

Magenta Zephyr & The Universe Bender

*EXCERPT #5
From the Novel by Tim Storm*

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“There are two ways of spreading light: to be a candle or the mirror that reflects it.”
- Edith Wharton -

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No one saw him enter or leave the hotel, although a few surprised guests did catch a quick glimpse of him as he went about his business. He would have drawn a lot of attention from the doormen and affluent guests if he had simply entered the luxury hotel through the lobby. He was well aware of this, so he had simply materialized in room number two-seventeen without fanfare.

He appeared to be ancient, and the ragged, dusty clothing he wore gave him the air of a miserable beggar. Yet he was far from miserable, as he whistled happily and chuckled occasionally at his own private jokes while going about his business. He tooted and hummed through a bushy gray beard. His eyes sparkled with delight from beneath a snagged mop of hair and an oversized black hat with a wide sagging brim. He was stooped by age and by the weight of a bulging sack that was draped over his shoulder. He hobbled about, supported by a gnarly wooden cane crowned with a large aqua gemstone. The precious stone glimmered with arcane light in the grasp of his gnarled hand, and it suffused a muted luminance throughout the darkened room.

He quickly examined the room as if he were searching for something in particular. He grunted triumphantly when he spotted a number of items scattered about the room, including a stylish pair of sunglasses laying on the night stand. He picked up the glasses and put them on, then turned to admire himself in a mirror. A broad grin deepened the creases in his face and exposed a perfect set of bright, white teeth. Despite his appearance, he was meticulous with his personal hygiene.

He gave himself a double thumbs-up.

“Stylin’!” he bellowed with gusto. “These will do nicely.”

Then he reached into his satchel and withdrew a book. The bag was filled with copies of this expensive and lovely work of craftsmanship. Its cover was made of some type of dark crimson leather stamped with elaborate designs in gold leaf, and in the center, surrounded by the intricate ornamentation, was embedded a round red gem that was polished into a perfect dome. It was a thick volume whose pages were composed of the finest quality vellum.

He placed it on the desk where the sunglasses had been.

“The Gideons can kiss my ass,” he muttered, then he laughed robustly. He did a fancy little dance step and hopped through the solid wall of the room into the adjoining suite. There he repeated his strange pilfering routine, leaving a copy of the book in place of some unremarkable object, and so it went until nearly every room in the hotel had been visited.

As this eccentric Santa Claus impostor went from room to room, he whistled and hummed the beautiful melody of his favorite Magenta Zephyr song. It was titled “*Ever More*,” a song that, at this time, had not yet been written.

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“All things are possible.”

- *The Great Cosmic Book* -

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He had traveled millions of light-years to be near her, tracking her as she made her way across the universe toward the Fringes of Human Expansion. As he progressed on his journey his obsession for her became a bitter hatred that soothed his poisoned soul and gave his life purpose.

He was a serpent in human guise, and although he had gone by many names throughout the years, he was currently going by the name of Andrew Steele. It was a name that perfectly suited his cold, hard character. He was a killer by trade, a hired assassin with a very specialized set of skills, but his targeting of Magenta Zephyr was a purely personal matter. Many years ago he had suffered a minor indignity at the hands of her band mates, one that had been brought about by his own callous actions, and he had harbored resentment and loathing for them ever since. As the Magenta Zephyr band rose to fame, his animosity and jealousy toward them had grown proportionally, and though she'd had nothing to do with his humiliation, Magenta Zephyr had come to be the primary focus of his loathing. She was the reason the band had achieved such unparalleled success and it was she who had brought them their fame and fortune. She was their muse, the object of their affection and admiration, and thus she had become the focus of his hostility toward them.

It was fortuitous that he had targeted her for his mission of personal retribution and had come to be so near to her at this point in time. It was because of his current position in the Outer Regions that the Commission had contacted him to request that he take on a most critical assignment involving the band.

The details of the mission were withheld pending a full briefing, but he was given enough information to convince him that divine providence had favored him beyond measure. He had been briefed that Magenta's brother, Michael, had developed technology for the band's stage show that the Commission considered to be based on scientific principles far advanced from current conventional science. Steele's mission would be to infiltrate the tour and attain the

technology so the Commission could evaluate it and use it for their own purposes — most likely for weapons development and warfare applications.

The Commission would assist him in getting a job aboard the tour ship and even pay him extravagantly to pursue the quarry that he had already targeted. He relished the irony of his circumstances. The key to the culmination of his demented dream had fallen right into his lap!

He was now on his way to Andros, a planet with a hospitable environment and numerous thriving colonies, which was a scheduled stop on the Magenta Zephyr Interplanetary Invasion Tour itinerary. He was to meet there with an agent of the Commission, the primary operative assigned to the case, who would further brief him on the details of the mission.

As he traveled toward Andros, relaxing in a finely appointed cabin aboard a luxury cruiser, Andrew Steele was pondering his good fortune and musing over the many methods of murder that he might employ in dealing with the members of the Magenta Zephyr band. He was a consummate professional and he would follow through on his commitment by completing the mission, but it was of no consequence to him whether or not the technology was delivered into the hands of the Commission. It was only a means to an end, and of one thing in particular he was certain; Magenta Zephyr would suffer a cruel death by his own hands.

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“Envy inspires those who are virtuous at heart and corrupts those who are feeble in spirit.”

- *The Great Cosmic Book* -

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The elementary principles of modern-day space travel are taught at an early level in schools throughout the known universe, so I won't waste time explaining technical details during my journal entries, especially when it comes to revealing specifics about my research and experimentation. Nevertheless, my discoveries, Maggie's unique abilities, and the principles of space travel are all integral elements of our story. So, I won't be able to completely avoid spewing some scientific sewage during my journal entries.

I'll try to explain the capabilities of the Universe Bender in simple terms.

Everything that exists, including that which we perceive to be solid matter, is composed of energy. This universal energy, which is the essential fabric of the universe, flows around us in its myriad forms.

The universe contains trillions of stars — one obvious manifestation of that energy — and just a single median star radiates power beyond human measure. The very ether of space in which these innumerable suns float is yet another manifestation of that universal energy, and it can be utilized as the medium for transferring this limitless power from one point in space to another. This inherent primal force is of infinite magnitude, but it must be harnessed in order for us to utilize it in practical ways.

Essentially, the Universe Bender can plug into the fabric of space to gather, store, and manipulate the universal energy that permeates the universe. And, as I have discovered, so much more.

Due to my youthful ignorance, I inadvertently *released* some of my scientific findings and a few schematics for some simple theoretical configurations to the general populace. Still, I

believe it will be quite a long time before anyone is able to take the leap of imagination and link all the elements together to unlock the mysteries of the natural laws that govern the function of my device.

I only discovered it with a measure of ingenuity and by divine accident . . .

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“Imagination is more important than knowledge.”

- *Albert Einstein* -

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Please visit

www.magentazephyr.com

to learn more about Magenta Zephyr and the full-length novel

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