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# HERETICS OF DUNE

BOOK FIVE IN THE DUNE CHRONICLES

## FRANK HERBERT

*With an Introduction by Brian Herbert*

ACE  
New York

Most discipline is hidden discipline, designed not to liberate but to limit. Do not ask *Why?* Be cautious with *How?* *Why?* leads inexorably to paradox. *How?* traps you in a universe of cause and effect. Both deny the infinite.

--THE APOCRYPHA OF ARRAKIS

“Taraza told you, did she not, that we have gone through eleven of these Duncan Idaho gholas? This one is the twelfth.”

The old Reverend Mother Schwangyu spoke with deliberate bitterness as she looked down from the third-story parapet at the lone child playing on the enclosed lawn. The planet Gammu’s bright midday sunlight bounced off the white courtyard walls filling the area beneath them with brilliance as though a spotlight had been directed onto the young ghola.

*Gone through!* the Reverend Mother Lucilla thought. She allowed herself a short nod, thinking how coldly impersonal were Schwangyu’s manner and choice of words. *We have used up our supply; send us more!*

The child on the lawn appeared to be about twelve standard years of age, but appearance could be deceptive with a ghola not yet awakened to his original memories. The child took that moment to look up at the watchers above him. He was a sturdy figure with a direct gaze that

focused intently from beneath a black cap of karakul hair. The yellow sunlight of early spring cast a small shadow at his feet. His skin was darkly tanned but a slight movement of his body shifted his blue singlesuit, revealing pale skin at the left shoulder.

“Not only are these gholas costly but they are supremely dangerous to us,” Schwangyu said. Her voice came out flat and emotionless, all the more powerful because of that. It was the voice of a Reverend Mother Instructor speaking down to an acolyte and it emphasized for Lucilla that Schwangyu was one of those who protested openly against the gholas project.

Taraza had warned: “She will try to win you over.”

“Eleven failures are enough,” Schwangyu said.

Lucilla glanced at Schwangyu’s wrinkled features, thinking suddenly: *Someday I may be old and wizened, too. And perhaps I will be a power in the Bene Gesserit as well.*

Schwangyu was a small woman with many age marks earned in the Sisterhood’s affairs. Lucilla knew from her own assignment-studies that Schwangyu’s conventional black robe concealed a skinny figure that few other than her acolyte dressers and the males bred to her had ever seen. Schwangyu’s mouth was wide, the lower lip constricted by the age lines that fanned into a jutting chin. Her manner tended to a curt abruptness that the uninitiated often interpreted as anger. The commander of the Gammu Keep was one who kept herself to herself more than most Reverend Mothers.

Once more, Lucilla wished she knew the entire scope of the gholas project. Taraza had drawn the dividing line

clearly enough, though: “Schwangyu is not to be trusted where the safety of the gholas is concerned.”

“We think the Tleilaxu themselves killed most of the previous eleven,” Schwangyu said. “That in itself should tell us something.”

Matching Schwangyu’s manner, Lucilla adopted a quiet attitude of almost emotionless waiting. Her manner said: “I may be much younger than you, Schwangyu, but I, too, am a full Reverend Mother.” She could feel Schwangyu’s gaze.

Schwangyu had seen the holos of this Lucilla but the woman in the flesh was more disconcerting. An Imprinter of the best training, no doubt of it. Blue-in-blue eyes uncorrected by any lens gave Lucilla a piercing expression that went with her long oval face. With the hood of her black aba robe thrown back as it was now, brown hair was revealed, drawn into a tight barette and then cascading down her back. Not even the stiffest robe could completely hide Lucilla’s ample breasts. She was from a genetic line famous for its motherly nature and she already had borne three children for the Sisterhood, two by the same sire. Yes—a brown-haired charmer with full breasts and a motherly disposition.

“You say very little,” Schwangyu said. “This tells me that Taraza has warned you against me.”

“Do you have reason to believe assassins will try to kill this twelfth gholas?” Lucilla asked.

“They already have tried.”

Strange how the word “heresy” came to mind when thinking of Schwangyu, Lucilla thought. Could there be heresy among the Reverend Mothers? The religious

overtones of the word seemed out of place in a Bene Gesserit context. How could there be heretical movements among people who held a profoundly manipulative attitude toward all things religious?

Lucilla shifted her attention down to the ghola, who took this moment to perform a series of cartwheels that brought him around full circle until he once more stood looking up at the two observers on the parapet.

"How prettily he performs!" Schwangyu sneered. The old voice did not completely mask an underlying violence.

Lucilla glanced at Schwangyu. *Heresy*. "Dissidence" was not the proper word. "Opposition" did not cover what could be sensed in the older woman. This was something that could shatter the Bene Gesserit. Revolt against Taraza, against the Reverend Mother Superior? Unthinkable! Mother Superiors were cast in the mold of monarch. Once Taraza had accepted counsel and advice and *then* made her decision, the Sisters were committed to obedience.

"This is no time to be creating new problems!" Schwangyu said.

Her meaning was clear. People from the Scattering were coming back and the intent of some among those Lost Ones threatened the Sisterhood. *Honored Matres!* How like "Reverend Mothers" the words sounded.

Lucilla ventured an exploratory sally: "So you think we should be concentrating on the problem of those Honored Matres from the Scattering?"

"Concentrating? Hah! They do not have our powers. They do not show good sense. And they do not have mastery of melange! That is what they want from us, our spice knowledge."

"Perhaps," Lucilla agreed. She was not willing to concede this on the scanty evidence.

"Mother Superior Taraza has taken leave of her senses to dally with this ghola thing now," Schwangyu said.

Lucilla remained silent. The ghola project definitely had touched an old nerve among the Sisters. The possibility, even remote, that they might arouse another Kwisatz Haderach sent shudders of angry fear through the ranks. To meddle with the worm-bound remnants of the Tyrant! That was dangerous in the extreme.

"We should never take that ghola to Rakis," Schwangyu muttered. "Let sleeping worms lie."

Lucilla gave her attention once more to the ghola-child. He had turned his back on the high parapet with its two Reverend Mothers, but something about his posture said he knew they discussed him and he awaited their response.

"You doubtless realize that you have been called in while he is yet too young," Schwangyu said.

"I have never heard of the deep imprinting on one that young," Lucilla agreed. She allowed something softly self-mocking in her tone, a thing she knew Schwangyu would hear and misinterpret. The management of procreation and all of its attendant necessities, that was the Bene Gesserit ultimate specialty. Use love but avoid it, Schwangyu would be thinking now. The Sisterhood's analysts knew the roots of love. They had examined this quite early in their development but had never dared breed it out of those they influenced. Tolerate love but guard against it, that was the rule. Know that it lay deep within the human genetic makeup, a safety net to insure continuation of the species. You used

it where necessary, imprinting selected individuals (sometimes upon each other) for the Sisterhood's purposes, knowing then that such individuals would be linked by powerful bonding lines not readily available to the common awareness. Others might observe such links and plot the consequences but the linked ones would dance to unconscious music.

"I was not suggesting that it's a mistake to imprint him," Schwangyu said, misreading Lucilla's silence.

"We do what we are ordered to do," Lucilla chided. Let Schwangyu make of that what she would.

"Then you do not object to taking the ghola to Rakis," Schwangyu said. "I wonder if you would continue such unquestioning obedience if you knew the full story?"

Lucilla inhaled a deep breath. Was the entire design for the Duncan Idaho gholas to be shared with her now?

"There is a female child named Sheeana Brugh on Rakis," Schwangyu said. "She can control the giant worms."

Lucilla concealed her alertness. *Giant worms. Not Shai-hulud. Not Shaitan. Giant worms.* The sandrider predicted by the Tyrant had appeared at last!

"I do not make idle chatter," Schwangyu said when Lucilla continued silent.

*Indeed not, Lucilla thought. And you call a thing by its descriptive label, not by the name of its mystical import. Giant worms. And you're really thinking about the Tyrant, Leto II, whose endless dream is carried as a pearl of awareness in each of those worms. Or so we are led to believe.*

Schwangyu nodded toward the child on the lawn below them. "Do you think their ghola will be able to influence the girl who controls the worms?"

*We're peeling away the skin at last, Lucilla thought.*

She said: "I have no need for the answer to such a question."

"You *are* a cautious one," Schwangyu said.

Lucilla arched her back and stretched. *Cautious? Yes, indeed!* Taraza had warned her: "Where Schwangyu is concerned, you must act with extreme caution but with speed. We have a very narrow window of time within which we can succeed."

Succeed at what? Lucilla wondered. She glanced sideways at Schwangyu. "I don't see how the Tleilaxu could succeed in killing eleven of these gholas. How could they get through our defenses?"

"We have the Bashar now," Schwangyu said. "Perhaps he can prevent disaster." Her tone said she did not believe this.

Mother Superior Taraza had said: "You are the Imprinter, Lucilla. When you get to Gammu you will recognize some of the pattern. But for your task you have no need for the full design."

"Think of the cost!" Schwangyu said, glaring down at the ghola, who now squatted, pulling at tufts of grass.

Cost had nothing to do with it, Lucilla knew. The open admission of failure was much more important. The Sisterhood could not reveal its fallibility. But the fact that an Imprinter had been summoned early—that was vital. Taraza had known the Imprinter would see this and recognize part of the pattern.

Schwangyu gestured with one bony hand at the child, who had returned to his solitary play, running and tumbling on the grass.

"Politics," Schwangyu said.

No doubt Sisterhood politics lay at the core of

Schwangyu's *heresy*, Lucilla thought. The delicacy of the internal argument could be deduced from the fact that Schwangyu had been put in charge of the Keep here on Gammu. Those who opposed Taraza refused to sit on the sidelines.

Schwangyu turned and looked squarely at Lucilla. Enough had been said. Enough had been heard and screened through minds trained in Bene Gesserit awareness. The Chapter House had chosen this Lucilla with great care.

Lucilla felt the older woman's careful examination but refused to let this touch that innermost sense of purpose upon which every Reverend Mother could rely in times of stress. *Here. Let her look fully upon me.* Lucilla turned and set her mouth in a soft smile, passing her gaze across the rooftop opposite them.

A uniformed man armed with a heavy-duty lasgun appeared there, looked once at the two Reverend Mothers and then focused on the child below them.

"Who is that?" Lucilla asked.

"Patrin, the Bashar's most trusted aide. Says he's only the Bashar's batman but you'd have to be blind and a fool to believe that."

Lucilla examined the man across from them with care. So that was Patrin. A native of Gammu, Taraza had said. Chosen for this task by the Bashar himself. Thin and blond, much too old now to be soldiering, but then the Bashar had been called back from retirement and had insisted Patrin must share this duty.

Schwangyu noted the way Lucilla shifted her attention from Patrin to the ghola with real concern. Yes, if

the Bashar had been called back to guard this Keep, then the ghola was in extreme peril.

Lucilla started in sudden surprise. "Why . . . he's . . ."

"Miles Teg's orders," Schwangyu said, naming the Bashar. "All of the ghola's play is training play. Muscles are to be prepared for the day when he is restored to his original self."

"But that's no simple exercise he's doing down there," Lucilla said. She felt her own muscles respond sympathetically to the remembered training.

"We hold back only the Sisterhood's arcana from this ghola," Schwangyu said. "Almost anything else in our storehouse of knowledge can be his." Her tone said she found this extremely objectionable.

"Surely, no one believes this ghola could become another Kwisatz Haderach," Lucilla objected.

Schwangyu merely shrugged.

Lucilla held herself quite still, thinking. Was it possible the ghola could be transformed into a male version of a Reverend Mother? Could this Duncan Idaho learn to look inward where no Reverend Mother dared?

Schwangyu began to speak, her voice almost a growling mutter: "The design of this project . . . they have a dangerous plan. They could make the same mistake . . ." She broke off.

*They*, Lucilla thought. *Their ghola.*

"I would give anything to know for sure the position of Ix and the Fish Speakers in this," Lucilla said.

"Fish Speakers!" Schwangyu shook her head at the very thought of the remnant female army that had once served only the Tyrant. "They believe in truth and justice."

Lucilla overcame a sudden tightness in her throat. Schwangyu had all but declared open opposition. Yet, she commanded here. The political rule was a simple one: Those who opposed the project must monitor it that they might abort it at the first sign of trouble. But that was a genuine Duncan Idaho gholia down there on the lawn. Cell comparisons and Truthsayers had confirmed it.

Taraza had said: "You are to teach him love in all of its forms."

"He's so young," Lucilla said, keeping her attention on the gholia.

"Young, yes," Schwangyu said. "So, for now, I presume you will awaken his childish responses to maternal affection. Later . . ." Schwangyu shrugged.

Lucilla betrayed no emotional reaction. A Bene Gesserit obeyed. *I am an Imprinter. So . . .* Taraza's orders and the Imprinter's specialized training defined a particular course of events.

To Schwangyu, Lucilla said: "There is someone who looks like me and speaks with my voice. I am Imprinting for her. May I ask who that is?"

"No."

Lucilla held her silence. She had not expected revelation but it had been remarked more than once that she bore a striking resemblance to Senior Security Mother Darwi Odrade. "A *young Odrade*." Lucilla had heard this on several occasions. Both Lucilla and Odrade were, of course, in the Atrides line with a strong backbreeding from Siona descendants. The Fish Speakers had no monopoly on *those* genes! But the *Other Memories* of a Reverend Mother, even with their linear selectivity and confinement to the female side, provided important clues

to the broad shape of the gholia project. Lucilla, who had come to depend on her experiences of the Jessica persona buried some five thousand years back in the Sisterhood's genetic manipulations, felt a deep sense of dread from that source now. There was a familiar pattern here. It gave off such an intense feeling of doom that Lucilla fell automatically into the Litany Against Fear as she had been taught it in her first introduction to the Sisterhood's rites:

*"I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little-death that brings total obliteration. I will face my fear. I will permit it to pass over me and through me. And when it has gone past I will turn the inner eye to see its path. Where the fear has gone there will be nothing. Only I will remain."*

Calm returned to Lucilla.

Schwangyu, sensing some of this, allowed her guard to drop slightly. Lucilla was no dullard, no *special* Reverend Mother with an empty title and barely sufficient background to function without embarrassing the Sisterhood. Lucilla was the real thing and some reactions could not be hidden from her, not even reactions of another Reverend Mother. Very well, let her know the full extent of the opposition to this foolish, this *dangerous* project!

"I do not think their gholia will survive to see Rakis," Schwangyu said.

Lucilla let this pass. "Tell me about his friends," she said.

"He has no friends; only teachers."

"When will I meet them?" She kept her gaze on the opposite parapet where Patrín leaned idly against a low pillar, his heavy lasgun at the ready. Lucilla realized with an abrupt shock that Patrín was watching her. Patrín was