

## EXCERPT #6 From the Novel by Tim Storm

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"God will not be found under a microscope, nor through the lens of a telescope, any more than he will be found between the pages of a dusty old book."

- The Great Cosmic Book -

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"You are the Mother of the Universe and we are your children," Esther True whispered reverently. Her eyes were closed in concentration and she was kneeling in supplication before a makeshift altar. Despite her ample weight and the effects of artificial gravity, she was floating nearly five inches above the floor of her quarters. This phenomenon occurred often when she prayed, and she had come to accept it with humble reverence. Her goddess had given her many gifts and, in her estimation, this was one of the least significant; the most cherished of these gifts being her role in the ascension of the Divine Sisterhood.

On Earth, Esther True had been high priestess of a congregation of nearly three hundred devotees of the Goddess and she had also been president of the Northwest States Magenta Zephyr Fan Club. While attending her seventh live Magenta Zephyr concert, she'd had her divine revelation. She was well aware of her own meager psychic abilities, yet it had taken her until that particular moment to realize that Magenta was blessed with the same rare talent. As the years passed, and as Magenta's abilities grew, her choreography and her telepathic influence over the special effects became more extraordinary. Esther eventually came to understand the full truth; Magenta was the Star Child, a true daughter of Venus and the next step in the spiritual evolution of womankind.

Now, after having publicly proclaimed that Magenta was the embodiment of the Will of Venus, Esther and her followers were on a pilgrimage of monumental importance. The media attention drawn by Esther's claims had allowed her flock to multiply greatly. Throughout the universe, devotees of Venus were becoming initiated into her Crimson Sisterhood, and Esther's influence was growing at an incredible rate. Though this pleased her because it was the will of

the Goddess, she would not let her pride corrupt her. She retained her humility and her sense of purpose.

She finished her silent prayer and settled gently to the floor. Rising from her knees, she called for her attendants. Four young acolytes entered her sanctuary with their heads hung slightly low in a gesture of respect. They wore clothing of simple design and were each cloaked with the scarlet robes of their order. Each of them had different hairstyles that resembled Magenta's at various stages of her career.

"Yes, Mistress?" they asked in a sweet youthful chorus.

"Please summon my sisters and prepare some munchies. We will be passing through the Commission portals and landing on Eros soon. We must prepare ourselves to meet the Star Child."

"Oh yes, mistress . . . Yes! Yes!"

They began to chatter excitedly about the prospect of seeing Magenta Zephyr in-the-flesh, but they were cut short by Esther True.

"Come now, girls. Let's get busy! We have important business to attend to," she said with motherly exasperation as she ushered them out of her quarters.

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Magenta Zephyr and the Universe Bender

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