

Now Children

By Malcolm Twigg

“Now children, who can tell me when the third Galactic War broke out?”

“No, Johnny, it wasn’t last Saturday night ... Well, I don’t care what your father says - and it’s very wrong to incite species hatred – poor Mr. Klatchner will have to go to a lot of trouble to rebuild his bar. Yes, I know he’s got lots of arms, but that’s hardly the point, is it?”

“Yes, that’s right Zanphorasta, it was in GC 2423 ...”

“... yes, it was Johnny. If we took the trouble to read our history books we would know wouldn’t we? Yes, we would ...”

“... and it was in the winter-time was it, Zanphorasta? Well, now, strictly speaking there are no seasons in space, Zanphorasta are there? Oh, I see. Standard Zanphorastan Time. Well, that only applies to Zanphorasta, of course ...”

“... yes, I know that Zanphorastans believe there **is** only Zanphorastan time, and that nothing else matters but it doesn’t make sense, does it Zanphorasta? No, it doesn’t. It really doesn’t... and it was two o’clock in the morning was it, Zanphorasta? Yes, thank you for that ... Oh! On a Friday? My, we have been reading our history books, haven’t we?”

“Yes, we know you
another Zanphorasta

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“... it isn’t really a silly custom Xankle 213, Zanphorastans know who they’re talking about – it’s the way they pronounce ‘Zanphorasta’. Well, I suppose everyone thinks that theirs is a better system, don’t they Xankle 213? Sorry? Oh, Xankle 214 – oh dear, I’m really going to have to sit you two apart you know. You all look the same to me.”

“Well, yes, I suppose Clones are the same, Xankle 21...something, but it is very confusing. Yes it is! Well it confuses me anyway! Now, back to the Galactic War...X’lttl’x! What are you doing? Well, please don’t!”

“In the Third Galactic War the main causes of the conflict ... was that really necessary Johnny? You’ve made little Kakkakayak cry now - you know how sensitive she is. No, she did not start it! Well, all right, Kakkakayak’s people did start the war, but it wasn’t Kakkakayak’s fault was it? She wasn’t even hatched then. Now kiss and make up. And don’t pull that face!”

“We all know now, don’t we, that racial tensions were the primary ... X’lttl’x! - Oh, I’m sorry Deborah, did I splash you? - X’lttl’x! Get down off that ceiling at once! I don’t care if it