY: Holy--! What happened here?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Somebody blew up the main jets. Danton, do you know anything about this?

DANTON: No, sir.

HANSON: Not much he doesn't. He's crazy enough to blow us all up.

DANTON: Listen, Hanson, I admit I went off my head tonight, but I'm not crazy enough to commit suicide. If the jets are smashed, we're all marooned, up the same creek.

HANSON: I still think he's got somethin' to do with it.

KELLY: Lay off, Hanson. We found him wandering up in the hills. And he was with us when the blast went off.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Yes, that's right. We saw your recall flare before the explosions. Oh, I guess that puts Danton in the clear.

HOWELL: Then who did it, Captain?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: I don't know, Howell. Looks like somebody didn't want us to leave this planet. Well, we've still got one slim chance left, if we can repair the lifeboat.

BRIGGS: Skipper? It's gone!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Gone?

BRIGGS: The escape port is open; the boat's missing.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Oh. What else?

BRIGGS: The arms chest was cleaned out, sir, and the fuel locker was jimmied open. The bessendium bars are gone.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: You sure?

BRIGGS: You can look for yourself, sir. She's clean.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: I see. There's only one answer left. There's something or somebody out in those ruins trying to get us. Maybe that Lost Race decided they weren't going to stay lost.

HANSON: Ya think some of them may-may still be alive?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Who else could have blown up our ship?

musical transition

FX: cautious footsteps, murmuring voices echo

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Keep your blaster up, Howell. And be careful, it's a hair-trigger.

BRIGGS: What are we doing back at the television machine, Captain? I thought we were looking for the lifeboat.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: We are. Whoever blew up the ship must be around here. Might as well try to use this machine to track 'em down.

BRIGGS: Yeah. Yeah, catch 'em with their own gadget, huh?

CAPTAIN WHARTON: That's right. All right, Howell, you're the expert. Get up there and try to find 'em.

HOWELL: I hope it works.

FX: footsteps, squeak of lever, machinery hum

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Well?

HOWELL: Trying, Captain.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Nothing but mist.

HOWELL: I don't understand it. It reached all the way to Earth before. I saw my father in Detroit.

FATHER: Mary! My paper's all rumpled again!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What the--?

HOWELL: There it is again. My father in Detroit.

FATHER: I've told him time and time again, I don't like a messy paper.

HOWELL: Look at that. No selector control, yet all the way to Earth. You can see the whole room, the goldfish bowl, the--the antimacassars on the chairs, and yet we can't pick up something less than a mile away.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Knock it off, Howell! We're wasting time!

FX: squeak of lever, machinery hum stops

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Come on. If that gadget won't work, we'll have to comb these ruins inch by inch.

FX: footsteps

HOWELL: I don't understand it.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Neither do I. We'll cut behind the hood here and go on. Briggs, you take the lead with the radiation ticker. We might be able to pick up a reading on where the rocket fuel is hidden.

BRIGGS: Aye, sir.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: All right, let's go.

FX: footsteps

HOWELL: I can't understand why that machine can pick up Earth and not--

FX: whoosh and sliding scrape

BRIGGS: Captain! Help, Captain!

FX: scrambling footsteps

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Briggs? What is it?

BRIGGS: Captain, help! I'm falling!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: It's a cave-in! Hang on, Briggs!

BRIGGS: I'm slipping, Captain!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Grab his wrist!

HOWELL: All right.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Now, pull! Pull! Harder! Higher!

FX: grunting and scuffling

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What happened?

BRIGGS: Huh, I was just walking along and the ground caved in.

HOWELL: Wha--? It's some kind of shaft. Hold your light over it, Captain. (pause) "HELL0oooo!"

FX: Hell0oooo echos back

BRIGGS: Fifty feet deep and a stone bottom. I could have split my head open like a grapefruit.

HOWELL: Something's down there. Hold that light steady. (pause) Amazing. Amazing!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Looks like a pile of bones to me. Two piles.

HOWELL: It may be the first skeletal remains ever found of the Lost Race. I've got to get down in there.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: We haven't got time, Howell. Come on.

HOWELL: Let me have your binoculars. (pause) Wonderful. That small skeleton must be an infant. They've been laid out carefully. Burial chamber. The way they're lying, it's probably a mother and infant. Ah. The tail. She's definitely anthropoid.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Howell, you—you mean apes?

HOWELL: Something like that. Yet they had atomic power and built cities across the galaxy. Amazing.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Howell, we haven't got time.

HOWELL: Hello, that's funny. The—the little one is different. The—the caudal bones are different. No tail!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Listen, Howell, what do I care whether they had tails or not? Come on now!

HOWELL: It's almost as if, well, they—they did have atomics, and radiation does funny things to heredity. They had that problem of mutations in Detroit when— (pause) Detroit! That must be it!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What?

HOWELL: The new atomics plant at Detroit. They tore down my father's house to make room for it. Quickly, Captain!

FX: running footsteps

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Howell? Where are you going?

HOWELL: Back to the machine! I've got a theory that may solve the whole mystery of what happened to the Lost Race.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: I don't care what happened to the dead ones, Howell. I want to find the living ones who wrecked my ship.

HOWELL: I think this machine may give us both answers.

FX: squeak of lever, machinery hum

HOWELL: There. There's the house, Detroit, down to the last detail.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Howell, come on down; we know all that!

HOWELL: But don't you understand? That house was torn down! I got a letter before we lifted off Earth! It's gone!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: But it's on the television machine.

HOWELL: Captain, that machine isn't television. It's a thought projector!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: What?

HOWELL: It only mirrors what's in your own mind.

BRIGGS: But, Mr. Howell, we saw Earth. It was really there.

HOWELL: But it was just because we imagined it, Briggs.

FX: squeak of lever, machinery hum stops

HOWELL: It's a thought projection. I can produce any mental image that occurs to me on this machine. New York Space Port, a Space-Guard patrol, anything!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Anything?

HOWELL: Yes. And now I think I know what inspired the Lost Race to do what they did. It was fear! Fear of what was in their own minds. They could all see it with machines like this.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: But fear? Fear of what?

HOWELL: They foresaw the future. So they destroyed themselves, every last one of them.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Hold it, Howell. Are you sure they're all dead?

HOWELL: One hundred thousand years ago.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Then who blew up the ship? And stole our lifeboat?

HOWELL: Danton.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Danton? But why?

HOWELL: He was pathologically jealous.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Yes, but blowing up the ship was like committing suicide. He wasn't crazy enough to do that.

HOWELL: The Lost Race was, after they looked at this machine.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: You mean, Danton did too?

HOWELL: We found his wrench here.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: You're right.

HOWELL: He must have looked at the machine and thought it was television. He must have seen all his fears about losing his girl confirmed. That was enough to make him completely unbalanced.

BRIGGS: But he was with Kelly when that explosion went off. He's got an ironclad alibi.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: No, he hasn't. Wouldn't take a power man long to sneak back to the ship and rig a delayed-action fuse. Howell, we've gotta get back to the ship before Danton!

DANTON: Never mind Captain! Stay right there!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: That's Danton!

DANTON: I'm in the dark. You make a perfect target there. Drop your guns. I got a blaster set at wide-angle.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Drop 'em. He's got us cold.

FX: clunk of dropped guns, footsteps

DANTON: I been followin' you, Wharton. I wanted to tell ya. I'm going back to Earth. I got the lifeboat hidden over that rise.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: It won't work in deep space.

DANTON: (LAUGHS) You believed me when I told ya that, didn't ya? Well, I've got it fixed. And with that bessendium fuel it'll be a milk run. I'll reach the Space-Guard station at Volta with a long, sad story about how the rest of ya exploded in mid-space.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Danton, that's murder.

DANTON: Yeah. Yeah, that's just what it is! And easy, too!

BRIGGS: Danton, you can't just leave us here!

DANTON: Watch me! Sit in front of that machine and watch me! Yeah, I know what it is. I know it's a television without a transmitter. And I did some checkin' up. I've seen how you were stealin' my calls. Tryin' to steal my girl!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Danton, you're sick! You can't poss--

DANTON: Pretty smart, that Lost Race. They built some machine. And it showed me plenty. Showed me enough to kill ya!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Aw, you've got it all wrong. This isn't a television machine.

DANTON: What are ya tryin' to pull, Wharton? I saw it!

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Those were your own thoughts, Danton. Those things you saw exist only in your mind.

DANTON: Shut up, before I blast all of ya down! You're just tryin' to lie out of it, that's all. But I know the truth when I see it! And you're gonna die!

HOWELL: All right, Danton, but you're not going to get away with it.

FX: squeak of lever, machinery hum

HOWELL: Look at the machine!

DANTON: What's that?

HOWELL: The machine. It's the Space-Guard Patrol, Danton. Look! They're coming!

PATROL: X-Three to Command. Spotted the Carilya as reported. Preparing to land.

HOWELL: That's the Space-Guard, Danton.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Yeah, a whole patrol.

DANTON: You're lyin'! You're lyin'! They couldn't come! There wasn't any SOS!

PATROL: X-Three to Command. Preparing to land. There's a clearing.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: That's enough, Howell.

FX: squeak of lever, machinery hum stops

CAPTAIN WHARTON: All right, Danton. They'll be coming over the horizon. Drop your gun and give yourself up.

DANTON: Oh, no. No, they're not gonna catch me. I'll be away in that lifeboat before they land. Stand still, all of ya! Stay where ya are! I've still got ya covered!

HOWELL: Danton! Danton, look out behind you!

FX: scream fading as he descends, scream echos, thud

CAPTAIN WHARTON: The burial shaft.

BRIGGS: He fell in it.

FX: quick footsteps

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Hold the light down, Briggs. (pause) Well?

BRIGGS: He's dead. Deader than the Lost Race. And, what about those Space-Guard cruisers?

HOWELL: Out of my head. I just imagined them and there they were on the machine. Poor Danton believed they were real.

BRIGGS: I wish they were real so we could get off this planet.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Oh, it doesn't matter. We know where the lifeboat is now. We can send one man to bring back help. And it won't be Danton.

HOWELL: Machine got him the same way it got the Lost Race. Through fear.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: But what was the Lost Race afraid of, Howell?

HOWELL: Changing.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Changing?

HOWELL: Look at those skeletons down there. They had atomic energy, but they couldn't control it. Look. The baby's different from the other. The race was changing. By mutation.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: Mutation?

HOWELL: Look at those skeletons. Now imagine a shifted hip socket so they could walk upright. The baby was already without a tail.

CAPTAIN WHARTON: But, Howell, that would mean they were changing into -- into...

HOWELL: Yes, Captain. (pause) The Lost Race committed suicide rather than face the fear of seeing their descendants become such horrible creatures as -- men.

musical conclusion

NBC ANNOUNCER: You have just heard another adventure into the unknown world of the future, the world of-- (with echo) Dimension X - x - x - x (trails off and blends with sound of repeated gong throughout announcement)

HOST/NARRATOR: And now, about next week. William Travis and his wife thought they had escaped, but they were wrong. They were being searched out by men from another world, men who wanted them to return. Where? I'll tell you ... next week.

music

NBC ANNOUNCER: Tonight's drama was based on the Murray Leinster story, "The Lost" and was adapted for radio by Ernest Kinoy. Featured in the cast were Matt Crowley as Captain Wharton, Roger De Koven as Howell, and Joseph Julian as Danton. Your host was Norman Rose. (pause) Tomorrow it's SAM SPADE. Now hear TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES on NBC.

FX: three chimes