

LEBRIS

We know
books

DUNE MESSIAH

BOOK TWO IN THE DUNE CHRONICLES

FRANK HERBERT

With an Introduction by Brian Herbert

ACE
New York

EXCERPTS FROM THE
DEATH CELL INTERVIEW WITH
BRONSO OF IX-

Q: What led you to take your particular approach to a history of Muad'Dib?

A: Why should I answer your questions?

Q: Because I will preserve your words.

A: Ahhh! The ultimate appeal to a historian!

Q: Will you cooperate then?

A: Why not? But you'll never understand what inspired my Analysis of History. Never. You Priests have too much at stake to . . .

Q: Try me.

A: Try you? Well, again . . . why not? I was caught by the shallowness of the common view of this planet which arises from its popular name: Dune. Not Arrakis, notice, but Dune. History is obsessed by Dune as desert, as birthplace of the Fremen. Such history concentrates on the customs which grew

out of water scarcity and the fact that Fremen led semi-nomadic lives in stillsuits which recovered most of their body's moisture.

Q: Are these things not true, then?

A: They are surface truth. As well ignore what lies beneath that surface as . . . as try to understand my birthplanet, Ix, without exploring how we derived our name from the fact that we are the ninth planet of our sun. No . . . no. It is not enough to see Dune as a place of savage storms. It is not enough to talk about the threat posed by the gigantic sandworms.

Q: But such things are crucial to the Arrakeen character!

A: Crucial? Of course. But they produce a one-view planet in the same way that Dune is a one-crop planet because it is the sole and exclusive source of the spice, melange.

Q: Yes. Let us hear you expand on the sacred spice.

A: Sacred! As with all things sacred, it gives with one hand and takes with the other. It extends life and allows the adept to foresee his future, but it ties him to a cruel addiction and marks his eyes as yours are marked: total blue without any white. Your eyes, your organs of *sight*, become one thing without contrast, a single view.

Q: Such heresy brought you to this cell!

A: I was brought to this cell by your Priests. As with all priests, you learned early to call the truth heresy.

Q: You are here because you dared to say that Paul

LBRIS

We know books

Atreides lost something essential to his humanity before he could become Muad'Dib.

A: Not to speak of his losing his father here in the Harkonnen war. Nor the death of Duncan Idaho, who sacrificed himself that Paul and the Lady Jessica could escape.

Q: Your cynicism is duly noted.

A: Cynicism! That, no doubt is a greater crime than heresy. But, you see, I'm not really a cynic. I'm just an observer and commentator. I saw true nobility in Paul as he fled into the desert with his pregnant mother. Of course, she was a great asset as well as a burden.

Q: The flaw in you historians is that you'll never leave well enough alone. You see true nobility in the Holy Muad'Dib, but you must append a cynical footnote. It's no wonder that the Bene Gesserit also denounce you.

A: You Priests do well to make common cause with the Bene Gesserit Sisterhood. They, too, survive by concealing what they do. But they cannot conceal the fact that the Lady Jessica was a Bene Gesserit-trained adept. You know she trained her son in the sisterhood's ways. My *crime* was to discuss this as a phenomenon, to expound upon their mental arts and their genetic program. You don't want attention called to the fact that Muad'Dib was the Sisterhood's hoped for captive messiah, that he was their *kwisatz haderach* before he was your prophet.

Q: If I had any doubts about your death sentence, you have dispelled them.

A: I can only die once.

Q: There are deaths and there are deaths.

A: Beware lest you make a martyr of *me*. I do not think Muad'Dib . . . Tell me, does Muad'Dib know what you do in these dungeons?

Q: We do not trouble the Holy Family with trivia.

A: (Laughter) And for this Paul Atreides fought his way to a niche among the Fremen! For this he learned to control and ride the sandworm! It was a mistake to answer your questions.

Q: But I will keep my promise to preserve your words.

A: Will you really? Then listen to me carefully, you Fremen degenerate, you Priest with no god except yourself! You have much to answer for. It was a Fremen ritual which gave Paul his first massive dose of melange, thereby opening him to visions of his futures. It was a Fremen ritual by which that same melange awakened the unborn Alia in the Lady Jessica's womb. Have you considered what it meant for Alia to be born into this universe fully cognitive, possessed of all her mother's memories and knowledge? No rape could be more terrifying.

Q: Without the sacred melange Muad'Dib would not have become leader of all Fremen. Without her holy experience Alia would not be Alia.

A: Without your blind Fremen cruelty you would not be a priest. Ahhh, I know you Fremen. You think Muad'Dib is yours because he mated with Chani,

because he adopted Fremen customs. But he was an Atreides first and he was trained by a Bene Gesserit adept. He possessed disciplines totally unknown to you. You thought he brought you new organization and a new mission. He promised to transform your desert planet into a water-rich paradise. And while he dazzled you with such visions, he took your virginity!

Q: Such heresy does not change the fact that the Ecological Transformation of Dune proceeds apace.

A: And I committed the heresy of tracing the roots of that transformation, of exploring the consequences. That battle out there on the Plains of Arrakeen may have taught the universe that Fremen could defeat Imperial Sardaukar, but what else did it teach? When the stellar empire of the Corrino Family became a Fremen empire under Muad'Dib, what else did the Empire become? Your Jihad only took twelve years, but what a lesson it taught. Now, the Empire understands the sham of Muad'Dib's marriage to the Princess Irulan!

Q: You dare accuse Muad'Dib of sham!

A: Though you kill me for it, it's not heresy. The Princess became his consort, not his mate. Chani, his little Fremen darling—she's his mate. Everyone knows this. Irulan was the key to a throne, nothing more.

Q: It's easy to see why those who conspire against Muad'Dib use your Analysis of History as their rallying argument!

A: I'll not persuade you; I know that. But the argument of the conspiracy came before my Analysis. Twelve years of Muad'Dib's Jihad created the argument. That's what united the ancient power groups and ignited the conspiracy against Muad'Dib.

Such a rich store of myths enfolds Paul Muad'Dib, the Mentat Emperor, and his sister, Alia, it is difficult to see the real persons behind these veils. But there were, after all, a man born Paul Atreides and a woman born Alia. Their flesh was subject to space and time. And even though their oracular powers placed them beyond the usual limits of time and space, they came from human stock. They experienced real events which left real traces upon a real universe. To understand them, it must be seen that their catastrophe was the catastrophe of all mankind. This work is dedicated, then, not to Muad'Dib or his sister, but to their heirs—to all of us.

—DEDICATION IN THE MUAD'DIB CONCORDANCE
AS COPIED FROM THE TABLA MEMORIUM OF
THE MAHDI SPIRIT CULT

Muad'Dib's Imperial reign generated more historians than any other era in human history. Most of them argued a particular viewpoint, jealous and sectarian, but it says something about the peculiar impact of this man that he aroused such passions on so many diverse worlds.

Of course, he contained the ingredients of history,