

# LUCAS FLINT



**AN EPIC SUPERHERO  
MULTIVERSE  
ADVENTURE**

**FACE ROSES THE  
MULTIVERSE**

**HEROES OF THE MULTIVERSE  
#3**

# CHAPTER ONE

FOR THE second time in as many days, Ashley Jason—better known as the superhero Crafter—fell through the endless abyss between universes.

This was definitely not a hobby she'd taken up recently. The first time Crafter had ended up in that situation, she and her boyfriend (and fellow superhero) Barrett 'Dragon Prince' Marcus had been banished from her home universe by an interdimensional criminal who apparently knew (and hated) her dad.

The second time—that is, right now—Crafter was in a similar predicament. This time, however, she'd been on a dimension-hopping ship that could cross universes, along with five other heroes from across the multiverse, when *another* dimension-hopping ship attacked and destroyed theirs.

*What are the odds of that happening two times in one day?* Crafter thought as she fell. *I really do have the worst luck.*

That was about the only thought that Crafter had as she fell at about a million miles per hour. Bright white lights rushed past her, giving her glimpses into other universes, although she didn't know who or what she was looking at. Nor did she have time to look into them.

That was when a bright light shone below her. Looking over her shoulder, Crafter saw a portal similar to the ones around her open right below her.

Fear gripped her heart at the sight of the portal. Crafter had no idea where that portal might take her. The multiverse was a vast place where a person could end up literally anywhere. For all she knew, that portal might deposit her at the bottom of the Marianas trench or in the heart of the sun.

But Crafter could not control her trajectory. She just reached out, hoping to somehow grab her boyfriend's hand. She did grab *someone's* hand, but before she could see who it was, they fell into the portal ...

And landed in a body of water with a *splash*.

Crafter plunged beneath the water. Her first thought was that her worst fears were confirmed and they'd been dropped into an ocean miles away from home. She instinctively swam upward, kicking hard through the water, until her head broke through the surface and she took in a big gasp of warm summer air.

"Help!" Crafter screamed, thrashing about in the water. "Help me! I'm drowning! Someone, help!"

"Um, dude?" said a familiar surfer dude voice not far from her. "It's not that deep."

Crafter blinked. She looked to her right and saw a guy who looked like he'd just finished touring with his rock band standing beside her. His red mohawk and jacket were sopping wet, but he looked fine aside from that.

"Busker?" said Crafter. She felt her feet touch the muddy ground and realized he was right. "If we're not in the ocean, then where—?"

A quacking sound interrupted her and a mallard swam by her, followed by about a dozen ducklings quacking happily after their mother.

"I think we're in a pond in a park somewhere," said Busker, looking around, "although I don't recognize it. Do you?"

Crafter, feeling sheepish about her earlier panic, rose to her full height. Wringing water out of her brown hair, Crafter looked around at their surroundings and realized Busker was right.

They'd landed in a pond in the middle of a park. The pond was ringed by walking and bicycling paths, with pretty trees dotting the landscape. She even spotted a gazebo and playground on a raised hill overlooking the pond, the sound of birds chirping and ducks quacking filling the air. She did not see any other people, however.

“It looks familiar somehow, but ...” Crafter shook her head. She looked around wildly, her eyes darting this way and that. “Where’s Barrett? I grabbed his hand before we fell into the portal. He should be here.”

Busker pursed his lips. “Um ... not to pop your bubble, Crafter, but that was *my* hand you grabbed. Which I thought was ‘cause women just can’t keep their hands off me, but I guess you thinking I was your boyfriend makes more sense.”

Crafter felt her heart sink into her stomach. If Dragon Prince really wasn’t here with them, then he could potentially be *anywhere* in the multiverse.

*And we have no way to contact him, Crafter thought, or find him, for that matter,*

“Help!” another familiar voice called out suddenly. “I’m drowning!”

Startled, Crafter looked over to see a black guy in blue spandex sitting in the pond not far away from them. He was violently splashing in the water while gradually ‘sinking.’

“Mr. Space?” said Crafter, turning to face him. “Is that you?”

Mr. Jason Space, an agent from the Interdimensional Elite Agency (or IEA for short), suddenly looked up and raised a hand toward them. “Crafter, Busker! Save yourselves! Do not worry about me. I’ll manage somehow. Just tell Captain Galaxy I—”

“Dude, the water is, like, a foot deep,” said Busker. “See the ducks?”

Mr. Space blinked. He looked at the duck family that had swum by Crafter’s face earlier before abruptly standing up, splashing more water everywhere. “Well, that’s good news. I was sure we’d been dumped in the Pacific Ocean or something.”

Crafter almost rolled her eyes, but then she heard a squeaking sound in her backpack. Quickly swinging her backpack off her shoulders, Crafter unzipped it and saw the supermice looking up at her with their big, red eyes. “Are you guys okay? Were you hurt?”

“Do you still have those supermice?” asked Busker in disbelief. “I forgot about those.”

Crafter gave Busker an offended look. “Yes. They were actually really helpful when we were trying to save Trickshot. I just want to make sure they’re not hurt.”

Busker shook his head. “Whatever, lady. I think we have bigger problems to worry about than supermice. Like how long it’s going to take me to wash the pond stench out of my jacket.”

“Or, you know, finding out where the others went and how to get everyone back together in time to stop Karos,” Mr. Space said as he sloshed through the water toward them. “That is also important.”

Crafter gave Mr. Space a hopeful look. “Can’t you contact the IEA and ask them for help?”

Mr. Space scratched the back of his neck. “Normally, I *would*, but, um, my earcom broke in the crash.”

“Your earcom *broke*?” Crafter said. She suddenly looked at Busker. “What about yours?”

Busker tapped his ear and winced. “Nope. Nothing. Just static.”

Desperate, Crafter tapped her own earcom, only to get a similar whiny, static-like sound that forced her to turn it off. “This is not good. If we can’t contact our friends, how the hell are we supposed to stop Karos? Or even get home?”

“You’re the multiverse expert here, Spaceman,” said Busker to Mr. Space. “Got any ideas?”

Mr. Space stroked his chin. “Maybe if I had access to an IEA lab with the right equipment, I *might* be able to repair the earcoms. Then Captain Galaxy and I could coordinate our locations, get the team back together, and maybe stop Karos.”

Crafter’s eyes narrowed. “I don’t like that ‘maybe.’”

Mr. Space shrugged. “I mean, no guarantees? Karos undoubtedly has the complete Trinity Blade now. That makes him almost too powerful for even the IEA to fight. Don’t want to say we *lost*, but—”

Crafter sighed in frustration. She looked up at the sky, wondering where in the multiverse Dragon Prince might be, though she was worried about Karos and the Trinity Blade, too.

*I hope Barrett is at least safe, Crafter thought. But if we really are stuck here ... then I might never see him again.*

That thought nearly crippled Crafter's resolve. She had been a lot more confident earlier in the moments before the destruction of the *Iron Wind*, but that had been when the team had been together and they still had access to the IEA's technology.

Now, however, she wasn't so sure.

Busker tapped Crafter on the shoulder and pointed at the sky. "What is that?"

Snapping out of her thoughts, Crafter looked up in time to see a small black dot in the sky. At first, she assumed it was probably a helicopter or drone someone was flying around the park, but then it became obvious that the black dot was coming toward *them*.

Not merely coming, however. It appeared to be hurtling toward them uncontrollably, a red-and-black blur that moved with the speed of a falling meteor.

"Duck!" Mr. Space called out. "And not the ducks in the pond!"

Crafter, Busker, and Mr. Space dropped into the pond, but there was no need to. The red-and-black blur rushed by several feet above them and smashed into the gazebo atop the hill, sending chunks of concrete and wood flying everywhere. The duck family nearby quacked in fear and rushed toward the nearest beach, waddling into some nearby bushes for safety. The supermice also squeaked in alarm, causing Crafter to draw them closer to her chest to calm them down.

Looking up the hill, Crafter saw a column of smoke rising from the shattered remains of the gazebo. It looked like a missile had struck the structure, leaving a strong stench of smoke that stung Crafter's nostrils.

"The hell was that?" said Busker, who was also looking up at the destroyed gazebo. "Did we end up in a war zone or something?"

That mention of a war zone briefly brought Crafter's mind back to the universe where she and Beams had met an evil version of herself. She worried, for a moment, that they had somehow ended up back there before she heard movement in the gazebo. Then someone burst out of the debris and floated into the air from the ruins of the gazebo.

He appeared to be a superhero. Clad from head to toe in black spandex with red lines running up and down his costume, red electricity crackled and sparked off his body. Despite having crashed into the gazebo at a million miles per hour, the superhero looked largely unharmed, save for bits of concrete on his shoulder and some dirt on his face, which he paid no attention to.

"What is he doing here?" said Crafter in awe.

"What is *who* doing here?" said Busker. He glanced at the hovering superhero. "You know him?"

Crafter nodded, unable to take her eyes off the superhero floating above them. "Yes. That guy is my dad, Bolt, the greatest superhero in my universe."

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