

# The Hooman Saga:

## Book One

By C. C. Brower, et al.

### Book Universes Notes

*The universes of these stories can mix and merge. They've become large and complicated through their various series and crossovers. So we've begun the process of adding Book Universes Notes to each of them. This allows you to get the earlier materials that explain the character's backgrounds and abilities.*

*Also, as short stories, some intrinsic plot/character points can flash by in a single paragraph or sentence. These have been highlighted here.*

*Please enjoy.*

### Mind Timing

Some of these R. L. Saunders books are thick with satire - and this is no exception. But the dystopian world around us cries out for some relief, even if it's dark humor.

In this opening story, the women won the war of the sexes, and most men are criminals. The obvious counter-point to this is when a well-dressed, polite, white male enters an all-female club in a three-piece suit with a felt bowler - you know something is up.

This book's male protagonist (Peter) brings a very survival-oriented female (Meri) back in her timeline (not his) to before the disaster that endangered all humankind – to act and somehow avert the catastrophe that is ready to ignite. The one that forms the basis of this saga's conflict. From Mari's time, humanity was nearly wiped out as a species, but returned little wiser. Women from her "now" run things, but not any better.

Peter's time travel takes them "back" to "20-teens" L. A.

Outside of some pointed jabs at what passes for our modern culture, this book actually lays out the core premise for the Hooman Saga Book One. This biting satire might not be the best first foot forward to start out this saga, but it does lay out the challenge: *we are already living in a dystopian society and can work improve things or watch them collapse.*

There's a key quote early on that sets the stage, "Those who refuse to study their own history are doomed to repeat it." Despite the best efforts of the survivors to avoid what they "thought" turned it all wrong (ie. the supposed white male patriarchy.)

Peter's mind reading talents, as well as his ability to travel in linear time, stem from an intense study of our culture's recurring habits and actions. While she is from some two centuries later than our current time, his own future-time is never revealed.

He does point out (in Chapter Four) that if she hadn't come with him, she was due to die in an unfortunate accident, in that same room of her club, just a couple hours later.

And her own scientific-trained mind is what enabled her to make a more informed decision - *when* he pointed out a different set of values for the same data she already knew. As mentioned by another character in a parallel book universe, "Data without meaning is useless."

Given here is a sardonic definition of "news" as a "viral mental habit", one that actually obscures valuable and true data. "Social media" is described as a "temporal fad" and is, at its best, depressing.

Those pair of bad influences – news and social media – run through the Hooman Saga as a key factor in helping people become so polarized in their beliefs. Older traditions, such as found in religious and philosophic books, are found unifying.

Mari lays out the results of our current trends, "will wind up with small pockets of areas with high crime and rampant sexual diseases, plus higher taxes and lower jobs..."

Peter points out the basic problem, that almost doomed humankind as a species, was where our modern medicine created incurable diseases inside their hospitals. These victims are only sent to quarantined hospices on the peripheries of those large cities - and such plagues are released when the cities leave for the stars with their fusion-powered flight. (See "The Cities Rise" for how this happened.) The result left only tiny pockets of isolated and distrusting humanity to rebuild the human race. A few tiny genetic pools.

Their controversial (in our current age) solution was to get religions to run employment retraining agencies for all these laid-off news reporters. Where they could use their talents to expose their former employers as being "anti-religion, anti-gun, and anti-sex." That solution didn't actually prevent the cities from flying off – it only made life better outside those cities, so that humanity was able to survive in spite of the cities' actions.

So when Peter and Mari returned to her “present time”, the human culture was more balanced between the sexes and safer for the rest of humankind.

One plot hole in “Mind Timing” was that they seem to leave the plague problem unsolved. But by the sixth chapter "The Case of the Forever Cure", enough foundation is laid so that you can see that it was "a guy named Peter" who was responsible for that resolution.

The solution to the the rest of the disaster the cities created by leaving didn't occur until the last chapter of the third book in this saga (Book II, Part 2). So stay tuned.

## **The Lazurai**

Originally a standalone story, the creation of the "Lazurai" element accidentally built a solution to two plot holes in this saga. One of those has already been pointed out – the plague.

The key tips to know at this point are 1) the "Sentient Life Act", and 2) that this dirty bomb the terrorists exploded used a virus.

(If you want it all tied up in a neat package, read "The Girl Who Built Tomorrow Collection" - which explores a time-line outside the current Hooman Saga books and has set the foundation for Book Four.)

The additional abilities of the Lazurai have been explored in multiple other books, and collected in "Tales of the Lazurai" anthology, if you would like to study that book universe in its own terms. However, all later interaction with Lazurai (ie. later stories outside this Saga) bring even more abilities to light with each story...

## The Lazurai Returns

This is the sequel to the story above. In that original ending Rochelle disappeared after healing a dying woman. But when that first book was discovered to fix a plot hole, Rochelle returned in a sequel that took up her wanting a cure for her own condition – and traveling to 'Cagga to find it.

She brought various interesting talents – such as being able to imbue a non-running truck with fuel and repairs, plus installing defenses into that truck that foil roving gangs with tow trucks.

Rochelle also points out early on that she can take in raw material and transmute it into something else - an offshoot of making people sick and die from the viruses and poisons they'd been infected or injected with. (You'll note she pays the waitress with coin in chapter 2, then is turning rocks into small coins for the young kids in Chapter Three.)

This story's conflict is based on the effort to "hunt down" the Lazurai by the government. They hired freelance bounty hunters to find and round them up. All the government's efforts are futile though, as they simply don't understand what they are dealing with. As well as the government's (failed) efforts to control are only through experimentation and dissection of what they don't understand – instead of simply learning from them as fellow humans.

"Cagga" is short for Chicago, if you haven't guessed. One of the cities that rose in flight for the stars. And is also a recurring setting throughout this saga.

Here's our first glimpse of how bad is it inside these cities, despite all the internal PR. And how people survive and run their underground resistance through the soup kitchens.

An interesting note is made here: "This was the true legacy of the government testing and destruction – all those inhumane actions couldn't stop one little thing. Love. "

"Rick Decker" is a subtle tribute to the "Blade Runner" protagonist.

And Decker got a resolution that film character never achieved. As Rochelle says: *"Sure, he was sick inside. But he and I had one cure for each other. We had to learn to love, to trust, to simply co-exist and depend on each other."*

## Our Second Civil War

A lot is unsaid in this book between the lines. (It's another story by Saunders, and this means hard-edged satire – perfect for dystopia's.)

The Second Civil War was between the core cities (bi-coastal megalopolises) and everyone else. The violence was caused through their use of misinformation.

So that violence occurred within the original city boundaries and turned out to be between the left and the extreme far left.

"...Essentially, the cities were becoming even more violent, while the rest of the nation sympathized, but stayed away."

This story is about a religious-based group of people who are medic-trained and go around dressed in brown habits, called "Brownies". Pacifists, they are known for their good work (and saving lives) so are mostly left alone when they visit the cities. That, and they are mostly happy all the time.

There are some barbed comments about "diversity" and "tolerance" here, but give the basic premise for these cities secession and why. The polarized state of the population tended to have people move to areas where others believed like they did - and wanting nothing much to do with the others. Again, "news" and "social media" are the foils for this.

In this book, there is a long exploration of how the cities got this way. So it's a valuable part of the "Hooman Saga" just to lay this all down. It's noted here that 'Cagga joined the bi-coastal cities, while it nominally existed in Flyover Country.

You'll have to note the "Tolerance Edicts" here as their effect (as many government laws) had some unintended consequences, as noted in "Becoming Michelle."

The mob used state-sponsored religion to control things inside the city. The mob runs makes sure people pay their taxes and vote for who they want in office. Good old 'Cagga.

Gangs were organized by the mob to keep the peace and stop killings. (Mainly, because no one coming in meant deaths affected the bottom line of the Corp. See a small discussion of this in "Becoming Michelle".) So everyone had their territory. And the gangs were organized by identities based on minority groups - except white straights. (Satire – right?)

The gangs were fed by organized soup kitchens, which were placed at the borders of the gangs. And everyone ate on a set schedule, to keep the gangs separate.

You meet Doc and Dolly here, who show up again in "Becoming Michelle".

ABS is the single composite formed from all the media corporations that were in the cities when they seceded. And is state-run at this point. (ABS is rumored to mean "All B. S." or "Always Be Smiling" or "Always Broadcast Something". See "[For the Love of 'Cagga](#)" for an in-story discussion of them.)

The problem the Brownie (Sam) had is getting the girl he was supposed to rescue (Mary) out of the city. This was solved by having ABS to take them out on a location shoot just beyond the city limits. As noted described better in the following story, "A Sweet Fortune", the officials have shut down the city borders and don't want anyone leaving.

The trick that Sam and Mary used was to make her look like she had the Plague - which cities had no cure for.

There's a quote near the end which sums up this story: "*...freedom was out in front of us, that you had to grab hold of hope and hold it close, to never let it go. Because miracles are possible if you keep believing.*"

## **A Sweet Fortune**

Built on one line out of the preceding story – that there was a lot of wealth that the elites had out in warehouses in Flyover Country. And it was worth a fortune if they could get it inside the cities.

But only a rare few individuals could make that trip. In this case, a pair of surplus MRAPs with a long trailer in between. Because the "tolerant" urbanites used roadside bombs and weapons to "protest" by attacking the trucks bringing them their needed supplies.

(But without media coverage – who stay inside the cities – this violence is more a symptom of that city's culture than any effective "message" for change.)

There are more descriptive details here about how the cities are running themselves (into the ground.) One example is revealing that elites built plantations on the outskirts of the cities and their own uni-rail transport to get in and out.

The first part of the book describes how difficult it became to transport anything into the cities. The last part details how hard it is for anyone to get out.

One interesting point mentioned is that bitcoin survived the secessions.

## **Becoming Michelle**

More an examination of Identity and Tolerance politics. (And another biting satire.)

In order to survive, the heroine (Michelle) of this story becomes a transsexual cross-dresser (not transgender, which would be permanent.) That's her job - become just what people are expecting in a host/hostess for the Corp.

But she wound up appearing as the wrong identity at the wrong time and wrong place, and receiving near-fatal beating by a gang. They cut out her implanted ID and credit chip, leaving her to bleed out on the street.

A Brownie (Andy) saves her and the romantic plot starts in.

Her lost ID chip means she can't get a job any more, or even return to her apartment. That ID means everything.

A side element shows up, where the police are now just protecting the government types. The earlier story pointed out how they couldn't travel the streets. Here it's pointed out that if they lose their jobs, they are probably dead within a week because of the cop-haters. The media are typically two-faced in order to get their ratings.

This leaves the people outside the system to deal with the gangs for protection.

You meet Doc and see the soup kitchen again.

The in-story discussion tells how the schools have been required to be gender free - so telling someone they looked "pretty" could get you in trouble for being sexist. A person's actual physical sex was protected as private data.

You see the official and unofficial explanations for the Tolerance Edicts, which lead to the secession of the cities. (Read what you want into those...)

Michelle meets Dolly again, who used to work with her at the Corp, but had also been attacked by the gangs and left the same way.

We see how Doc lost his job and why he can't work in any usual medical position any more. Worse than his ID chip got removed. But we also find that there's a place for him in the Don's organization, although he isn't in their chain of command - once a healer...

There is a subtle cure for getting "triggered" if you want to look for it. But then, all these books are parables.

The couple again got out of 'Cagga by feigning the Plague. Another cute twist occurs here as well.

## **The Case of the Forever Cure**

This is another adventure with a strong romance structure.

And is where you learn just how the Lazurai heal. More or less. (Remember that sentient virus clue?)

The couple meets when this detective (Reg) has to break quarantine to save their technician's life. Then the head nurse (Cathy) saves his life by having him walk the babies all night, one after the other.

This is a different take on the Lazurai phenomenon, where the babies themselves can heal. A subtle point (not made obvious) is that the babies have all been cared for by these Lazurai nurses, and so the babies virulence has been changed into healing.

But they're now on the clock as the policy for any quarantine break is to pump in fatal gas, then cement over the structure. (Will they never learn?)

After Cathy reveals they are all fourth-generation Lazurai, she also explains that they avoid detection by looking and acting like everyone else.

Some sort of inside resistance organization becomes apparent when their cargo plane with the "bodies" is replaced by another. A later discussion gives an explanation is that the government is actually cooperating with them, as the Lazurai are both "their worst enemy and best ally."

There is some disagreement with this inside the government itself – you can see this in the last story in "[The Time Bent Anthology](#)". This is another parallel book universe that is Lazurai-related.

Peter (from "Mind Timing") shows up again as financing these nursing colleges in Lazurai communities and then providing these student nurses as medical volunteers to these outbreaks. But these Lazurai nurses weren't able to do much about the outbreaks in the bi-

coastal megalopolises except limit the plague's spread to just the outlying city areas.

The final chapter has Peter appear in an underground research facility where he releases the original Lazurai embedded in walls there. This incident is used in "The Arrivals" to fix another plot hole in the original Hooman Saga.

## **Ham & Chaz**

Originally, this was just research into writing in a Romance story structure. Two teens (Hami, Chaz) and their mentor (Jean). They all just happen to be Lazurai. Although the two teens aren't trained.

Jean turns out to be an original Lazurai (first generation).

Hami's cooking skills keep her showing up over and over from here on out.

Jean has to clue them in on their abilities, but this is just foreshadows later events - which show up a couple of chapters later. A street gang can't approach them without getting physically sick, but get better when they move away or let them pass.

That gang later shows up to attack the food van. And the lessons Jean has been teaching them are used to solve the situation with a non-violent method.

As the eatery businesses decided to come back (since they saw the long lines that one food truck was serving) and the community is cooperating with the police to keep the peace, their job was done.

So they packed up and drove to their new location, a "graduation present" of a saloon-turned-restaurant named "Ham & Chaz - Sandwiches, Etc." (Couldn't resist the pun.)

## **Peace: The Forever War**

Not a story as much as it is a descriptive essay. Setting the scene of a future reality based on our current political messes.

This became a core foundation for how the cities raised themselves from the surface. There were two technological feats that made this possible. The first was that the "Fisk dome" as titled here was independent of the Earth's gravity, and so was more prone to fly. The other was a fusion drive that powered that dome. As the story covers, that was solved hand-in-glove with the dome - essentially using the

radiated water under the protection of the dome (deuterium) to leapfrog into actual fusion power.

You have to compare this with the following "War Bringeth" to get all the plot holes filled.

## **The War Bringeth**

This short essay gives us more information Corp that employed Michelle (from "Becoming Michelle") and Dolly (who appeared first in "Our Second Civil War".)

They converted everyone they could into coders. And paid them in hormones like dopamine. But plugged in all the time, mostly. And this work preceded building the city walls and their secession, but continued throughout. A global operation. Massively parallel computing in hooman form. More like the Matrix.

But you also see the people who couldn't or didn't want to code (see also "[For the Love of 'Cagga](#)" for an insider's view of this).

It also showed the technology of the Fisk dome and fusion drive were both coded and shared as code through the global Corp.

Right at the end, you see how another story starts. And that ending actually was proved correct by the outcome of the moon colonies in [Hooman Saga Book II, Part 2](#).

Unstated here is the merger of all the various companies into a massive One World Corp - essentially bypassing national governments by buying them off. This also explains how they got all those domes (the ones that made it) to fly off on the same schedule (in "[The Love of 'Cagga](#)" again).

In this story is the reason for those cities taking flight - rare earth minerals needed for the electronics to run. Due to the mining on Earth (and lack of effective recycling) these are now available only on nearby planets and in other galaxies.

It also turned out that a third - and more controlling - interest in the cities was the Corp, who left the day-to-day activities of the non-coders to the Mob and government.

Meaning, this gives us a hidden enemy which can result in great conflict for Book Three. By the end of Book II, Part 2, if the Corp survived - it might have every reason to seek revenge against the people who thwarted their Grand Scheme...

## The Lazurai Emergence

You may need to review "The Lazurai" and "Case of the Forever Cure" as this is right into the original Lazurai existence. Another book is "Ghost Hunters", which explains that reference in this one.

We see Peter and Mari (of "Mind Timing") show up in the second chapter again, talking to the Lazurai in the rock.

Next, we see reference to Rochelle (from "The Lazurai" and "The Lazurai Returns") and Hami (from "Ham & Chaz"). The opening chapter speaker is Jean, also from "Ham & Chaz". The next two chapters tell his origin story, and that of the Lazurai in the rock. It also reveals that elementals *are* Lazurai - except for the very old ones she's met in traveling through the earth.

There is a more Ghost-Hunter-oriented version of these same events, called "The Spirit Mountain Mystery" This story is from the Lazurai view of those same events – and adds a lot more background.

Rochelle and Jean both meet with this original Lazurai, who's picked the name Betty as her own in Chapter Seven. They then enable Betty to discover that she can return to co-exist with humanity, be treated with respect and not hurt the humans with her virus infection.

The last chapter is Betty herself showing up at Hami's restaurant as a shape-shifting elemental, finally assuming human form to talk with them briefly – before taking Rochelle with her on an adventure – which starts in the next story.

## For the Love of 'Cagga

This is Rochelle talking in the first chapter, an introduction and mood setting. She and Betty are going to 'Cagga to save someone.

Chapter Two is about Sue's family. (Sue is the principle protagonist for both Book II parts.) Sue's mom (Jeannie) was one of those who couldn't stand to code all the time. She tells here the inside story of what it's like to be a coder as we first met in "The War Bringeth". We meet Doc again, who's visited them, but isn't able to do much for them. He just isn't able to treat them with what he can get. This section tells more about how Doc gets his medicines through his network. Ma and Doc used to work in the clinics together – before they couldn't anymore.

We then see again where ("The War Bringeth") Games tied in neatly to show the pre-"Rising" world inside 'Cagga.

Rochelle and Betty arrive in Chapter III, using their talents to shift their appearance as they come off the elevated train. Some external perception is demonstrated here, which has some connection with their assignment. And they also exhibit mental powers to persuade people. Rochelle's ability to fix machines shows up again.

"Leeters" is slang for the Elites. And shows the class and caste system that has developed in the cities.

Their talents of healing are on display. And young Sue shows some talents of her own - that show up again through Hooman Saga Book II, Part I.

The final countdown before lift-off ("Rising") commences. Joe is going to guide them on their way out. As a parting gift, Betty removes Jeannie's jack and turns it into silver coins. In order to save Joe from radiation dangers, they simply read from his mind and get the route they should take to safely leave (radiation doesn't bother Lazurai). They send sent him back to his family.

Then Betty and Rochelle moved as only elementals could - showing up miles away to watch the theatrical rise of 'Cagga into the skies. This also includes one of the few points where it's mentioned that some cities didn't make the lift off.

## **The Cities Rise**

A short essay, included only in this anthology. The key point here, other than giving views from people not on-board those flying cities, was that the domes they took with them were powering the shields around the incurably ill. When the cities rose off the surface, those local shields lost power. And so the plagues started their march.

## **The Arrivals**

The basic idea behind this was to answer the question of where the "elementals" came from in the Hooman Saga – specifically. We knew they were Lazurai (with the example of Betty, in "The Lazurai Emergence"). But there are other unanswered questions about them.

In the final chapter of "Case of the Forever Cure", we saw many "submerged" Lazurai emerge and simply assume elemental forms, but as above, some would still be able to make people sick and die if they were untrained. So far, like that "Case of the Forever Cure" book above, they simply left it at "by the third generation, they'd managed to turn their 'gift' into healing."

Here, we now see they have ability to "become" the other people and mutually transfer knowledge and understanding. It also enables them to transfer new abilities - even at a distance.

In this story, the two main protagonists also became healers. From their example, it may be that untrained Lazurai are only dangerous in human form, but this is far from settled.

There is also an additional reference to another origin story about the Lazurai – "Dark Lazurai" where the fuller story of the twins in the original story is revealed by them. That story also shows the damage an untrained Lazurai can do.

The first parts of "The Arrival" were originally published as "Snow Cave" and "Snow Gift" - and always seemed incomplete. This now brings those characters together in a Romance story structure and tells the rest of their story.

This now replaces these two stories as part of "The Hooman Saga: Book One", which now brings a greater wholeness to the whole Hooman Saga adventure.

## **When The Wild Calls**

While a great adventure story, the key point this examines is the effect of elementals in human-animal relationships. Or, more correctly, shape-shifting elementals mentoring sentient humans and animals. This is mostly a fun story, and shows how elementals are guiding the human culture back – this time in greater balance with the other species on this planet.

There is one interesting point where one of the elementals expands Kelly's ability to directly communicate with the pups. As said before, the more stories are written about the Lazurai-elementals, the more we learn about what they can do.

This is another stepping-off point where any number of stories could be told. As it currently stands, those stories would be part of Book Four of the Hooman Saga.

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