

## The Only Alien I Ever Met

Reading my title, your first question would be: *Are you insane?* My fellow writers familiar with the fantasy and sci-fi genre talk freely about aliens, ETs, and creatures from other worlds. I on the other hand have never had the urge to speculate about aliens, their shapes and size, their intellect, or their desire to destroy or dominate the universe.

Therefore, when I encountered a critter, clearly not human and unlike any animal I had ever seen, even in National Geographic, I stared in wonder. Since I am not skilled in providing descriptions (a police officer would say I am a total loss identifying a suspect), I can only say the creature appeared to have two eyes. I could not even say it stood because I could not tell if it was touching the earth or hovering. Other than that, I will spare the reader the details of its appearance.

It must have some sort of exotic powers. Where was it from? Was it intelligent? Might it kidnap me and perform weird experiments on me? If it gave me a test, would the test include calculus (not my strong point)? Can we communicate? Did it do Zoom meetings? Would it speak King James English and end its verbs in -eth?

Fairly certain it didn't appreciate the significance of my gray hair I was not tempted to flash my AARP membership card and ask for a discount. No longer the 98-pound weakling I was as a kid, I was ready to defend myself, if necessary—still careful to make no movement that might provoke the thing. Was it waiting for backup, or worse, doing word-search for the best recipe for preparing a human entrée?

When it did not move, I wondered if it might be as afraid of me as I was of it.

And how did it get here? I saw no spaceship or vehicle. Did it arrive in a transporter, like on Star Trek? Time and circumstances permitting, I rejected checking out the parking garage down the street, although I strongly doubted it arrived in a Ford or Chevy.

Expecting it to make the first move, I waited for what seemed like forever. Then without warning, I suddenly *knew* what it was thinking. I had to believe it also knew what I was thinking. Telepathy? Perhaps. Neither of us spoke, but we communicated. *How weird*, I thought.

It turns out his mission was not a hostile takeover of the planet. It was friendly. The visit was not planned, but an emergency. The alien was just passing by and needed a restroom—fast. I pointed him to a store, but he communicated that their restrooms were for customers only. I suggested I go with him and make a purchase while he used the facilities.

“You’d do that for me?” he asked.

“Why not?” I answered.

It worked out fine. The creature was relieved, and I invited it to come again. It promised to return as soon as it accumulated enough comp time. “Would it be okay if I brought a friend?” it asked.