

Chapter Summary - Silver Threads

Chapter 1: Golden Needles

The velociraptor-like people's defense of their planet, HOME, results in an explosion tearing space-time and allowing some of the combatant starships and Home itself to pass through subspace to unknown destinations. One ship survives a crash on a planet circling a star hidden in one of the galaxy's dust lanes. The survivors realize that the tear will produce a fold in space-time which will destroy our galaxy some five to six thousand years hence.

Chapter 2: Rogue Planet

Four thousand years later, the cat-like crew of the TAUPOIAN starship *MARCOPO* discover Home frozen in deep space. Because the STELLAR ECONOMIC COMMUNITY (SEC) pays well for information and artifacts about alien cultures, the crew is elated to find an unknown civilization, until they discover that the rogue planet is on a possible collision course with Earth.

Chapter 3: Red Sky in Mourning

After investigating the rogue planet, the SEC sends a Taupoian fleet to make contact with Earth, informing our people that the rogue planet will cause Earth's ejection from our solar system and offering assistance in the evacuation of our population, a process which will require over six hundred years.

Chapter 4: The Tartian Egg

During Earth's long evacuation, many items must be left behind. The silvery skink, PIERRE, an antique dealer from the planet PANJANDRUM, purchases some of these at auction and sells one of them, a fabulously beautiful and rare Tartian Egg, to the powerful interstellar gangster BIDIDO.

Chapter 5: The Pirates of Penjandrum

On the planet Panjandrum, SHEILA purchases the plastidroid JUAN from Pierre to help her get revenge on the gangster Bidido by conning him out of a small fortune and the starship *Marcopo* (which they rename the *Marco Pollo*.)

Chapter 6: Sedona Jack

While Christmas shopping with his mother on Earth, TOM shows that, even at an early age, he has both interest and skill

in piloting starships as he plays the virtual reality space opera game, "Sedona Jack."

Chapter 7: Raptors of the Depths

The starship *NEWTON*, carrying some of the last evacuees from Earth, is attacked by pirates and crash lands on the still-uncharted planet, New Home. The raptors save the child *CAROLYN* (Tom's girlfriend), her parents and the rest of the evacuees from starvation, converting them from dying humans to "immortal," living raptors by transferring their holographic "mind" patterns to unhatched raptor eggs.

Chapter 8: The Ring

On the planet Adondus, the wizard *AQUILLO* buries a young dragon which has died accidentally. He takes a small ring of dragon bone and, in his laboratory, discovers that the DNA in the bone, in contact with platinum, gives the wearer of the ring telekinetic and warp powers. He gives the ring to the beautiful young Adondi girl, *TAHITI*, and she uses it to disrupt an attack by the dragons on her village.

Chapter 9: Ghost Writer in the Sky

Tom, now a young man, works with two friends, the Syringee, *BAROO*, and the Zetian, *ONDOMO*, on the planet Syringo in a con-game designed separate space pirates from their ill-gotten gains while trying to find the pirate responsible for the disappearance of Carolyn and the starship *Newton*.

Chapter 10: The Winds of Spring

Tahiti wants only to become the greatest candlemaker in the kingdom and to marry the daughter of her Master. The candlemaker *ARBUTUS* drugs her while she is creating candles for a royal wedding so that he can hide stolen crown jewels in his own candles and smuggle them across the border. The wizard *Aquillo* convinces Tahiti that she must use her "magic ring," to foil *Arbutus's* plan.

Chapter 11: The Life of RyLee

RYLEE, Tahiti's mother and mistress of The Inn of the Blue Moon, closes up after her friend, *CINNABARA* (Sheila) arrives with a dramadon carcass for the cook. After a pleasant interlude in *RyLee's* bed, the two discover a plot for arson and a bank robbery. Warned by *Cinnabara*, the village constable foils the

bank robbery while RyLee and Aquillo prevent the diversionary attempt to burn RyLee's stables.

Chapter 12: A Last Farewell

After TRITTCHA'S latest molt the butterfly-like mammal is driven from her flock because her foreign scent and blonde fur wing patches now mark her as not of her flutterby flock. She eventually finds a home at Tom's research station and she discovers that her primitive intelligence improves with her psychic interaction with Tom's mind.

Chapter 13: A Many-Splendored Thing

Tom is doing biological research as a cover for his work ferreting out smugglers on Zeta 4. He receives a letter from a lawyer on Adondus telling him that he has inherited his pirate Uncle Juan del Rio's starship the *Marco Pollo*. Accompanied by the flutterby, which he has named FIDO, he leaves for town to earn enough money playing poker to buy passage to Adondus. Fido saves his life and drives off a would-be assassin. In town Tom finds that his undercover contact has been murdered and helps the police capture her murderer. The reward money allows Tom and Fido to leave for Adondus.

Chapter 14: The Phoenix

Juan awakens to find himself a prisoner in a hospital following the crash of the *Marco Pollo*. He is told that Stellar Security has been convinced that he is dead so that he can be given a new identity and his pirate skills utilized by a consortium of "businessmen." When Tom and Tahiti thwart his attempt to retake the *Marco Pollo*, Juan escapes his guards to a seedy part of town where he is hidden overnight by Cinnabara/Sheila, only to be teleported the next morning onboard the *Marco Pollo* by Tom and Tahiti.

Chapter 15: Departure

After discovering that her mother, RyLee, is human, Tahiti cannot tolerate her own existence as a half-breed and, coupled with the fact that Master Melrix's daughter has been promised to another, decides to jump from the fourth floor of the hangar where the *Marco Pollo* is being refitted. Tom talks her out of suicide and she decides to leave Adondus as a crew member on the *Marco Pollo*. After escaping Uncle Juan's attempt to retake the *Marco Pollo* they return and teleport him on board because Tom thinks his uncle can help him find Carolyn.

Chapter 16: The Voyage of the Bagel

Tom and Fido share a joint nightmare when Tom goes to bed after eating a pepperoni, spicy mustard, and dill pickle bagel. Tom becomes aware of Trittcha's true name and biological and psychic nature.

Chapter 17: Monkey Trap

Flight Lieutenant MARY SUE is a human who grew up on the streets of Adondus. Enamored of Tom, she uses the *Marco Pollo*, Bidido's greed, and the promise of both a Tartian Egg and revenge on Juan as bait in a Secret Service plan to eliminate the gangster and in her own plan to finally meet Tom. But Bidido escapes during the merciless attack on his starship.

Chapter 18: Trading Places

Although Tom does not want Mary Sue onboard the *Marco Pollo*, she convinces him that she could be useful in his attempt to find and rescue Carolyn.

Chapter 19: Jellyroll

While stopped for supplies on the planet, Ramses III, Tom and Mary Sue are rescued from Bidido's assassins by the skink, Pierre, and take him on as cook for the *Marco Pollo*. Uncle Juan then directs them to the nebular region hiding the planet where the *Newton* had been forced down.

Chapter 20: Madame Librarian

Uncle Juan guides the *Marco Pollo* to New Home City in an attempt to find information about the *Newton* and its occupants. Uncle Juan morphs into a raptor to look for information in the city's Public Library, but is interrupted by military police before he can do more than discover a newspaper article describing the burial in the far north of the occupants of the *Newton*.

Chapter 21: The Beacon

While searching the northern continent, Tahiti's ring leads them to a golden tower where Tom finds a coded message telling him that the people of the *Newton* are alive. They are taken prisoner by a raptor squad who accuse Tahiti of being a murderer.

Chapter 22: Silver Threads

Chapter 23: A Dish Best Served Cold

Chapter 24: Crack the Whip

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