

E-Mail 2111
By Fred Hobbs

August 1, 2111
From: Fred Hobbs V
To: Fred Hobbs IV

Dear Dad:

I'm sending this message by old-fashioned e-mail, but hope you folks on earth will soon start using the IMS...Interplanetary mail service. I'm sorry I haven't written for so long. I was hesitant because things have not gone well here.

It's a sad day here on Mars, Dad. I thought that since we gained statehood in 2101, Martians would enjoy the same privileges that I had when I was born down on Earth. I know you warned me that it would be difficult in this new galactic environment. But, I stubbornly held to my plan to pack up the family and move away from the crowded cities on Earth, with all the crime, corruption and disease.

As you may remember, when we first settled here in Obama City, we found an exciting frontier, sparsely populated with plenty of room to carve out a living in the craters and the valleys and deserts. But gradually, everything has changed. Here are just a few examples: As alien immigrants, we could find work only as servants to the Martian war lords who control the RPSE...Red Planet Stock Exchange. At school, the kids were teased because they lacked the distinctive Martian facial features...heliotrope-colored hair, long blue noses and pointed ears. Our neighborhood association prevented us from planting grass in the front yard of our yurt. The green was considered ugly in contrast to the reddish-gray Martian soil.

I'd like to buy a new 2111 model rocket ship, but can't afford it, so I guess we'll have to postpone our planned trip to Jupiter this summer. It's a tiring trip, anyway and always so hot there. And, rocket fuel prices are out of sight ! I hate to say it, but those old fashioned vehicles that great granddad used years ago ...what did you call them? Oh, yes, cars. They might be more practical, at least for short trips, like to the Olympus mountains.

So, in an effort to do my part to deal with all the difficulties of life on Mars, I've become active in Martian politics. The biggest problem at the moment is the massive planetary debt. We've been steadily borrowing from Saturn whose economy is booming since a giant platinum deposit was found along its rings.

Even though I don't make much money, the central government here in Han Solo Province takes a big bite in taxes. The Republicrats and Democans spend so much time arguing that nothing gets done. And with the planet-wide election coming up, the candidates for premier, Senator Benjamin Skywalker and Representative Mortimer Vader are still squabbling as they have for years.

Dad, you won't believe this, but if things don't get better, I'm actually thinking of bringing the family back to Earth. I know it has risks, but there is a friend of mine who says his great grandmother successfully made the trip back after some pretty hairy adventures with a lot of crazy characters here. Her name was Dorothy Gale. She settled back in her hometown. I think it was in Kansas.

Write soon.

Love, Fred