

## KING FLASHYPANTS AND THE BOO HOO WITCHES BOOK 4

"Lock your doors." More tweedles than antitweedles would be projected into a normal universe, and more antitweedles than tweedles into an antiuniverse, and that, according to the Chironian version, was why the universe was composed of matter and not antimatter; the opposite, of course, held for the twin antiuniverse. The way to obtain antimatter, they therefore reasoned, would be to make a small part of the universe look like an antiuniverse so that tweedlespace could be "fooled" into projecting antitweedles instead of tweedles into it. In other words, instead of expending enormous amounts of energy to create antitweedles from scratch, as was thought to be inescapable by most terrestrial scientists, could they "flip" tweedles into antitweedles in ~the matter they already had? "Not if you don't want to, I guess." "Go ahead." A few times, Sinsemilla whimpered or groaned, although she never woke or attempted to pull away from Stormbel made a signal to somewhere in the background and announced, "Sixty-second countdown commenced." Leilani in the house of Sinsemilla. Leilani limping ever closer to a bomb-clock birthday, ticking toward. Extracting the cheese tray from the refrigerator, Micky said, "Are you cooking for a cellblock full of. Until now, Micky hadn't noticed this deformity. "Everyone's got imperfections," she said. Sirocco shrugged noncommittally. "Can't say. I wouldn't worry too much about it. If you stick close to Steve and Bret and do what they tell you, you'll come through okay." Although they couldn't claim to be campaign veterans, Colman and Hanlon were among the few of the Mission's regulars who had seen combat, having served together as rookie privates with an American expeditionary unit that had fought alongside the South Africans in the Transvaal in 2059, the year before they had volunteered for the Mayflower II. The experience gave them a certain mystique-especially among the younger troops who had matured-in some cases been born and enlisted--in the course of the voyage. "I'm not sure why, but it's important. - . from the Chironians." The advantage of surprise will belong to Curtis, but he's not confident that surprise alone will carry the. of battle readiness had held off friends as well as enemies, and in fact it had prevented her from. "Oh, so it's trouble them fellas is looking for, is it?" a voice with just a hint :of an Irish brogue asked softly from the doorway. Bret Hanlon was leaning casually against one of the doorposts, blue eyes glinting icily. His huge shoulders seeming almost to reach the other side of the door. He looked completely relaxed and at ease, but Colman registered his weight carded well forward on the balls of his feet and his fingers flexing inconspicuously down by his hip. The two corporals glanced at each other apprehensively. Hanlon's appearance altered the odds a bit. Padawski was looking uncertain, but at the same time didn't seem willing to back off ignominiously. For a few seconds that dragged like minutes, the charge in the room crackled at flashpoint. Nobody moved..myself? ". "Told?" Aunt Gen asked. "Who told you, dear?". On the roof of the SUV, a searchlight suddenly blazes, so powerful and so tightly focused that it appears triumph. They have no hope who have no belief in the intelligent design of all things, but those who see. body or pop me into a brand-new body identical to this one but with no imperfections. Anyway, that's. Mrs. Crayford glanced at the dock display on the room's companel. "Well then, I really must be getting along. I did so enjoy the trip and the company. We must do it again soon." She heaved herself to her feet and looked around. "Now, where did I leave my coat?". also left with a vague uneasiness. Like a quick dark fish, some disturbing half-glimpsed truth had seemed. Curtis goes to the window, where the drapes have already been drawn aside, and peers out at the. grass, she edged backward.. Marcia Quarrey, the Director of Commerce and Economic Policy, didn't look too happy at the suggestion as she sipped her cocktail. "Obviously that would be possible," she said, setting down her glass. "But would it serve any useful purpose? The contingency plans were made to allow for the possibility of opposition. Well, there hasn't been any opposition. What's the sense in throwing good business and growth prospects away by provoking hostilities needlessly? We can acquire Franklin simply by walking in. We don't have to make a demonstration out of it." ". Sometimes names are destiny. Look at you. Two pretty names, and you're as gorgeous as a. "I don't get your attitude." anger, and so she drank now in the service of Leilani.. hallucinogens during pregnancy give the baby psychic powers." Or maybe not.. between Geneva polishing each already-clean dessert fork on a dishtowel before placing it on the table. "Look, I think Jay probably wants to talk about things you wouldn't be interested in," Colman said to Anita. "Why." Jay was able to connect the facts without too much difficulty," Kath pointed out. "We didn't try to hide them. Haven't the scientists on the ship done the same?". It was a nice feeling.. "Maybe I'm not," he said, although the word maybe issued from him without conscious intention, "but my. words that penetrate his screaming.." "A witch doctor." Kalens smiled at the frown on Celia's. isn't it. It's just a phase. She'll get over it. "I hope so," Celia murmured.. Colman frowned, rubbed his brow, and in the end tossed out his hand with a sigh. "No . . . we're not making the right point somehow. Let's put it this way--how can you measure who owes who what?" The painter scratched his nose and stared at the ground over his knuckle. Clearly the notion was new to him. -. He has a way with dogs, and this one is no exception. It nuzzles him and then, panting happily, leads him. "Guard, forward," Colonel Wesserman ordered from a row in front of Portney.. "What wouldn't be?" Geneva wondered.. two words carried a heavier load than any of the freight trains that Micky had imagined escaping on. "Twenty?". "Proceed, General," Farnhill said from the back.. Sirocco shrugged. "Well, Kalens's wife is always going places with Veronica, so they're obviously good friends. Swyley noticed something funny between you and Veronica at that party we went to at Shirley's, and that was the connection he figured out," Sirocco shrugged again. "I mean, it's none of my business, of course, and I don't want to know if it's true or not He paused and looked at Colman hopefully for a second. "Is it?". course, Haley Joel Osment, who was cute, sensitive, intelligent, charming, radiant, divine.. So instead of saying, " 'Tis I, Princess Leilani, inquiring after m'lady's welfare," she said, "It's me. You." Sinsemilla? That's a ...". horse as they cross burning desert sands. After "Cool Water" comes a spate of advertisements, nothing. pendent salty jewels quivered on her

lashes, and fresh tears shimmered in her brown eyes. Veronica nodded her head quickly a couple of times. "She's not hurt or anything like that, but she's in a lot, of trouble. She's gotten herself mixed up with Sterm, and she can't make a move without being watched. She could be in real danger, Steve. She has to get away from there." "Ghosts in your head," Bernard said. "Come on, Jerry, you're a scientist. Where's your evidence? Since when have you started believing in things you don't have a shred of anything factual to support?" Dr. Doom thinks ETs are more likely to visit a site at the same time of year they visited it before, I guess. Fury fired her rant, which grew hotter by the word: "Witch with a broomstick up your ass, witch bitch, Most self-mutilators were deeply self-involved. A small number could be confidently diagnosed as. "What sort of baking does your mother do?" Geneva asked. So they don't know everything, after all. Even the Bureau can make mistakes. The ghost of J. Edgar Wellesley seemed thoughtful. "I wonder if Leighton Merrick and his specialists could run a place like that," he mused. After a few seconds, he added hastily, "Not immediately, of course, but at some time in the future, possibly, depending on circumstances. As insurance, it would certainly pay us to know something more about it." temporary emotional paralysis. All her life, until now, Geneva Davis had always found exactly the right. Seated, bowing her head, Geneva offered a succinct but heart felt prayer: "Thank you, God, for. to squat." "Down!" Maddock yelled, and all three hurled themselves sideways to get out of the line of fire as a smoke grenade launched from around a corner some distance behind them exploded at the entrance. Fire from the entranceway raked the area as the D Company squad broke cover and rushed forward through the smoke, but the first of them was still twenty feet away when the steel door slammed down and alarms began sounding throughout the Government Center. - never had a romantic relationship with Sinatra, though if he'd ever come around, I'm not sure I could have. someone's name gives you power. inseparably twined with his. If she leads him out of this danger or if she leads him off the edge of a high. The screen before him suddenly came to life to show her face. A flicker of surprise danced in her eyes for the merest fraction of a second, and then gave way to a smoldering twinkle of anticipation mixed with a dash of amusement. share quarters, because she didn't possess the capacity to socialize to the extent that the care home. A serving robot arrived at the table and commenced dispensing its load, at the same time chatting about the quality of the steaks and the choices for dessert. Bernard turned to stare out of the window and think. A knot of figures, all clad in olive drab and standing not far from the main entrance in the parking area below, caught his eye and caused him to stiffen in surprise. They were wearing uniforms---U.S. Army uniforms. Some kind of delegation from the Mayflower II was visiting the place, he concluded. The thought immediately occurred to him that they could be the visitors whom Kath had gone to talk to. After a few seconds he turned his face back again and asked Nanook, "Do you know anything about other people from the ship being here today?" "Arrogant?" Adam smiled to himself. "They're the ones who are so sure they 'know,' not me. I'm just making the best interpretation I can of the facts I've got." He thought for a moment longer. "Anyhow, arrogance and pride are not the same thing. I'm proud to be a human being, sure." recognizes him for the monster that he is. Whether the psychic wire or a good nose is responsible, she. though he finds the idea of dinosaurs-to-diesel-fuel silly enough to have first been expounded by Daffy. snake-gnawed face and her snake-chomped nose. Face to the sun, eyes closed, striving to empty her mind of all thought, yet troubled by insistent. "With who?" the cedar scent of disinfectant cakes, six sinks with a built-in liquid-soap dispenser at each, and two. At least thirty men, dressed in black, debark from the trailer: not merely a SWAT team, not even a. Ordinarily, nothing made Micky bristle with anger or triggered her stubbornness more quickly than being. "It's a wonderment, isn't it?" the girl said. "More than a wonderment. It's impossible." Some facial muscles might be forever paralyzed, twisting your smile, weirdly distorting every expression. if . . . Welcome Wagon gifts and valuable discount coupons that come with membership. Sinsemilla also buys. For once, no sparkle of humor enlivened Leilani's blue eyes, no thinnest paring of a wry smile curled. "Nice job you're doing," Hanlon remarked at last. "Glad you think so." The painter carried on. Colman could only shake his head. "I don't know. Neither did Jay. That's what Fallows and whoever this other guy is want to find out." "Maybe it was an antidote to all that crap the Eagles sang." taste from his recent experience of it. baroque detail was not a fabrication, then what of the murderous stepfather, Dr. Doom, and his eleven. to survival: Only time matters. The longer he stays free and hidden, the less likely that he will ever be. background? but Micky saw clearly the hopelessness of this situation. On the other hand, if only. Jarvis scanned the screen on the far side of the post. "The fighting at Vandenberg looks as if it's being contained," he announced. - "Two pockets of our guys are holding out at Bays One and Three, but the rest are cooperating with the regulars. The regulars have pretty well secured the whole module already. Stormbel won't be getting any help from the surface through there." "I hope so too," Kath said with feeling. "I ought to go now and see them off. Take care, Leon." "Not really. Jay's playing on one of the teams in the Bowl tomorrow. I'll probably go and watch that. I might even take a ride over to Manhattan--haven't been there for a while now." slap-slap-slap of his sneakers echoes between the bank and the trees, slap-slap-slap, a spoor of sound. roses. Monday, she might smell like oranges; Tuesday, like St.-John's-wort and celery root; Wednesday, right. Then the jig would be up for our friends, the ETs. They'd be so busy dodging alien hunters that they. "What about me?" Ci asked, hooking at Driscoll. She leaned to one side to let her mother see the hand she was holding. The communicator at his belt signaled a call from Sirocco, who, with Hanlon and a couple of the others, was taking a break inside the Chironian transporter that had flown from Canaveral. "How's it going?" Sirocco inquired when Colman answered. "Are the troops mutinying yet?" and she smiled, too. "Mrs. D, you said apparently the gunman shot you." He grinned at the joke as he, turned to lead the way. Farnhill didn't seem to appreciate the humor. Kath had moved away to talk to Adam, Casey, and Veronica, who were sitting together beyond the table at which Driscoll was performing. Although he was beginning to feel more at ease with her than he had initially, Colman was still having to work at getting used to the feeling of being accepted freely and naturally by somebody like her, and of being treated as if he

were somebody special from the Mayflower ii. On the first occasion that he had walked with her from Adam's place to The Two Moons, he had felt somewhat like Lurch, Adam's klutz robot-awkward, out of place, and uncertain of what to talk about or how to handle the situation. But all through that evening, despite the shooting episode, on the way back and at Adam's afterward, and when he had met her in town for a meal after coming off duty the following day, she had continued to show the same free and easy attitude. Gradually he had relaxed his defenses, but it still puzzled him that somebody who was a director of a fusion plant, or whatever she did exactly, should act that way toward an engineer sergeant demoted to an infantry company. Why would she do something like that? For that matter, why would any Chironian be interested more than just socially in any Terran at all? "Why's it so important to be better than somebody?" Leilani took the first bite from her second serving of pie. She chewed longer than cooked apples. The answer turned out to be no when two teams of physicists on opposite sides of the world—one led by a Professor Okasotaka, at the Tokyo Institute of Sciences, and the other working at Stanford under an American by the name of Schriber—developed identical theories to unify quarks and leptons and published them at the same time. It turned out that the sixteen entities and "antientities" of the ground-state generation could be explained by just two components which S themselves possessed surprisingly few innate properties: Each had a spin angular momentum of one-half unit, and one had an electrical charge of one-third while the other had none. The other fine hulking shoulders, a neck made to burst restraining collars, and the proud chins of a fattened bull. "The ship's changed a lot since then though," Colman remarked. "I noticed it the day we flew down to it from the Mayflower II soon after we arrived . . . when Shirley and Ci met Tony Driscoll. The front end must be at least twice as big as it used to be." "Who said that originally? Thomas Jefferson? Abe Lincoln?" Whether the serpent moved slowly because it was hurt or because it was being cautious to deceive, "Half an hour." She smiled a promise and winked. Just before the picture blanked out, Colman caught a brief close-up glimpse of her shoulder-length auburn hair and finely formed features as she leaned toward the screen to cut the connection. "Well, hello, Sergeant," she said huskily. "I was beginning to wonder if I had a deserter. Now, I wonder what could be on your mind at this time of night." "prospects. That's what you get." "What's what I get?" "Right. The other—yes, question?" "I wouldn't know, but it wouldn't surprise me," Celia answered. "I just know the true story about Howard because . . . because." It seemed that his head had hardly touched the pillow when a concussion shook the room and a booming noise in his ears had him on his feet—before he even realized that he was awake. More explosions came in rapid succession from outside the building, followed by the sounds of shooting, shouting voices, and running feet. Seconds later a siren began wailing, and the speaker in the room called, "General Alert! General Alert! A breakout is being attempted from the Detention Wing. All officers and men report to General Alert stations." Logically, a receiving room should open to the outdoors, to a loading dock or to a parking lot, and Doom. I remember some places, but I was too little to have memories of them all. A few months here, a Lechat agreed that the Chironian culture, far from being a naive and backward experiment that would be absorbed without difficulty into the Terran system, as had been assumed, was highly developed in its own unorthodox way and would not yield readily to changes. The two populations could not simply be left to collide with each other in the hope that an equilibrium would establish itself. Something, somewhere, would blow up before that happened. "Shirley? You mean Ci's mother?" for electricity. Now she'd be sticking her finger in a socket about ten times a day. She's an addict. "Is it your intention to attempt enforcing those orders if we refuse, Major?" the Chironian who had killed Wilson asked. He was lithe and athletic in build, had a thin but rugged face, and was dressed in clothes that were dark, serviceable rather than fancy, and close fitting without being restrictively tight. He reminded Colman of the bad guy in an ancient Western movie. The Chironian's manner was mild and his tone casual, making his answer simply a question and not a challenge. "Fifty?" Therefore, at the arrival of the disabled girl, Micky was surprised to feel the same buoying expectation to conserve electricity. "and folded into an amazing work of architecture, high at the top of which is pinned a little. And where was the girl's brother, Lukipela, to whom she referred so mysteriously? Was he Preston. Backlit by the westering sun, wearing khaki shorts and a white T-shirt with a small green heart. T-shirt. The impressive mass of bone in his brow surely weighed more than the five-pound sledge that he. he squints toward the sixteen-ton, motorized house of horrors. While Noah watched her from the doorway, Constance Tavenall left the presidential suite, carrying the. to the lunch counter, where customers occupy fewer than half the stools. "Better late than never, I suppose," another commented, glancing at the painter, who was still there. The painter nodded but didn't reply. "could be redeemed." ease out of his way, facilitate his passage, use their bodies to further block the cowboys' view of him, and

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