

Walking Other Worlds, 07-03-2011: Fly-By, Zoom-In

By John Steiner

Clear blue sky, normal air and gravity, you'd think it was Earth. But that's definitely not our moon. While airless there's no Sea of Tranquility, the sizeable dark patch around the upper right side of the moon's face. The same's true for the other light gray lunar face. They have similar topography, mostly light gray with islands of dark gray, but there's enough minor differences to tell them apart. They must've come from outside the solar system on tangential trajectories to Earth's path to be trapped in orbit. New places to land on, explore and- as would be the case, inhabit.

And what wild rides they take. Both are highly elliptical, so much so that during their inbound treks people freak out over the prospect of a collision. One of them gets as close as ten to twenty thousand miles of the Earth. They visible move and grow in size. The other is presently about twice as far away, and so seems to have a little more than half the diameter. Unequal in size to each other in actual size they're both a little smaller than our original moon. The nearer moon takes up twelve to twenty four times the skyline because of proximity. And once every orbit they come whipping silently by.

There must be biodomes on at least one. It's amazing age that has left me either artificial ocular implants or one hell of a set of inserted genes that allows my eyes to zoom in closer to the surface. I find a green grassy park with paved walkways. On one is a mother and her seven or eight year old little girl. The kid sees me, also able to zoom in her sight, and offers up a friendly wave. I wave back and smile. "See you next time around."

And then they begin to shrink away on their outbound course.

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