

GEORGE R.R. MARTIN

STARPORT



ART AND ADAPTATION BY RAYA GOLDEN

George Martin

Starport

«HarperCollins»

Martin G. R.

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Law & Order meets Men in Black in this graphic novel adaptation of a TV pilot script by the author of A Game of Thrones. Ideal for fans of Saga. **SECOND CITY. FIRST CONTACT.** Ten years ago, representatives from an interstellar collective of 314 alien species landed on Earth, inviting us to become number 315. Now, after seemingly endless delays, the Starport in Chicago is operational, a destination for diplomats, merchants, and tourists alike. Inside, visitors are governed by intergalactic treaty. Outside, the streets belong to Chicago's finest. Charlie Baker, newly promoted to the squad that oversees the Starport district, is eager to put to practical use his enthusiasm for all things extraterrestrial; he just never expected to arrive on his first day in the back of a police cruiser. Lieutenant Bobbi Kelleher is married to the job, which often puts her in conflict with Lyhanne Nhar-Lys, security champion of Starport and one of the galaxy's fiercest warriors. Undercover with a gang of anti-alien extremists, Detective Aaron Stein has no problem mixing business with pleasure—until he stumbles upon evidence of a plot to assassinate a controversial trade envoy with a cache of stolen ray guns. Now the Chicago PD must stop these nutjobs before they piss off the entire universe. Based on a TV pilot script written by George R. R. Martin and adapted and illustrated by Hugo Award–nominated artist Raya Golden, this bold and brilliant graphic novel adaptation brings Martin's singular vision to rollicking life. With all the intrigue, ingenuity, and atmosphere that made A Game of Thrones a worldwide phenomenon, Starport launches a new chapter in the career of a sci-fi/fantasy superstar.

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PROLOGUE

A decade ago, something amazing happened: Aliens discovered Earth. Three Chaseen ships landed, all randomly searching for active sports stadiums, looking to make a real entrance. The first ship landed in Singapore during the AFF Tiger Cup Championship. The second landed in Denmark at the Parken Stadium during a New Firm local rivalry pregame and unfortunately caused a small stampede of university students—which was indeed an entrance, although maybe not the one that particular pilot was looking for. The third landed at one other notable stadium on the other side of the planet, but more on that later.

Thankfully, they didn't come to rule over us or anything dramatic like that. Instead, humanity got to join the 314 other species within the Harmony of Worlds. With the help of three main pilgrim species—the Lohb, the Nhar, and the founding Chaseen—Earth began to construct three intergalactic treaty ports: one in Singapore, the first to open, six years after the landing; one in Copenhagen, which opened the following year ...and one plagued with delays and all sorts of intrigue, opening two years after that...

CHAPTER ONE

...IN CHICAGO.

... WHILE THE AMERICAN STARPORT'S FIRST ANNIVERSARY IS APPROACHING AND AS EARTH CELEBRATES ITS TEN-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF HUMANITY'S DISCOVERY BY THE HARMONY OF WORLDS.

THE PRESIDENT IS BUSY WORKING WITH OTHER GLOBAL LEADERS TO COMMEMORATE THE DAY. AN INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAY IS BEING PROPOSED, BUT MASSIVE

TENSIONERUPTED OVER WHICH STARPORTWILL HOST THE CELEBRATION.AND HERE IN CHICAGO...

...PROTESTS
CONTINUE AS NATIONAL
MOTORS PREPARES TO
FINALIZE ITS CONTROVERSIAL
POWERCELL DEAL WITH
HARMONY'S MOST ELUSIVE
SPECIES, THE SKRIT.
CHARLIE?
WHAT TIME
IS IT?

MUCH RESTSON THE SUCCESSFULCONCLUSION OF THISVENTURE, WHICH MIGHTFINALLY PUT CHICAGOIN LINE WITHSINGAPORE...

...AND COPENHAGEN AS AMAJOR ECONOMICPOWER–DESPITE THE MANYDELAYS THAT PLAGUED THEOPENING OF ITS STARPORT JUST ABOUT A YEARAGO.

SIX-THIRTY
A.M.
WAKING
UP BRIGHT
AND EARLY FOR
YOUR NEW
JOB, HUH?
YES...
DAMN IT!
HERE,
LET ME.
YOU'RE
GOOD.
I THOUGHT
YOU LEARNED THAT
LAST NIGHT...
YOU THINK
THIS COLOR'S
OKAY?
YOU
LOOK
FINE.
SEVEN
YEARS IN UNIFORM,
ALL YOU KNOW
IS BLUE.
IT'S AN
ADJUSTMENT.
WAIT...
WHERE'S MY
BADGE?
DETECTIVE BAKER,
ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT

YOU LOST YOUR NEW GOLD
SHIELD WITHIN TWENTY-
FOUR HOURS OF
GETTING IT?
THAT'S
NOT FUNNY,
STACY.
IT HAS
TO BE HERE
SOMEPLACE!
WE DIDN'T GO
ANYWHERE LAST
NIGHT...
IT'S RIGHT
HERE, SILLY. YOU
DEPUTIZED ME,
REMEMBER? IT
WAS JUST
AFTER-
RIGHT! WELL,
I'D BETTER GET
GOING. MAKE SURE
YOU LOCK UP
WHEN YOU...
OF COURSE.
AND IF YOU
BUMP INTO GORT,
TELL HIM *KLAATUBARADA NIKTO* FOR ME.
BOY, THAT'S
THE WAY TO COMMUTE,
HUH? WOULDN'T YOU
LOVE TO OWN ONE OF
THOSE BABIES?
GOOD LUCK! THEY
DON'T SELL THEM
TO THE LIKES
OF US...
SURE THEY
DO, IF YOU GOT A
COUPLE MILLION TO
SPARE. I HEAR THE
SAUDIS BOUGHT
A DOZEN.
I READ
THAT JAY LENO'S
GOT ONE.
YEAH, AND
THE NEW TESLA
REALLY LOOKS LIKE ONE.

THAT'S NOT THE POINT.
POINT IS, THEY SHOULDN'T
BE ALLOWED TO FLY THEM
IN THE CITY. IF ONE OF
THEM CRASHES...
THEY DON'T
CRASH.
SAYS WHO?
THE MUNCHKINS?
I MEAN, WHAT THE
HELL DO YOU EXPECT
THEM TO SAY?
ACTUALLY,
THEY'RE DESIGNED
NOT TO CRASH. EVEN
IF YOU *TRY* TO SMASH INTO SOMETHING, THE SKIMMER WON'T LET YOU.
NOW, IF
YOU'LL EXCUSE
ME, THIS IS
MY STOP.
FIGURES.
SON
OF A...
HEY!
STOP!
POLICE!
COPS! EVERYBODY SPLIT!
EARTHBLOODS!
GRAB AS MANY
AS YOU CAN!
PUT
DOWN THE
BAT, SON.
HAHA
HAHAHA
HAHA!
I SAID
DROP IT,
YOU LITTLE
SHIT!
DROP
THE GUN,
ASSHOLE!
NOW!
OKAY,
AGAINST THE
WALL. SPREAD
'EM!
I'M A

COP, FOR
CHRISAKE!
UH-HUH.
SURE YOU ARE.
LET'S SEE
A BADGE
THEN
I...
I SEEM
TO HAVE
LOST IT.
RIGHT.
HAPPENS TO
ME ALL THE TIME. NOW GET MOVING!
WAIT! IT'S
GOT TO BE
AROUND HERE
SOMEPLACE—
YOU HAVE
THE RIGHT
TO REMAIN SILENT.
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT
TO AN ATTORNEY. IF
YOU CAN'T AFFORD
ONE, ONE WILL BE
APPOINTED FOR
YOU—
LISTEN TO
ME, OFFICER...
OFFICER...WHAT'S
YOUR NAME?
OFFICER
LISA RUTLEDGE.
ANYTHING YOU SAY
CAN AND WILL BE USED
AGAINST YOU...
ESPECIALLY THAT CRAP
ABOUT BEING A COP!
IN YOU GO.
YOU
ALL RIGHT,
MA'AM?
WHAT
DID SHE
SAY?
AYSACH LEESAY NOAHASOMU WAILAANIS. CHAIT SLEEVA CHAI!
HOW THE
HELL DO I KNOW?
I DON'T SPEAK

MUNCHKIN.
I DON'T
BELIEVE THIS!
LIFE'S A
BITCH, MAN.
ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU
GET YOUR ASS HANDED
TO YOU BY A BUNCH
OF UMPA
LUMPA-LOVIN'
COPS!
THIS IS
NOT HAPPENING ON MY FIRST DAY.
LISTEN, IF YOU
COULD JUST LET
ME SPEAK TO THE
CAPTAIN...
I WANT
A SHYSTER,
MAN! I GOT
RIGHTS!
...CAN I
GET YOUR FULL
NAME FOR OUR
REPORT?
JANE
MANISCALCO,
DEAR.
GET
YOUR HANDS
OFF!
THIS IS *NOT* HAPPENING.
HOW DO
YOU SPELL THAT,
MA'AM?
MANISCALCO.
JUST LIKE IT SOUNDS,
OFFICER PARK. IT'S
NOT JUST THE
MONEY.
ALL MY CREDIT
CARDS WERE IN
THERE. AND THE PICTURES
OF MY GRANDKIDS...
AND MY DRIVER'S
LICENSE.
WE'LL DO
OUR BEST TO GET
THEM BACK FOR YOU,

MRS. MANISCALCO.
CAN YOU DESCRIBE
THE PURSE?
YOU WERE
THERE, OFFICER
MORELLO.
BROWN.
IT WAS
BROWN.
OR DID
I TAKE THE
BLACK ONE
TODAY?
YOU AND PARK
HAD HIM, AND YOU
LET HIM GET
AWAY!
GIMME A BREAK,
SARGE. THE GUY TOOK
OFF! WHAT THE HELL
WERE WE SUPPOSED
TO DO?
RUN HIM
DOWN—THE WAY
WE DID WHEN I
WAS ON THE
STREETS!
IT WAS A SIMPLE
PURSE-SNATCHING,
MORELLO. MAYBE IF
YOU SPENT MORE TIME
IN THE GYM AND LESS
IN THE DONUT SHOP,
RUNNING DOWN A
SUSPECT WOULDN'T
BE SO...
NO OFFENSE,
SERGEANT
MONDRAGON, BUT
WHEN YOU WERE ON
THE STREETS, THE
PURSE-SNATCHERS
DIDN'T HAVE
WINGS!
EXCUSE ME?
YEAH. HE
WASN'T RUNNING
AWAY. THE LITTLE
PISSANT COULD

FLY.

...AS I
SAID.
BUT WE'VE
ALREADY ASSIGNED
HALF A DOZEN MEN
TO THE HOTEL. AND I
CAN'T GIVE EVERY
VISITING DIGNITARY A
FULL DETAIL...

...I
UNDERSTAND,
BUT THAT WAS
THE POPE!
THEN TELL
TOPMAN TO CALL
THE MAYOR AND GET
US APPROVED FOR
MORE OVERTIME!
NO, I DON'T
NEED TO TALK TO
TOPMAN MYSELF.
NO REALLY,
THERE'S...

STAMM!

NO, I WASN'T
TALKING TO YOU,
AND I DON'T KNOW
WHAT THAT MEANS IN
YOUR LANGUAGE.
CAN YOU GIVE ME
A MOMENT,
PLEASE?
EMILE, IF
YOU LIGHT THAT THING,
I SWEAR I'M GOING TO
SHOVE IT RIGHT UP
YOUR—
NO, I'M STILL
HERE. I WAS
SPEAKING TO SOME-
ONE ELSE...YES, AND
TO YOU CHAY'ASH
LENAERHI. A PLEASURE.
THIS IS LIEUTENANT
KELLEHER.
YES, PROFIT
TO YOUR HOUSE,
TOO. YES, OF COURSE

WE UNDERSTAND THE
IMPORTANCE OF
THESE TALKS...
TOPMAN,
WE'LL DO EVERYTHING
IN OUR POWER TO
PROTECT THE TRADE
ENVOY, BUT YOU MUST
UNDERSTAND...
FINE. *YOU* SPEAK TO THE MAYOR! AND TO THE GOVERNOR.
HELL, YOU
MIGHT AS WELL
SPEAK TO THE
PRESIDENT. MAYBE
SHE'LL BE ABLE
TO HELP
YOU!
STAMM, I
WARNED YOU
ABOUT THAT
CIGAR.
SORRY,
LIEUTENANT.
I MUST NOT HAVE
HEARD...
I DIDN'T
WANT TO
EAVESDROP.
WORD IS
YOU'RE GOING TO
STICK ME WITH A
NEW PARTNER.
DETECTIVE
CHARLES K. BAKER, A
TRANSFER FROM THE
22ND. SEVEN YEARS ON
THE FORCE, JUST GOT
HIS GOLD SHIELD.
C'MON, L.T.,
GIMME A BREAK.
YOU KNOW I DON'T
DO VIRGINS.
STAMM, WHAT
I KNOW IS YOU GO
THROUGH PARTNERS LIKE
A HYPOCHONDRIAC GOES
THROUGH KLEENEX. BAKER
IS SUPPOSED TO BE A
GOOD COP.

YEAH, SO
WHERE THE
HELL IS THIS
PARAGON?
GOOD
POINT. HE'S
LATE.
JUST WHAT
WE NEED—A
DETECTIVE WHO
CAN'T EVEN FIND
HIS OWN DESK.
HEY, MAN,
WHY DON'T YOU
LOCK UP THE FREAKIN'
ALIENS INSTEAD?
YOU OUGHT
TO ARREST THEM
FOR SELLING
THAT CRAP!
EARTH
FIRST, EH?
YOU BOYS
LOOK GOOD
BEHIND
BARS.
EXCUSE ME,
OFFICER, BUT
THERE'S BEEN A
MISTAKE. I'M
A COP.
HELL,
YEAH. ME,
TOO!
YEAH, MAN!
AND I LOST MY
GUN AS WELL. CAN
I HAVE THAT
BACK NOW?
HEHEH...
SCREW
YOU. I'M WITH THE FBI!
MMM-
HMMM.
ALL RIGHT,
GENTLEMEN, SETTLE
DOWN. WE'RE GOING
TO TAKE YOU UP ONE
AT A TIME AND BOOK

YOU. YOU GET ONE
PHONE CALL
APIECE.
LISTEN,
IF I COULD JUST
SEE CAPTAIN SWOBODA
FOR A MINUTE...
YOU FIRST,
PRETTY BOY,
SINCE YOU'RE
SO EAGER.
SO
YOU'RE
A COP,
HUH?
THIS IS NOT
HAPPENING...
HERE HE IS,
LIEUTENANT. HE TRIED
TO USE MANNING'S
HEAD FOR BATTING
PRACTICE.
WHAT'S
ERNIE KVETCHING
ABOUT?
I WHIFFED,
DIDN'T I? TELL
HIM "ALMOST" ONLY
COUNTS IN HORSE-
SHOES AND HAND
GRENADES.
YOU SURE
I CAN'T GIVE HIM
A FEW DINGS, FOR
AUTHENTICITY?
THANK
YOU, SERGEANT
MONDRAGON.
THAT'LL BE
ALL.
AARON, THIS
IS SAM WINEGLASS
FROM THE STATES
ATTORNEY'S OFFICE.
SAM, THIS IS
DETECTIVE AARON
STEIN.
DETECTIVE?
THAT ISN'T A

REAL TATTOO...
IS IT?
ONLY MY
HAIRDRESSER WILL
EVER KNOW FOR
CERTAIN.
WHAT THE
HELL WERE YOU
DOING AT THE EL THIS
MORNING, ESPECIALLY
AT A STOP THAT'S
THREE BLOCKS
AWAY? ARE YOU
NUTS?
WHAT DO
YOU THINK I WAS
DOING? I WAS
GETTING MYSELF
ARRESTED!
THEY LIVE LIKE
A PACK OF WILD DOGS,
AND HOLLANDER'S GOT
SOMEONE ON ME 24/7,
SINCE I'M THE NEW
GUY AND SO
CHARMING
AND ALL.
THIS WAS
THE ONLY WAY TO
REPORT IN, MAKE SURE
I DIDN'T GET STUCK
EXPLAINING MYSELF
AT THE WRONG
DISTRICT.
WE GOT
A FEW OF THEM
OFF THE STREETS,
ANYWAY.
WELL, GO
PUT THEM BACK.
THEY'LL WALK ANYWAY.
ENTRAPMENT. THIS
MORNING'S LITTLE
PRANK WAS
MY IDEA.
LITTLE PRANK?
TRY FELONY ASSAULT,
BATTERY, MALICIOUS
DESTRUCTION OF

PROPERTY...
...AND A
PARTRIDGE
IN A PEAR
TREEEEE.
DIME-STORE
CRAP, COUNSELOR.
THE BIS PRIZE IS
STILL BEHIND
DOOR NUMBER
THREE.
EARTHBLOOD'S
GOING TO TRY AND
WHACK THE SKRIT
TRADE ENVOY.
DAMN IT!
ARE YOU
SURE?
I CAN'T TELL
YOU WHEN OR
WHERE-YET. BUT
BELIEVE ME,
LIEUTENANT, IT IS
GOING DOWN.
CAN
WE BRING
'EM IN?
CONSPIRACY
CHARGES ARE
NOTORIOUSLY HARD
TO PROVE.
THEN HOW
ABOUT ARMS
SMUGGLING?
HOLLANDER'S
UGLY, BUT HE'S NOT
STUPID. AND HE'S NOT
GOING TO TRY AND
SNUFF ONE OF OUR
FRIENDS FROM THE
STARS WITH A
SATURDAY-NIGHT
SPECIAL.
WORD IS,
HE'S FIXED TO
GET HIS HANDS ON
SOME HEAVY-DUTY
FIREPOWER.
ARE WE

TALKING UZIS,
HERE? HAND
GRENADES,
BAZOOKAS?
WHAT?
NAH, EVEN
BETTER. SOMETHING
STRAIGHT OUTTA
STARPORT...
RAYGUNS!
CHAPTER TWO
WHAT DID
HE EXPECT ME
TO DO, FLAP MY
ARMS AND
THINK ABOUT
CHRISTMAS?
YOU ASK
ME, MONDRAGON'S
HAD A BUG UP HIS
BUTT EVER SINCE HE
MADE SERGEANT. HE'S
LIKE ME. A MAN OF
ACTION CAN'T BE
HAPPY BEHIND
A DESK.
A MAN OF
ACTION?
DON'T GIVE
ME THAT LOOK,
PARK. YEAH, OKAY, I'M
NOT INTO YOUR
KUNG-FU...
...BUT I'M
STILL WHO
I AM, YA
KNOW?
HAPKIDO.
A MAN OF
ACTION.
DAMN
STRAIGHT!
HEY,
MORELLO.
THERE HE IS!
HELP!
THIEF!
LEGGO!
HEY,

HOLD IT!
GET
DOWN
HERE! I'M
WARNING YOU,
I SWEAR...
HAHA
HAH!
SKREEEE!
HAHA
HAH!
SKREEEE!
I TOLD
YOU, LITTLE FILTH
MONKEY...
HISSSSS!
...TO
GET DOWN HERE!
HAHAHA
HAHAHAHA
HAHAHA!
ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT,
MA'AM?
HE...
IT...
I SAW.
CAN I
HAVE MY
PURSE BACK
NOW?
THAT'S *IT!* I'LL SHOOT ITS WINGS OFF NEXT TIME, *I SWEAR!*
I WAS FOUR YEARS,
TWO MONTHS, AND FIVE
DAYS FROM MY PENSION WHEN
I MET MY FIRST ALIEN. REMEMBER,
BOBBI, WHEN THE MUNCHKINS LANDED
AND THEY ANNOUNCED HOW THEY'D
BEEN WATCHING US FOR NEARLY SIXTY
YEARS, WAITING? AND THE DELAYS
TRYING TO OPEN A STARPORT HERE?
WHAT WAS IT, FIVE YEARS OF
ANTICIPATION BEFORE THEY EVEN
SET FOOT ON AMERICAN SOIL?
ENDLESS CONGRESSIONAL MEETINGS,
TREATIES, AND RED TAPE OUT
THE ASS. THE TUNNEL COLLAPSE,
THE RIOTS IN NEW YORK.
ENDLESS.

POINT IS, THEY
TOOK SIX DECADES
TO COME KNOCKING ON
OUR DOOR, AND ONE MORE
BEFORE KNOCKING ON MINE,
SO DON'T YOU THINK THEY COULD
HAVE WAITED A BIT LONGER? MAYBE
LET ME GET ON WITH MY DAMNED
RETIREMENT BEFORE I BECAME
BEHOLDEN TO SOME PINK
FROG-FACED ASSHAT WHO
INSISTS ON BEING
ADDRESSED AS
"TOPMAN"?
AND WHY HERE,
KELLEHER? WHY ME?
WHY MY CITY?
DON'T WORRY,
CAPTAIN, YOU STILL
GET TO RETIRE. THE
TOPMAN HAS SENT A
SKIMMER. IT SHOULD
BE OUTSIDE RIGHT
NOW.
THAT'S ALL
I NEED. IF GOD HAD
MEANT CARS TO FLY, HE
WOULDN'T HAVE GIVEN
THEM WHEELS.
I SPENT MY
WHOLE LIFE ON
THE FORCE, BOBBI.
UNTIL THE STARPORT
OPENED, I FIGURED I'D
SEEN JUST ABOUT
EVERYTHING...
BUT...HE
LOOKS LIKE A
COCKROACH.
WHO?
THE SKRIT
TRADE ENVOY.
HE'S FIVE FEET THREE
INCHES TALL, ONLY HE'S
A COCKROACH. KAFKA
WOULD BE PROUD, BUT
IT CREEPS ME RIGHT
THE FUCK OUT.
WITH 314

OTHER SPECIES
IN THE HARMONY, IT
FIGURES THAT SOME OF
THEM MIGHT BE
INSECTS...
THE MAYOR
IS GOING TO GIVE
HIM A KEY TO THE CITY.
HE'LL PROBABLY SHAKE
HANDS WITH HIM. CAN
COCKROACHES SHAKE
HANDS?
DO
COCKROACHES
EVEN *HAVE* HANDS?
MAYOR DALEY
WOULD *NEVER* HAVE GIVEN A COCKROACH THE KEY TO THE CITY!
WELL...
MAYBE IF IT WAS A
DEMOCRAT?
IF THERE'S
NO DRIVER, I'M NOT
GETTING IN.
C'MON,
CAPTAIN.
THE TOPMAN'S
EXPECTING
US.
WOULD YOU
ENJOY TO HEAR
LISTEN ATTEND TO
MUSIC TUNE
MELODY?
NO. NO,
WE'RE FINE.
POSSIBLY
PREFER TALK
CONVERSE
SHARE-VIEWS?
SHOULDN'T
YOU WATCH WHERE
YOU'RE FLYING?
BUT, OF
INTERESTING
ARE YOU...
NOT
NECESSARY VITAL
IMPORTANT, OF
FLIGHT ACHIEVEMENT

DESTINATION,
PARAMETERS
FUNCTION WORKING
TOP TIPS.
JUST
HUMOR US,
OKAY?
AHHHH!
HUMOR
FUNNY HA-HA.
HOKAY!
SPECIES 26,
91, AND 214
WALK INTO TAVERN
SALOON BAR.
SALOON
TENDER PROPRIETOR
SPEAKS REMARKS,
SAYING...
DID YOUR
SPORE FALL FROM
ITS BRANCH BEFORE
SUN'S ZENITH? YES!
ENJOYMENT!
THE POLICE
ARE HERE!
STEP ASIDE,
PLEASE. MOVE
ASIDE.
WHAT'S THE
PROBLEM?
WHAT THE
HELL TOOK YOU
SO LONG?
THE POLICE...
THANK YOU,
JESUS!
UH-OH.
ANGELS.
WORSE.
MAROON
CADRE.
DO YOU
CHAMPION THESE
THIEVES?
UH, YES.
WE DO. WHAT
SEEMS TO BE THE
PROBLEM?

SHE'S
CRAZY!
SHE PULLED
THAT LASER KNIFE
THINGY ON MY
HUSBAND, THEN
TRIED TO TAKE
OUR PHONE!
STILL YOUR
TONGUE, HUMAN...
OR DIE BESIDE
YOUR MATE!
YOU HEARD
HER. ARREST
THEM!
HOW
DARE
THEY?
EARTH
FIRST!
CAREFUL,
SHE'S GOT ONE
OF THEM SWORD-
STICKS!
SETTLE DOWN,
ROOKIE. NOW, DO
ME A FAVOR AND
HANDLE THE
CROWD.
WILL
EVERYBODY
JUST SHUT UP AND
CALM DOWN FOR
A MOMENT?
HI THERE,
SIR. I'M OFFICER
ERNIE MANNING. MAY
I SEE YOUR PHONE,
PLEASE?
VERY NICE.
WHERE YOU FOLKS
FROM?
I...IOWA.
WE'RE ON
VACATION...
AND HOW
CLOSE DID YOU
GET WHILE TAKING
PICTURES OF

THEM?
I...THEY'RE
SO TALL AND
COLORFUL! AND
WE'VE NEVER
SEEN...
ALIENS
BEFORE.
NO.
AH.
THERE
IT IS.
LOOKS LIKE YOU FOLKS
DIDN'T GET THROUGH YOUR
NEW-SPECIES-INTERACTION
PAMPHLET AT THE AIRPORT, HUH?
MISSED THE BIT ABOUT HOW
SERIOUSLY THESE GUYS
TAKE THEIR PERSONAL
SPACE?
DO YOU
MIND IF I ERASE
YOUR PHOTOS AND
TURN OFF YOUR
PHONE, SIR?
YES! *YES*, OF COURSE! WHATEVER YOU NEED, OFFICER.
THERE, I'VE
ERASED ALL
THE IMAGES. THEY
ARE TOTALLY
IRRETRIEVABLE.
IS HONOR
SATISFIED?
NO. THE
THEFT IS UNDONE,
YET THE INSULT
STILL STANDS.
TELL THE
NICE LADY
YOU'RE SORRY.
I DIDN'T...
THESE ARE
NHAR, SIR. ANGELS.
IF YOU HAD READ
YOUR PAMPHLET,
YOU'D KNOW THAT BY
STEPPING INTO HER
PATH AND TAKING THAT
UNFLATTERING PHOTO,

YOU'VE INADVERTENTLY
STOLEN HER SPACE
AND "BESMIRCHED"
HER IMAGE.
I DIDN'T
KNOW! I DIDN'T
MEAN TO...I'M SORRY!
SO SORRY. I'LL READ
THE PAMPHLET AT
THE HOTEL. I
PROMISE!
YOU HEARD
HIM. HE DIDN'T MEAN
ANYTHING. HE'S SORRY.
AND HE'S NOT EVEN
ARMED. LOOK
AT HIM!
THIS APOLOGY
IS A POOR THING,
AND YET I WILL
HEAR IT.
BUT,
SHOULD IT
HAPPEN
AGAIN...
NAH-TO!
TREASURE
THIS LESSON AS
A GIFT FROM DAHRYS
NHAR-KQL, ARYANNE OF
THE MAROON CADRE
OF THE CHILDREN OF
THE ENDLESS
NIGHT.
PAY THE
HUMAN FOR HIS PITIFUL
COMMUNICATION
DEVICE.
WHAT
WAS THAT ALL
ABOUT?
GET USED
TO IT, ROOKIE.
BEING A COP IN
CHICAGO ISN'T
WHAT IT USED
TO BE.
BUT...SIR, I DON'T
THINK THAT'S ENOUGH

TO COVER MY PHONE.
IT WAS BRAND-NEW,
AND ON A PAYMENT
PLAN...
SO WHO'S
GOING TO PAY
FOR THE
REST?
SEND THE
BILL TO THE TOPMAN,
CARE OF STARPORT
CHICAGO.
OK. WHICH ONE
OF YOU DOUCHEBAGS
KILLED DETECTIVE
BAKER AND STOLE
HIS GUN?
HERE!
I MEAN, I'M
BAKER. I DIDN'T
KILL ANYONE!
SO HOW COME YOU'RE
COVERED WITH
BLOOD?
HUH. THAT'S
WHAT THEY
ALL SAY.
IT'S
FRUIT
JUICE.
THEY RAN
A MAKE ON YOUR
GUN. IMAGINE THE
HORROR WHEN IT
TURNED OUT TO BE
ONE OF OURS...
YO, LIVINGSTONE,
BETTER UNLOCK MY
PARTNER, HERE. LET'S
SEE IF MAYBE I CAN
KEEP HIM OUT OF
TROUBLE.
MMMM-
HMMM.
HERE WE ARE,
SKIP, AT CHICAGO'S
FINEST, DISTRICT 19,
AKA THE ZOO, AKA
THE UNIVERSE'S

CRAP HOLE.
AND ON
THAT SUBJECT,
THERE'S THE
CRAPPER. DEEP,
I KNOW...
HEY,
RICHY!
IT'S SERGEANT
MONDRAGON,
DETECTIVE STAMM,
NOT RICHY.
I SEE
THEY'VE GIVEN
YOU A NEW
PARTNER.
I'M SERGEANT
RICHARD MONDRAGON.
WELCOME TO THE
ZOO, SON.
AND MY
SYMPATHIES
ON YOUR
PARTNER.
HEY...
AND ANOTHER
BATHROOM... YOU
GETTING ALL
THIS?
SO,
JUST HOW
SEXY AM
I?
ABOUT
AS SEXY AS
SOMETHING I'D
FLUSH DOWN
THE TOILET.
I CAN'T
BELIEVE SHE'S
SENDING YOU
BACK IN.
YEAH, WELL,
SHE HAS TO. I
HAVEN'T LEARNED
ALL THE WORDS TO
"EARTHLAND UBER
ALLES" YET.
I WANT

YOU TO WEAR
A WIRE.
LOVE TO!
DARLING IDEA,
REALLY. SO KIND
OF YOU TO
SUGGEST IT.
THE THING IS,
THERE'S THIS HOT
LITTLE EARTHBLOOD
NUMBER WHO CAN'T
KEEP HER HANDS
OFF ME.
SO IMAGINE,
THERE WE ARE
PETTING IN THE BUNKER,
AND SHE SLIDES HER
HAND UNDER MY SHIRT,
AND...OH MY
GOODNESS...
SURPRISE!
IT'S. A.
WIRE!
ONLY YOU
WOULD HAVE THAT
KIND OF PROBLEM,
AARON.
YEAH,
WELL...
...I KNEW THE
JOB WAS DANGEROUS
WHEN I TOOK IT. DON'T
BE JEALOUS, RICHY.
IT LOOKS BAD
ON YOU.
HEY, NICE LOOK, MORELLO.
YOU UNDERCOVER AS A
COUCH POTATO, OR DID
YOU JUST FORGET
YOUR SHIRT?
I'VE HAD
THAT URGE MYSELF,
FROM TIME
TO TIME.
THAT'S "EAT
IT, *DETECTIVE* STAMM."
THESE ARE
OUR NEIGHBORS,
OFFICERS JI-HUN PARK

AND LOUIS MORELLO,
UNDERCOVER CHICAGO
FASHION ICONS.
AN ALIEN...
UHH...HEH...*THREW UP* ON HIM.
EAT IT,
STAMM!
THAT'S MY
DESK BACK BY THE
STAIRS, AND THIS IS
YOU. MY LAST PARTNER
DIED IN THAT CHAIR.
MASSIVE CEREBRAL
HEMORRHAGE.
WENT
JUST LIKE
THAT.
HOW MANY
PARTNERS
HAVE YOU HAD,
ANYWAY?
YOU
CAN'T COUNT
THAT HIGH.
DAMN,
MORELLO, YOU
FORGET HOW
TO USE A
REMOTE?
SCREW YOU,
DETECTIVE
STAMM.
PARK, CAN
YOU HELP ME?
YOUR PEOPLE
MADE THIS DAMN
THING...
MY PEOPLE
ARE KOREAN.
THAT "DAMN THING" IS JAPANESE, AND— REGARDLESS OF ITS ORIGIN—NOT MY
PROBLEM.
HERE,
LET ME
TRY.
LET'S SEE.
YOU JUST NEED
TO GET INTO THE
MENU—THERE IT
IS—AND...

THAT
SHOULD
DO IT!
GOOD
LORD...
WHASSAMATTER,
MORELLO, WERE THEY
ALL OUT OF *DEBBIE DOES STARPORT?*
FOR YOUR
INFORMATION,
I'M DOING SOME
RESEARCH.
MAYBE I
CAN HELP. I'M
SOMEWHAT OF
AN AMATEUR
XENOLOGIST...
UHHHHH...
IT MEANS
I'VE READ JUST
ABOUT EVERYTHING
I CAN GET MY HANDS
ON CONCERNING
THE ALIENS.
CAN YOU
DESCRIBE HIM
FOR ME?
WE'RE TRYING
TO GET A MAKE ON
AN ALIEN PURSE
SNATCHER.
YEAH. SHORT-
SMALLER THAN A
MUNCHKIN, EVEN-WITH
BIG EARS, WINGS,
AND NO PANTS.
SORT OF
A MONKEY/BAT/
GREMLIN LOOK.
REALLY?
THAT'S WEIRD.
NONE OF THE WINGED
SPECIES I KNOW
FIT THAT
DESCRIPTION...
SO WHAT...
PUKED ON
ME, THEN?
I DON'T KNOW.

SO LET'S SEE IF WE
RECOGNIZE OUR
WINGED FRIEND IN THIS
LOVELY DEPICTION
OF *DEBBIE DOES STARPORT...*

*SPACE. THE LAST UNKNOWN. FORTHOUSANDS OF YEARS, MEN HAVE LOOKED UP INTO
THE STARRY NIGHT, WONDERING WHAT WAS OUT THERE...*

WHO'D'VE THOUGHT,
FOR ALL THOSE YEARS,
THAT THE ANSWER WAS
"MUNCHKINS"?
I'M TELLING
YOU GUYS, I'VE
SEEN THIS VIDEO
BEFORE, AND THERE'S
NO SPECIES LIKE
THAT!

*THE HARMONY OF WORLDS. VAST FLEETS OF FASTER-THAN-LIGHT STARSHIPS,
LINKING NINE THOUSAND INHABITED PLANETS, MOONS, AND COLONIES.*

*A VAST TRADING WEB THAT UNITES AN ENTIRE GALACTIC ARM, WITH THE
ANCIENT WISDOM AND ACCUMULATED SCIENCE OF 315 SENTIENT SPECIES.*

*WELCOME TO OUR PLANET'S GUIDE TO THE HARMONY OF WORLDS, AND OUR FRIENDS
FROM THE STARS...*

...THEY CAME TO US NEARLY TEN YEARS AGO, DURING THE SUPER BOWL...

CHAPTER THREE
PLEASE TO
FOLLOWING
LIGHT OF INDICATION-
PROGRESSION-
WALKING DESTINATION.
OFFICE TOPMAN
AWAITS.
WELCOME
TO STARPORT
CHICAGO. I'M
MELANTHA MOORE, FROM
THE UNITED NATIONS
INTERSTELLAR TRADE
ORGANIZATION.
PROFIT
TO YOUR
HOUSE.
AND
TO YOURS,
CHAY'ASH.
CAPTAIN
SWOBODA.
LIEUTENANT KELLEHER.
APPRECIATION FOR

YOUR PRESENCE. YOUR
FLIGHT WAS SWIFT
AND EXCELLENT,
I TRUST?
WELL...
IT WAS
SWIFT.
YOU ARE
UNCOMFORTABLE,
CAPTAIN?
I JUST
GET A LITTLE...UH...
NERVOUS AROUND
HEIGHTS.
AH, ONE
UNDERSTANDS...
AND REQUIRES BUT
A MOMENT TO
RECTIFY.
PLEASE TO
BE SEATED.
IT IS
SUPERIOR TO
SPEAK IN COMFORT,
NAI?
UH, YEAH.
LOOK, I'LL
COME RIGHT TO
THE POINT. WE'VE UNCOVERED
EVIDENCE OF AN ASSASSINATION
PLOT AGAINST THE SKRIT TRADE
ENVOY. WE BELIEVE IT'S THE
WORK OF A GROUP CALLED
EARTHBLOOD...
THEY ARE A
RADICAL OFFSHOOT
COMBINATION OF
THE EARTH-FIRST AND
ALT-RIGHT PURITY GROUPS.
BASICALLY, THEY...OBJECT
TO THE ALIEN
PRESENCE.
OBJECT?
ISOLATIONISTS
AND BIGOTS, CHAY'ASH.
WE'SHEY ASSIAYAS NOVO TELLA NASH-TARA.
THERE'S NOT
MANY OF THEM—
NO MORE THAN

TWENTY.
THEN SO
FEW CAN PRESENT
NO TRUE DANGER TO
THE TRADE ENVOY,
NAI?
I WISH
THAT WERE TRUE,
BUT THESE PEOPLE
ARE VIOLENT AND
UNPREDICTABLE.
THEY MAY
EVEN HAVE AN ALLY
WITHIN STARPORT.
RUMOR HAS IT THAT
SOMEONE IS SUPPLYING
THEM WITH OFF-WORLD
WEAPONRY.
IMPOSSIBLE!
STARPORT
SECURITY WOULD
NEVER ALLOW
THIS!
THE
CHAY'ASH
SPEAKS
TRULY.
THE VIOLET
NHAR HAVE GUARDED

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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