

## GIANT METEOR IMPACT

*J. E. Enever*

The Federation Warning Post at Grimaldi perches on the rim of the crater. It was built with the five other Lunar posts, when power plays by member nations were still conceivable. Their radars have been kept abreast of discovery, and, though they have never tracked a hostile, are still the most sensitive in existence.

At this moment, Grimaldi is "out" for installation of an improved transmitter module. The Post Commander's desk is, therefore, adorned by his large boots in addition to the usual house phone and the hot radiophone link to Earth.

The house phone rings: Control console calling. The Commander reflects that Smittie must have balanced in the new circuit. We're operational again.

"Lo, Smittie, got it working?"

"Yes—but listen, Chiefie, I turned up an echo on my trial sweep. Unbelievably big . . ."

The Commander is very definitely interested. No interplanetary research fights are currently scheduled, and there can be no reason for normal traffic to wander out of the Lunar Commercial lanes into Grimaldi's sector.

"A ship, Smittie?"

"Not unless someone has built a ship with a square mile surface, Chief. It can't be anything except a big, big meteor—moving in the ecliptic, already across the moon's orbit. Even from our angle—it's something like 110° round from us—it's dopplering in like hell."

Chiefie has removed his boots from the desk and is hustling up to the control room.

Smith proves to be right. It can be nothing but a meteor;