



...EARTH ALERT...

BY KRIS NEVILLE

# **EARTH ALERT!**

**By Kris Neville**

*What defense could she raise against mutant science—telepathy, invisibility, teleportation—especially since Earth was not aware of its danger!*

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## CHAPTER I

When Julia (she pronounced the name without the "a" at the end) was twenty-four, she inherited \$22,000 from an obscure uncle in California. After deducting taxes and administrative expenses, the California State Court ordered the money transferred to her bank account. It came to \$20,247.50.

She had been working in a local book store. "I haven't the vaguest idea why it came to me," she told the curious and covertly envious customers. "I guess he just didn't know anybody else."

She was a small, slender girl. Her eyes were bright and enthusiastic, her open smile so friendly that it was infectious.

The first afternoon when the money was actually in the bank under her own name, her father asked, "Well, what are you going to do with it?" He was genuinely curious. He owned his own home and was about to retire on a pension. He felt uncomfortable in the face of \$20,247.50—for which he was not able even to imagine a use.

Julia said, "I haven't exactly made up my mind yet." She intended to shop around for a husband, but she did not say this. She thought it would sound very callous to say: I'm going to buy me a husband: I've always wanted one.

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Julia gave two weeks notice at the book store. When the time was up she took her last pay check and went to one of the modest dress shops and bought herself a conservative brown suit.

"You have a very nice figure," the clerk told her.

"Thank you." She studied him critically and then shook her head sadly. He wouldn't do.

I've got to be sure I get the right one, she thought. I'll know him when I see him, she reassured herself. It certainly isn't this one.

There ought, she thought, to be a lot of eligible bachelors in Hollywood. The

movies ought to attract them.

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Two days later she walked down to the bank and instructed the teller to transfer \$5,000 of her money to a checking account in her name at the Security First National Bank in Los Angeles.

She told her father she was going to take a little vacation.

"There's plenty of eligible bachelors here," he said.

"Why dad!" she exclaimed indignantly. "... And anyway, none of them ever has asked me."

"God help the man you set your mind on, that's all I can say."

## CHAPTER II

Out beyond the orbit of the moon there was a huge, wheel-shaped space station. Its rapid spin pressed the equivalent of one Earth gravity against its broad, thick rim. Once when the distortion field failed, the Mt. Palomar telescope tracked it for the better part of an hour, but earth astronomers attributed the track either to an irregularity in the photographic plate or to some peculiarity in the atmosphere.

Near the hub where the gravity was weak, the nine aliens lived; in the two rim compartments lived the mutants. There were almost a thousand of the latter—both male and female—in the larger compartment; and fewer than thirty—all male—in the smaller one.

"Soon, now," the mutants told each other with growing excitement, "we shall go down and kill them."

The aliens stepped up the power in the larger of the two transmitters. "Our indoctrination is perfect," they reassured themselves. "The mutants will not get out of hand."