

MAUDE MOLD

#34

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THIRTY-THREE TRANSMISSIONS

tags: 1966, Æsir, mars2, mars3, sue, tab1, tab2

Off by one.

The Æsir dropped him off back at the end of good old 1966, still eight years old, and Robert is your father's nearest male relative. A serpent picked him up at the foot of the mountain.

Where was he going?

Spiro was still dead. The test site was still closed down. Or, whatever, he wasn't supposed to be there. He was breathing hard in his respirator, pinching the bridge of his nose until it bruised. He imagined he could see the black mold orbiting, could see what Plinth must be up to. A lot of the workers were probably getting sick. Statistically speaking, somebody was getting sued.

He rode back home, ignoring the regular haptic alerts from his data gloves that squeezed his fingers in an apparent imitation of a superior's handshake. When he could no longer keep his eyes open his unaugmented vision blanked, and so he nearly missed his stop. Sue nudged him gently when at last it was time to disembark, and he clambered off the transport almost remembering where he was going. He made sure not to leave anything behind, and rote learning from earlier in his childhood eased the transition from the solitude and 6XL attire of his mountain lifestyle back to the similarly rat-infested, contemporary walk-up apartment he shared with his father.

Who hadn't seemed to have missed him.

"Get your go bag. We're headed back to MARS2."

TAB2 rolled his eyes.