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**IP:** The Fugitives of Borthan

**Authors:**

**Related :** Robert Silverberg's COLONIES

**Book Status :** Under Development France

**Logline :** On planet Borthan, human settlers established the Covenant, which teaches that the self is to be despised, and forbids anyone from revealing their innermost thoughts or feelings to another.

**Genre :** Adventure, Sci-Fi, Futurist, Redemption, Drama, Exploration, Literary Adaptation, Forbidden Love

**AV Types :** Live Action Series, Live Action Mini Series, Feature Film

**AV Demographics :** PG-13, R, TV-14, TV-MA

**Part of larger Universe :** Robert Silverberg

- Characters :**
- **Kinnal Darival:** second son of the Septarque, the ruler of Borthan. Descendent of John Borthan. He is a regulator at the airport and validates all incoming arrivals for trade. Kinnal is secretly in love with his bond sister, Halum. (Bond siblings are an important part of Borthan society – through the union of clans, each person has a bond sister and bond brother with whom they can share their thoughts and feelings more freely than with anyone else. While not biologically related, the incest taboo among them is as strong as with actual siblings). The Septarque believes that Kinnal would be a better ruler than his older brother, Stirron. Kinnal is a good man, determined to do what's in the best interest of Borthan and its people. He does not seek power, but rather wants to live a simple life. While Kinnal respects the Borthan doctrine, he refuses to follow it blindly. He feels the original concepts developed by the first settlers have been carried to too extreme of lengths. He strongly questions whether unions between bond siblings should be forbidden. His defiance towards the Borthan religion makes him completely reconsider his beliefs upon meeting Gabriela Schweiz, a woman from Earth. He will end up writing a memoir spreading his new vision of the Borthan doctrine all over the planet. Through his journey with Gabriela he will discover what is the self.
  - **Gabriela Schweiz** (makes an appearance in CHILDREN OF BELZAGOR): a woman from Earth who goes to Borthan to try to sell literary classics she has transposed into the native language of the planet. Having suffered too much on Belzagor, she wishes to detach herself from the Self like the inhabitants of Borthan to get rid of her pain. She hopes to settle there and convert to the dominant religion, convinced that renouncing the use of "I" (John Borthan's doctrine) is the solution to stop her suffering. She falls in love with Kinnal and their child becomes the heir to Borthan's throne.
  - **Halum Helalam:** bond sister of Kinnal, she is aware of their mutual attraction and does everything she can to deny it as it is forbidden by Borthan's morals. She is an outstanding fighter. Unlike Kinnal, she deeply respects the Borthan dogma and authority.

# HUMANOIDS

- **Stirron:** eldest son of the Septarque, he is impatient to succeed his father for the throne but his claim to power is threatened by his infertility. Unlike his brother, Kinnal, he is power hungry and determined to sit on the throne. His vision of the Borthan doctrine is radically different from Kinnal's (and their father's) – Stirron thinks the laws should be tougher and wants to close the planet's borders to protect it from the harmful influence of strangers who could call into question the dogmas he believes in.
- **Noim:** bond brother of Kinnal who accompanies Kinnal and Gabriela on their journey. He is extremely loyal to Kinnal and would do anything for him. He ends up sacrificing himself so that Gabriela can live.
- **Glin:** Stirron's advisor and his bond brother. He is a vile and cruel man, set on doing everything in his power for Stirron to obtain the title of Septarque.
- **The Tutors:** residents of the Condorit, they are dressed in purple or black cloth and wear furs. Most of them have taken a vow of silence and had their tongues cut out to ensure they never break their vow.
- **The Purger:** confessor to whom it is – theoretically – possible to say everything, everything that is forbidden in this world. Borthans tell them about any deep desire which may go against the Borthan doctrine, and Purgers are supposed to set them back on track before they act on their desires.

**Book Plot/Twist :** In a world where it is forbidden to say “I” or “me,” Stirron, the oldest son of the Septarque (the sovereign ruler of Borthan), is impatient to succeed his father but fears that his lack of an heir will cost him the throne. If Stirron's younger brother, Kinnal has children before him, the position of Septarque will go to him. But Kinnal is far from getting married. He is in love with his bond sister, Halum (bond siblings are an important institution in the society – while not biologically related, incest among bond siblings is as big of a taboo as among actual siblings). Such a union is forbidden on Borthan so Halum goes to a monastery to give Kinnal a chance to find a wife to have a family with. The Septarque and Halum both believe that Kinnal would make a much better ruler than his older brother, Stirron. When the Septarque is killed in a hunting accident, Stirron decides to eliminate his younger brother rather than run the risk of seeing Kinnal crowned in his place at the end of the traditional year of mourning. Kinnal is forced to flee and decides he must find Halum. He is accompanied by his bond brother, Noim and a woman from Earth, Gabriela Schweiz who is fascinated by the language and doctrine of the planet. Halum refuses to go with Kinnal as she believes doing so will lead to innocent deaths. Kinnal continues on with Noim and Gabriela further south where they settle incognito. On the journey Gabriela and Kinnal fall in love and are now expecting a child. Kinnal has learned from Gabriela to say, “I,” which is a terrible blasphemy on Borthan. Stirron's men track them down. They kill Halum and Noim. Kinnal manages to kill the assassins. A few months later, Kinnal gets in touch with his brother Stirron and says he will renounce the throne in exchange for the reintroduction of “I” in society. Stirron refuses and has Kinnal sentenced to death. Kinnal manages to kill Stirron before he is killed himself. Gabriela's child becomes Borthan's heir and embodies the hope of a new society.

**AV Key Attributes :**

# HUMANOIDS

- From sci fi legend, Robert Silverberg, a Grand Master of Science Fiction who has won four Hugo Awards and six Nebulas
- Based on the Nebula award winning book A TIME OF CHANGES which was also nominated for a Hugo and Locus award
- Has multiple layers of an adventure story, a love story, and a story of self-discovery
- Themes of religious persecution, what is self, challenging the social order in standing up for what you believe in, concept of fraternity (with bond siblings), forbidden love, power, succession, worship of society and nationalism
- Unique society that banishes the Ego and technology, establishes blood siblings and bond siblings
- Abuse of power and the resulting impact on society
- The possibility of coexistence between societies with radically different morals (Earthlings vs. Borthans)
- Crossover character of Gabriela Schweiz who also appears in THE CHILDREN OF BELZAGOR