

The F — D — Episode 25 THE COUNTDOWN
Recapitulation

Crafty Carson C — , sprung at Woomera Rocket Range, drank some scientific mixture which made him shrink to the size of a little centipede. When chased by the Doctor he slid away ^{accidentally} into one of the corridors of the laboratory building, where he was sucked up by the vacuum cleaner of the cleaning lady. At last it

"He's caught!" cried the Doctor. "Crafty has been captured by the cleaning lady!"

[Indeed this ^{And it seemed as if} opened time. everything would now go back to normal at the Rocket Range. The Doctor took the package of dust from the cleaning lady and put it on the laboratory bench.

"There," he said, "Crafty is neatly tied up in this package. I will drop it in to the ^{one} police station on my way home."

Major Minor, the Space mouse, was feeling quite well again now that no-one was poisoning his food; and plans were made to send him up in the satellite that afternoon. The count-down began.

"Two hours... [The launching pad was checked over by engineers.] ~~One hour...~~ ["One hour..."]

The mighty rocket was gone over by mechanics. ~~30 minutes...~~ ["30 minutes..."]

The satellite "itself" was dusted and polished and oiled. ~~15 minutes...~~ ["15 minutes..."]

The Flying Doctor made up the space mouse's lunch box himself, to be absolutely sure that nothing but the best and freshest cheese went into it. He put in a different sort, ^{of cheese} for every day that the space mouse would be up in orbit—seven of them: cheddar, stilton, gorgonzola, gruyere... ^{yellow} cheese, blue cheese, and cheese with great big holes in it. And he wrapped it ^{all} up neatly in a package and gave it to the Secret Service Man, who put it on the laboratory bench. ~~Fived~~

"Ten minutes..."

The space mouse was strapped into his space suit, and his helmet fitted. ~~time~~ "Five minutes..."

He was given his camera, notebook, and lunch box and then he was taken in a special jeep to the launching pad. ~~time~~

"One minute..."

The scientist gave him a final examination to make sure that his helmet fitted properly and all his straps were done up tightly. ~~time~~

"55 seconds..."

[Finally Major Minor, the brave mouse-tranrant, climbed into the satellite and the door clanged shut behind him — "Fifteen seconds..."

[Mechanics tightened the bolts around the door.

"Forty seconds..."

[Well, that's that," said the Flying Doctor, ^{briskly,} anxious to be off home now that his work at Woomera seemed to be completed. "Thirty seconds..."

[The Secret Service man picked up the remaining package from the bench and handed it to the Doctor. "The sneaky snake spy will be safe in here until you drop him in to the police station," he said.

"Twenty seconds..."

[But suddenly the Doctor's sensitive nose twitched again. He smelt cheese. "Good gracious!" he gasped "let me look in there!" And he unfastened the package that was supposed to contain the midget-size snake among the vacuum cleaner's dust.

"Twenty seconds..."

[The Flying Doctor and the Secret Service Man together gazed in dismay at the contents of the package. ["Fifteen seconds. [It was the mouse-tranrant's lunch." ["Ten seconds" [He had ^{taken} the wrong package!]

"Nine seconds..."

[The Doctor and the Secret Service man looked at each other in horror. ["Eight seconds..."

"That means Crafty is aboard the rocket!" ["Seven seconds..."

"He's about to take off!" gasped the Flying Doctor.

"Six seconds..." "I can't bear it!" whispered the Secret Service man.

"Five seconds..." Will the Flying Doctor be able to stop the rocket? Or will

~~V.O. END TITLE~~ Crafty ^{landed} ~~Crafty~~ ^{when} Carpetbag be, on a flight to outer space? Be sure to be with him ^{when} the countdown reaches zero, in the next exciting episode of

(sing) the F-D