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THE WINDS OF DUNE

SISTERHOOD OF DUNE

MENTATS OF DUNE

NAVIGATORS OF DUNE

HERETICS OF DUNE

BOOK FIVE IN THE DUNE CHRONICLES

FRANK HERBERT

With an Introduction by Brian Herbert

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INTRODUCTION

BY BRIAN HERBERT

Frank Herbert wrote much of the first draft of *Heretics of Dune* in Hawaii, a few miles outside the village of Hana on the eastern shore of Maui. He had not expected to be writing there, because the Pacific Northwest was his Tara, the place of his heart. But difficult circumstances led him to a distant, tropical isle.

When my father signed the contract for the novel in 1981, it was the largest science fiction book deal in history. World famous, he was at the top of his profession, having risen from poverty to success in a fashion that was reminiscent of the works of Horatio Alger, Jr. But Dad's remarkable achievement was bittersweet. The actual process of writing the fifth book in his classic Dune series would prove to be exceedingly arduous and much slower for him than usual, because of all the time he had to spend out of his study tending to the medical crises of my mother, Beverly Herbert.

She was seriously ill at the time, and for years had been battling valiantly for her life. The original diagnosis in 1974 had been terminal lung cancer from a lifetime of smoking cigarettes, sometimes as many as two packs a day. At the time of the discovery of the dread disease, the most optimistic prognosis had given her only a 5 percent chance of surviving beyond six months. Our family was devastated.

Under a rigorous program of chemotherapy and cobalt radiation treatments, my mother beat the cancer, but radiation seriously damaged her heart, which was inadequately shielded because of the limitations of medical technology in the 1970s. After these treatments, she suffered several life-threatening episodes, but Beverly Herbert was a fighter, and my father did everything possible to save her. He was her champion, and in true heroic fashion he sacrificed himself for her, just as she had done for him more than two decades earlier—when she gave up her own creative writing career in order to become the breadwinner for our

family, thus enabling him to write. When she became gravely ill, he took time away from his writing to find the latest treatments for her and tended to her every need. He became her personal nurse, maid, and cook, preparing the low-salt meals required for her. Under his loving attention, she kept beating the odds, kept rising like Lazarus from ICU hospital beds and going on with her life. As soon as she was able, she continued to help Dad with his business operations, handling his accounting, scheduling, and management. But over the years, she had weakened physically and was slipping away from us, and from him.

Stretching their financial resources to the limit, in 1980 my parents purchased an incredible piece of property in a remote area of Maui and proceeded to have a wonderful home built there. Frank Herbert did this for my mother because she could breathe much easier in the warm air of Hawaii, far from the cold, damp Pacific Northwest, where she had been born and had lived more than thirty-five years of her life.

By late 1982, the home was still under construction but could be occupied. They arrived in October of that year. A swimming pool was being built for Mom on the property so that she could get some much-needed exercise, but work was progressing slowly, frustrating her and my father. Even so, she loved the eastern side of Maui, with its warmth, stunning beauty, and relaxed pace of life. It was a very spiritual, old-Hawaiian region, inhabited by a people reminiscent of a bygone, less-hectic time, and it was the perfect spot for her to recuperate.

Having researched old records, my mother had already found a map showing their property. It was five miles from Hana, in an area that used to be called "Kawaloa," which means "a nice long time" in the Hawaiian language. She said she hoped to spend a long time there herself and that it was a magical place, unlike anything she had ever seen. A five-acre piece of paradise, the land fronted an aquamarine sea with dancing whitecaps and a surf that pounded against the black lava shoreline. The property had palms, papayas, mangoes, bananas, breadfruit trees, and a graceful kamani tree overlooking the water. The flowers on the gentle slopes around the home were spectacular, with bougainvillea, blue lilies, orchids, torch gingers, heliconias, bird-of-paradises, poinsettias, and huge hibiscus blossoms.

“It’s warm here,” my mother said to me over the telephone, “and there are flowers everywhere.”

In Hawaii, Frank Herbert set to work on *Heretics of Dune*. I spoke with him by phone in early January 1983, and he told me he was putting in long hours on the new novel, pressing to complete it as soon as possible. Each morning he rose before dawn and worked out on a rowing machine and an Exercycle. Then he took a quick shower and made a light breakfast of toast and guava juice, which he carried to his loft study on the second floor of the house.

After writing for three hours, he would help Mom get ready for the day. He made her Cream of Wheat with sliced bananas on top, found books and knitting materials and art supplies and whatever else she needed, and sometimes adjusted the louvers in the walls to allow just the right amount of trade winds to enter, naturally ventilating the interior of the house. By nine thirty he was back at his desk upstairs, but he was always going to the interior railing and looking down into the living room to make sure she was comfortable. Under the circumstances, it was difficult for him to find the time or the energy to write, but he did the best that he possibly could. The novel, as important as it was, had to be secondary to Beverly Herbert, his loving wife and companion since 1946.

For the new book project, he was using a Compaq word processor since it was much faster than his customary electric typewriter. Each night he put the new machine away in a sealed “dry room” by the kitchen to prevent it from being damaged so quickly in the caustic, salty air that blew in from the ocean. By the middle of February, he told me he’d been having plot problems with the novel, but he was a little over halfway through the first draft. Only a few days later, he was interrupted by yet another of my mother’s medical emergencies, one that forced them to return to a home they still owned in Port Townsend, Washington. Choosing to stay there instead, a short distance from Seattle, they could more easily obtain the best medical treatment for her. It was the practical thing to do, though they would return to Hawaii later in the year.

By early June, they were still in Port Townsend, and Dad had the first draft completed—around 200,000 words, which would eventually be cut to 165,000. I remember visiting them at their home on the Olympic Peninsula and seeing my mother reading the

manuscript. A slender brunette woman, she was seated on a dark yellow recliner in the sitting area adjacent to the kitchen, with manuscript pages spread out on the table beside her. She said the story was great, that she couldn't put it down. Mom felt that each book in the series was superior to the one before, with plots and characterizations that were even better than *Dune*.

The strong characterizations of women in the series—and particularly in *Heretics* and *Chapterhouse*—appealed greatly to my mother. In fact, Dad based the Lady Jessica on her, creating a memorable literary character who had my mother's beauty and grace. Remarkably, even though Beverly Herbert passed away years ago, she continues to live through the ages . . . a significant testimonial to the love that Frank Herbert felt for her.

It is interesting to note the progression of women in my father's Dune novels. Female characters get stronger and stronger as the series develops, and in *Heretics of Dune* and *Chapterhouse: Dune*, women are running most of the important planets in the Dune universe. By that time, the Bene Gesserit Sisterhood is the most important political power, although it is a more austere age, without the grandeur and pomposity of the Imperium back in the days of Shaddam Corrino IV, the Emperor Paul Muad'Dib, or the tyrannical God Emperor, Leto Atreides II. The glories of the desert planet Arrakis are long gone as well, and the sandworm species has been moved off world, where it may not survive.

Thousands of years before the events described in *Heretics of Dune*, the God Emperor set mankind on his "Golden Path" and scattered civilization across countless star systems, as if sprinkling human seeds in the wind. But now, in *Heretics of Dune*, evil, supremely powerful women have emerged from the Scattering and threaten the Sisterhood. They call themselves "Honored Matres," which is ironic because there is nothing honorable about them. Individually and collectively, they can outfight the Sisters, so that the Sisterhood—like the sandworms—seems in danger of being wiped out. The brutal Honored Matres appear to be unstoppable, and there are rumors about their origins. Could they possibly be descended from failed Reverend Mothers, making them the dark side of the Sisterhood? Or could something else be at play, something even more sinister that has been generated in the secret breeding laboratories of the fanatical Tleilaxu?

Heretics of Dune is a remarkable, cerebral excursion through the most fantastic universe in science fiction. In this novel, as in *God Emperor of Dune* before it and *Chapterhouse: Dune* afterward, the author explored layers that he originally interwove into the action of the first novel in the series, *Dune*—layers containing important messages about politics, religion, ecology, and a host of other interesting, timeless subjects. The last three novels he wrote in the series are intellectually stimulating, and sometimes the action almost seems secondary. Huge battles, and even one that is environmentally catastrophic, occur behind the scenes.

As I wrote in *Dreamer of Dune*, the biography of my father, *Heretics of Dune* was actually intended to be the first book of a new trilogy that would complete the epic story chronologically. It is set thousands of years in mankind's future, long after the events in *Dune*. Before his untimely death in 1986, Frank Herbert wrote the first two books of the trilogy (*Heretics* and *Chapterhouse*), but he left the third unwritten. Using my father's outline and notes, I eventually co-wrote the grand climax with Kevin J. Anderson, but it required two novels for us to do so—*Hunters of Dune* (2006) and *Sandworms of Dune* (2007).

Heretics of Dune is the beginning of that extraordinary, climactic adventure, a giant leap in time and space beyond the novels preceding it. In this novel, you will meet a diverse and complex cast of characters, inhabiting worlds that stretch the imagination. It is a journey into what my father liked to call one of humankind's "possible futures," showing where we might very well be headed, into a tableau that is at once terrifying and exhilarating. Even with its complexities, *Heretics* is a page-turner, a novel that will not disappoint the most critical of *Dune* fans. After reading the last page of the book, you will want to go back and read it again, revisiting old friends in a fantastic realm that never quite leaves your thoughts.

Brian Herbert
Seattle, Washington
June 24, 2008

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 ghola 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 gholia project. Taraza had drawn the dividing line clearly enough, though: “Schwangyu is not to be trusted where the safety of the gholia 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 gholia?” 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 gholia, 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 gholia thing now,” Schwangyu said.

Lucilla remained silent. The gholia 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 gholia to Rakis,” Schwangyu muttered. “Let sleeping worms lie.”

Lucilla gave her attention once more to the gholia-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 gholia 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 gholias 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 gholas 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 gholas, 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 gholas with real concern. Yes, if the Bashar had been called back to guard this Keep, then the gholas were in extreme peril.

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

"Miles Teg's orders," Schwangyu said, naming the Bashar. "All of the gholas' 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 gholas," 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 gholas 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 ghola 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 ghola.

"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 Atreides 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 a message from the Bashar! Schwangyu obviously saw and understood. *We guard him!*

"I presume it's Miles Teg you're so anxious to meet," Schwangyu said.

"Among others."

"Don't you want to make contact with the gholia first?"

"I've already made contact with him." Lucilla nodded toward the enclosed yard where the child once more stood almost motionless and looking up at her. "He's a thoughtful one."

"I've only the reports on the others," Schwangyu said, "but I suspect this is the most thoughtful one of the series."

Lucilla suppressed an involuntary shudder at the readiness for violent opposition in Schwangyu's words and attitude. There was not one hint that the child below them shared a common humanity.

While Lucilla was thinking this, clouds covered the sun as they often did here at this hour. A cold wind blew in over the Keep's walls, swirling around the courtyard. The child turned away and picked up the speed of his exercises, getting his warmth from increased activity.

"Where does he go to be alone?" Lucilla asked.

"Mostly to his room. He has tried a few dangerous escapades, but we have discouraged this."

"He must hate us very much."

"I'm sure of it."

"I will have to deal with that directly."

"Surely, an Imprinter has no doubts about her ability to overcome hate."

"I was thinking of Geasa." Lucilla sent a knowing look at Schwangyu. "I find it astonishing that you let Geasa make such a mistake."

"I don't interfere with the normal progress of the gholas' instructions. If one of his teachers develops a real affection for him, that is not my problem."

"An attractive child," Lucilla said.

They stood a bit longer watching the Duncan Idaho gholas at his training-play. Both Reverend Mothers thought briefly of Geasa, one of the first teachers brought here for the gholas project. Schwangyu's attitude was plain: *Geasa was a providential failure*. Lucilla thought only: *Schwangyu and Geasa complicated my task*. Neither woman gave even a passing moment to the way these thoughts reaffirmed their loyalties.

As she watched the child in the courtyard, Lucilla began to have a new appreciation of what the Tyrant God Emperor had actually achieved. Leto II had employed this gholas-type through uncounted lifetimes—some thirty-five hundred years of them, one after another. And the God Emperor Leto II had been no ordinary force of nature. He had been the biggest juggernaut in human history, rolling over everything: over social systems, over natural and unnatural hatreds, over governmental forms, over rituals (both taboo and mandatory), over religions casual and religions intense.

The crushing weight of the Tyrant's passage had left nothing unmarked, not even the Bene Gesserit.

Leto II had called it "The Golden Path" and this Duncan Idaho-type gholia below her now had figured prominently in that awesome passage. Lucilla had studied the Bene Gesserit accounts, probably the best in the universe. Even today on most of the old Imperial Planets, newly married couples still scattered dollops of water east and west, mouthing the local version of "Let Thy blessings flow back to us from this offering, O God of Infinite Power and Infinite Mercy."

Once, it had been the task of Fish Speakers and their tame priesthood to enforce such obeisance. But the thing had developed its own momentum, becoming a pervasive compulsion. Even the most doubting of believers said: "Well, it can do no harm." It was an accomplishment that the finest religious engineers of the Bene Gesserit Missionaria Protectiva admired with frustrated awe. The Tyrant had surpassed the Bene Gesserit best. And fifteen hundred years since the Tyrant's death, the Sisterhood remained powerless to unlock the central knot of that fearsome accomplishment.

"Who has charge of the child's religious training?" Lucilla asked.

"No one," Schwangyu said. "Why bother? If he is reawakened to his original memories, he will have his own ideas. We will deal with those if we ever have to."

The child below them completed his allotted training time. Without another look up at the watchers on the parapet, he left the enclosed yard and entered a wide doorway on the left. Patrin, too, abandoned his guard position without glancing at the two Reverend Mothers.

"Don't be fooled by Teg's people," Schwangyu said. "They have eyes in the backs of their heads. Teg's birth-mother, you know, was one of us. He is teaching that gholia things better never shared!"