



## Prolonging the Evening (1/3) ..... †0.00

By David Klionsky

**α**

I found an invitation in my mailbox this morning, telling me I should go to Milliways “for a fun trip, or ten”. I have to admit, this first trip ended with a bang, and no, I’m not talking about the G nab Gib. As the evening and the universe started winding down, I went to reach for my glass, only to find it explode in front of me! I took a closer look at the fragments on the table and it was clear I had just dodged a bullet, literally. Based on the angle of impact the shot must have come from the balcony, but I couldn’t see anyone up there. It would be worth coming here again to find out who wanted me dead. The strangeness didn’t end there: On my way out the door I passed a green alien with the same kind of jacket as mine! He mentioned he had traded his old jacket for it just this evening. Remarkable coincidence, it even had the same scuffing on the sleeves like mine does.

**β**

I need this ship now more than I needed it a few minutes from now. Good thing I stole the keys from myself a long time ago. I hopped in and flew it straight to the balcony entrance, ran at the masked gunman, and tackled him, but not before he was able to get his shot off. He ran and managed to evade me in the crowd. I guess I have myself to thank for saving my life.

**γ**

I arrived fashionably late so as to avoid any awkward encounters with myself. Someone must have picked my pocket because my keys and my ship were stolen! That makes two trips in a row that I’ve lost something, except this time it was my ride home. Hitching a ride back to the present with myself was out of the question – I couldn’t recall ever giving my future self a ride on previous visits. Luckily a guy in a black helmet and jacket gave me a ride home on his sun surfer.

**δ**

I’ll need a disguise if I’m going to pull this off. I found an alien with a black spacesuit and helmet who was willing to trade. I waited until I was at the buffet and snatched my jacket. The alien was pleased with it, I think. He won’t be pleased when he realizes the keys to his sun surfer are still in his jacket pocket.

**ε**

Now that I knew what the gunman looked like I thought I would use this trip to look around for the gunman ahead of time. Of course I didn’t see him at all, not until the end of the evening of course. I decided to stay on the ground floor, in case he ran down there. I knew from past experience there was no way I would catch him on the balcony. No sign of him, but I did notice something strange at my old table. The liquid from the exploded glass was burning through the floor! Someone had poisoned the drink. It looks like I was never the target.

**ζ**

I deposited a penny into my bank account to pay for a second trip to Milliways. It’s so affordable, I don’t know why I don’t eat here every night! I don’t think the fish I ate sat very well with me though... I was queasy all the way home.



## Prolonging the Evening (2/3) ..... †0.00

By David Klionsky

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**η**

I thought I had figured out how to get a ride home this time – I would just take my own ship! From myself. How hard could it be, I thought. I remembered where I was when I lost my keys, and discreetly picked my pocket. My plan was foiled, though. When I left to find my ship, I saw that it was already stolen. I guess it wasn't me who stole it? I couldn't ride home with that guy in the black helmet like I did last time. If I could, I'm sure I would have remembered my future self joining us. Instead I packed my towel and hitchhiked home.

**θ**

The usual crowd is here at Milliways. Well, technically it's the only crowd. This evening only happens once, after all. I got a seat in the balcony this time and kept an eye out for anything suspicious. Since I ate the fish the last time I was here this time I went for the buffet. When I got back to my seat I found that my jacket was missing. I was only gone for a minute; it's almost as if someone knew I would be away from the table just now.

**ι**

It's easy to hit your target when you know the outcome ahead of time. Being tackled was a bit uncomfortable, but it's lucky that I'm not very good at chasing people. I decided to be generous this time and gave myself a lift home. After dropping myself off, I went a little bit further back in time. This restaurant is so much fun I should tell myself about it. I wrote up a short invitation and dropped it in my mailbox.

**κ**

I really liked that ship; I need to find out who took it, and how they did it without the keys. Well, I didn't find the thief on this trip, but I did notice something interesting: later in the evening, after the gunshot, I saw the masked man who gave me a ride on a previous trip running away on the balcony – with a rifle in his hand! He must have been the gunman. And to think I rode home with that guy...

Welcome to  
The Diner near the Edge of the Galaxy



# Prolonging the Evening (3/3) ..... †0.00

By David Klionsky

