



Jumper Cable (Xanth, No. 33)

By Piers Anthony

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In the thirty-third thrilling escapade in Piers Anthony's rousing Xanth fantasy series, an adventurous arachnid named Jumper must assume human form to save the enchanted realm from a cosmic peril.

A cataclysmic battle between two all-powerful Demons has severed a mystical connection that joins Xanth to our own world. The key to restoring it is hidden within a cryptic prophecy that Jumper discovers when he is suddenly transformed from spider to man. As he sets out to discern the prophecy's meaning, he gathers about him a half dozen alluring damsels who do their best to help him solve the riddle while vying for his attentions.

But a seductive siren and her demonic consort have determined to use their wiles to lure Jumper and his lovely companions away from their urgent mission. In a madcap adventure that is alternately harrowing and hilarious, they soon discover that danger, deception, and even true love may be found where they least expect it.

In *Jumper Cable*, master storyteller Piers Anthony spins a wild and witty web of wonder that is sure to captivate fans of fantastic adventure everywhere!

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Piers Anthony is one of the world's most popular fantasy authors and a *New York Times* bestseller twenty-one times over. His Xanth novels have been read and loved by millions of readers around the world. In addition to his bestselling Xanth books, Anthony is the author of a series of historical fantasies called *The Geodyssey*, that makes the broad sweep of human history into very personal stories. Piers Anthony has a devoted fan following, and he daily receives hundreds of letters and emails from them. Piers Anthony lives in Inverness, Florida.

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PROPHECY

Jumper was going about his business as usual, hunting succulent bugs to eat. He had happened upon a puddle of ointment, and knew there would be flies in it. He was just about to nab a fat fly, taking care not to get stuck in the slimy stuff himself—whereupon a hook swung down from the sky and caught him by the scruff of his chitin. It hauled him up, up, and away, dizzyingly.

Then it dropped him into another scene. This was strange beyond his experience. The ointment was gone, and with it the delectable fly. The plants were thick-stemmed and woody, reaching into the sky, sheathed in clusters of green leaves. Some were small green blades hugging the ground. There was a bird, but no threat to him because it was so small as to be no bigger than a mite. Weird!

Jumper suffered a tweak of memory. His great-to-the-nth grandfather, the original Jumper, had had experience with such a realm. Where was it?

There was a scream. Jumper reacted before he thought, getting there in a single bound. Jumping was of course his nature; he could cover many times his body length per jump, and make a perfect landing. He was, after all, a free-ranging spider.

It was—his distant tenth-hand memory tweaked—a man, grabbing a girl. Girls needed protecting. So he extended a foreleg, caught the man by the scruff, heaved him up, and threw him away. The man landed in a prickly bush, yelped, looked at Jumper, yelped again, and fled.

“Xx, xxxxx xxx!” the girl cried, getting to her two thick feet.

Jumper clicked his mandibles in confusion. He did not speak girl talk. He was trying to figure out what a girl was doing in this scene. Girls were properly of the giant realm.

She gazed at him, then went to the side and fetched something squirmy. She brought it to him. She held it up with one of her forelegs.

Jumper reached out a foreleg and took it. It seemed to be a writhing nest of greenish leaves. What was he supposed to do with it?

The girl made a gesture as of putting something in her mouth part. Oh—this was edible? He lifted it to his own mouth, to taste it. But the thing immediately squirmed into his mouth and filled it with twisting strands.

“Oh, thank yew!” the girl exclaimed, exactly as before.

“You’re welcome,” Jumper said.

Then he paused, astonished. Not only had he understood her, he had replied in her own language. How could that be?

“It’s the tongues,” the girl said. “I gave yew the gift of tongues. So we could talk.”

“Tongues?” he asked, perplexed. There was something funny about the way she talked, without any clicking of mandibles; could this explain it?

“It’s a kind of plant,” she clarified. “It enables a person to relate to any language. Yew saved me from getting abused by that village lout, and I wanted to thank yew. So I had to enable yew to talk. Yew can spit out the

tongues now, if yew want.”

He considered that. “First, can you tell me where this is? I am not familiar with this scene.”

“Well, yew woodn’t be. Yew’re a spider, aren’t yew? A big one. Yew must be from far away. This is Xanth proper.”

“Xanth proper! That’s where my ancestor was.”

“I dew knot know about him, but yew came in on a narrative hook. I saw it drop yew here. I was so surprised that I was knot careful, and that lout caught me. Then yew rescued me. I really dew appreciate that. Most creatures woodn’t have bothered.”

“A narrative hook?”

“It’s a device to catch someone up in a story right away. Once it hooks yew, yew can’t leave the scene.”

Jumper wasn’t satisfied with that, so he changed the subject. “Why wouldn’t someone else have bothered to help you? You seem like a nice girl, for your species.”

“My species. There’s the rub. Yew see, I’m knot really a girl.”

“You’re not? You look like one.”

“From the front.”

“You seem to have a nice front.” She was bare, and shapely. He was remembering the descriptions handed down to the descendants by the original Jumper. Girls were supposed to have thin forelegs, thick hind legs, and fleshy cones on their torsos. She did.

“But I’m really a woodwife.”

“Wood? Trees are wood. They have wives?”

“No, silly! I am made of hollow wood. See.” She turned around.

Jumper stared. From the back he saw that she was indeed hollow. Her round limbs and cones were empty, as was her head. Her shaped front outside was all there was of her.

She completed her turn and faced him again. “So you see, I am something else. I wish I could be a real girl, so I could make some real man happy, and not be stalked by village louts who dew knot care what’s inside as long as they can poke it from outside. But that simply is knot my nature.”

“I ... see,” he said, orienting about three of his eight eyes on her. It didn’t help; she remained the shell of a woman.

“And that is knot the worst of it. Com Pewter wants to make me into a Mother Board to fix his obsolescence. Because my animation is all in my wood shell. I could knot stand being shut up like that, so I’m fleeing civilization. Knot that I was ever part of it; I am an innocent woodland creature.”

“I understand. I wouldn’t like it either.”

“But that’s no concern of yewrs. Yew saved me this time, and I’ll be more careful next time. I’m really grateful. Is there any favor I can dew yew in return?”

“Can you tell me how to return to my own realm?” She shook her head. “Yew can knot return, once yew’ve been hooked. Yew have to finish the narrative.”

“But I was about to catch a succulent fly!”

“I’m sorry about that—what’s your name?”

“Jumper.”

“I’m sorry, Jumper. I’m Wenda. Wenda Woodwife, a fantasy female. I dew knot know why the narrative hook caught yew and put yew here; maybe it was just an accident. But yew’re stuck in my world for the duration.”

“But I’m not comfortable here!” That was an under statement, but he wasn’t sure how to fill it out to full strength.

“I understand, I think. I’m knot comfortable being a fake girl; yew’re knot comfortable being in an alien environment. Too bad we can knot solve each other’s problems.” Then she paused, looking at him. “What is that?”

“My carapace?” he asked. “I wear my skeleton on the outside. Not that I have much of one. I am mostly soft body and hard legs.”

“No, that thing stuck to yewr back.” She stepped forward and reached for it. It turned out to be a square paper with markings on it.

“I didn’t know about that,” he said, surprised.

“It’s like a label, identifying yew.”

“I know who I am. A lost spider.”

She studied it. “I think yew had better read it, Jumper. It seems to relate to yew.” She handed it back to him. Jumper took it with one foreleg and oriented an eye on it. To his surprise he found he could read. The tongues really were versatile.

PROPHECY

A Hero unfurls the Bra & Girlls

The Good Magician will set the mission

Like the Ogre beware rogue her

Win Heart and Mind but be not blind

The Unicorn betrays the scorn

And Button Ghost unmask the Host.

Jumper looked up. “This makes little if any sense to me. What hero? What girls? What Ogre? What Unicorn? What Ghost?”

“I dew knot know. It may be part of your problem I can knot solve.” She smiled. “Maybe it is part of the tangled web yew weave to confuse people.”

Jumper folded the mystical note and tucked it under a fold of his carapace. “I think I could solve your problem, at least. All you need is girl clothing and someone to watch your back to make sure no one else sees it.”

“Clothing! Woodwives dew knot wear clothing.”

“So it would make you seem more like a real girl.”

Her little mouth dropped open. “It wood, woodn’t it? I never thought of that.”

“Well, you’re a forest creature. It shows in your speech.” She considered. “Clothing makes me think of the antistreaking agent.”

“The what?”

“It is something to put in wash water. It messes up the fauns and nymphs something awful, because then they can knot streak.”

“I don’t understand.”

She paused, assessing his incomprehension. “It is complicated. But I might be able to solve yewr problem, or tell yew how to. I thought it was just chance that brought me here right when yew arrived, but maybe that hook had a reason to drop yew near me. Because maybe we can help each other. What yew need to dew is go ask the Good Magician, as yewr Prophecy suggests.”

“I don’t believe I know him, or even where he is. Would he know the answer?”

“He knows the answer to everything. All yew have to dew is ask. Only then he makes yew pay for it with a year’s service, or equivalent. So maybe that’s knot for yew.”

Now Jumper considered. “If the alternative is to stay here in this foreign habitat, I might be better off with that year.” Then he reconsidered. “Except for one thing.”

“One thing?”

“Spiders of my type live only about six months.”

“But yew’re much bigger now. Shouldn’t yew live lon ger? At least in this realm? Maybe six months in yewr realm is sixty years in this one.”

He wasn’t sure. “Maybe so....”

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Nancy Sanchez:

This Jumper Cable (Xanth, No. 33) usually are reliable for you who want to be described as a successful person, why. The main reason of this Jumper Cable (Xanth, No. 33) can be among the great books you must have is actually giving you more than just simple studying food but feed an individual with information that probably will shock your before knowledge. This book will be handy, you can bring it all over the place and whenever your conditions in e-book and printed kinds. Beside that this Jumper Cable (Xanth, No. 33) giving you an enormous of experience like rich vocabulary, giving you trial of critical thinking that we all know it useful in your day activity. So , let's have it and luxuriate in reading.

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Reading a book tends to be new life style in this era globalization. With looking at you can get a lot of information which will give you benefit in your life. Using book everyone in this world can easily share their idea. Books can also inspire a lot of people. A lot of author can inspire their particular reader with their story or maybe their experience. Not only the story that share in the textbooks. But also they write about advantage about something that you need instance. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your young ones, there are many kinds of book that exist now. The authors in this world always try to improve their skill in writing, they also doing some exploration before they write on their book. One of them is this Jumper Cable (Xanth, No. 33).

William Marquis:

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation or even go to the outside with them household or their friend. Did you know? Many a lot of people spent these people free time just watching TV, or playing video games all day long. If you wish to try to find a new activity here is look different you can read a new book. It is really fun for you personally. If you enjoy the book that you simply read you can spent the whole day to reading a publication. The book Jumper Cable (Xanth, No. 33) it is rather good to read. There are a lot of those who recommended this book. They were enjoying reading this book. In the event you did not have enough space to bring this book you can buy the actual e-book. You can m0ore easily to read this book from a smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book offers high quality.

Daniel Carter:

Playing with family within a park, coming to see the ocean world or hanging out with good friends is thing that usually you might have done when you have spare time, in that case why you don't try thing that really opposite from that. Just one activity that make you not sense tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you have been ride on and with addition of knowledge. Even you love Jumper Cable (Xanth, No. 33), you can enjoy both. It is great combination right, you still need to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh occur its mind hangout men. What? Still don't get it, oh come on its referred to as reading friends.

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