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## **Our Year 1981: Home Planet**

*I am conscious of being only an individual struggling weakly  
against the stream of time.*

**Ludwig Boltzmann (1896)**

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## **Chapter 18**

### **Signals**

**Sending a signal across the crevasse of interstellar space was the primary goal. Not just a signal, but a specific signal that could be received by an intelligent mind in an interpretable manner. It was not important what the signal meant. The whole experiment involved the medium of propagation rather than the signal content. Content would come later.**

**The signal would be timeless. It could exceed the speed of light, for it was to be a space-time signal, targeted at the planet so unique to this solar system. Water was everywhere on this planet and so intelligent life should be similarly prevalent. The first step was the signal itself. Direct communication would follow naturally from this. Direct physical contact maybe soon thereafter.**

**Sending such a concentrated signal over the span of interstellar space ran the risk of missing all available targets. In fact, the lack of success for the extended period of this experiment already proved that point. Surely, intelligent life was abundant on such a watery planet. But not a single reply had been received. The life on this planet might not be fully evolved, and the density of the individual beings was another problem entirely.**

**But if the beam was targeted patiently and it remained targeted on the first receptor that was found, it should eventually pay dividends. The temptation, of course, was to jump from one target to another, until a response was received. But if the intelligence was not mentally**

**powerful, time could be easily wasted by not giving the beam a chance to be recognized anywhere.**

**Such were the odds that faced these minds of science. And they had to convince their superiors that this was the wisest decision. That might be the toughest part. It seemed that no one talked to anyone else when it came to administrative decisions. The elements that supported the scientists failed to explain their reasons to their superiors adequately, and the scientists thought it was their right to avoid political contact. As a result, no one really understood what was going on regarding this engineering project. Lack of communication plagued the biggest communication project in their planet's history.**

**And for all this time, nothing. There had been absolutely nothing since the experiment began. Yet now progress on other related issues was moving forward, leaving the communication experiment far behind. Already there were exploratory capabilities of transmitting matter as well as messages. But what good would be the investment in such science, if there were no one to receive the messages. No one to receive the matter.**

**The first important step was to get somebody's attention.**