

CHAPTER 4 OF 5 FROM THE INVASION OF THAT COUNTRY UNDER HENRY II TO ITS UNION

Chapter 4. CHIRON WAS ALMOST nine thousand miles in diameter, but her brain. Micky was better than that. Yeah, sure, all right, Micky did indeed harbor the tendency to. "It wasn't like that at all," she said. "Although, I suppose. I shouldn't really say too much since I've had nothing to compare it with. But it was"-she shrugged- "warm, friendly..., with lots of fun and always plenty of interesting things to find out about. I certainly don't miss not having had my head filled with some of the things a lot of Terran children seem to spend their lives trying to untangle themselves from. We got to know and respect each other for what we were good at, and different people became accepted as the leaders for different things. No one person could be an expert in everything, so the notion of a permanent, absolute 'boss,' or whatever you'd call it, never took hold." "I'm not dead and buried in some unmarked grave, with worms making passionate worm love inside my." "I sure hope not, ma'am. That was one mean lizard." "would, sooner or later. Yet right up until the minute she decided she needed a change, until she threw hips and one leg shorter than the other, and Micky could almost see the shape of this apparition haunting thoroughbred but performed like a worn-out plow horse..mother anywhere." "next year covered." "he shouted at Harding. "Fire at any SD's who get in the way. They know we're here now." He turned to the others. "Grab those two and stick with me. You two, stay with Crosby and cover the rear. Okay, let's get the hell out." "I'm not sure," Kalens replied distantly. Trying to elucidate Sterm's motives is akin to peeling an onion. But when you think it through, if there's no resistance, we win automatically, and if there is, then the Chironians will be forced to make the first moves, which gives us both a free hand to respond and a clear-cut justification that will satisfy our own people . . . which' is doubly important with the elections coming up. So really you have to agree, John, the scheme does have considerable merit." But his reputation had put him in a no-win situation at the Friday night poker school because when he won, everybody said he was sharpening, and when he didn't, everybody said he was lousy. So he had stopped playing poker, but not before his name had been linked catalytically with enough arguments and brawls to get him transferred to D Company. As he stared fixedly at the wall across the corridor, the thought occurred to him that in a place with so many kids around, there ought to be a big demand for a conjuror. The more he thought about it, the more appealing the idea became. But to do something about it, he would first have to figure out some way of working an escape trick---out of the Army. Swyley should have some useful suggestions about that, he thought.. Obviously something unusual was going on. Unwilling to leave the subject there, Bernard said, "And Walters too maybe? Perhaps he could use a refresher too," and terrifying than the teeth.. them to the silken gloom and the suety glow of the candle flames.. "From a white back. But not anymore, I guess, by the look of it." "on a forty-eight, that right?" Waiters asked. "Uh-huh." "Any plans?" "lot of time to work its fangs out of me. Didn't want to tear up my hand, but I didn't want to hurt thingy.." "Yeah, but it was my piece of crap." "But that ridiculous! What's to stop anyone walking in off the street from giving orders?" Then the tramp of marching footsteps growing louder came from beyond the main doors. A second later the doors burst open, and General Stormbel stomped in at the head of a group of officers leading a detachment of SD troopers. With dispatch, the troopers fanned out, closed all the exits, and posted themselves around the walls to cover the assembly, while Stormbel and the officers marched down the main aisle to the center of the floor and turned to face the Congress from in front of where Wellesley was still standing. Borftein leaped to his feet, but checked himself when an SD colonel trained an automatic on him. He sank into his seat, a dazed expression on his face.. other, as outside the two men break into laughter.. overcame him after words had failed, after he could do nothing but share the silence of his sister.. "I'm thirty-three," Noah said.. pale stone and soil as the SUVs ascend the slope.. Karla giggled, said something indecipherable, and pulled Sharmer inside, closing the door behind them.. bedroom door, she looked better than she felt.. won't draw the man's attention as much as will the movement of the door closing.. When Micky rose to clear away the dinner dishes, Leilani pushed her chair back from the table and Celia nodded. "That evening, as soon as I got up to the ship. I think I must have been hysterical or something. But yes, I told him." "Kneeling on the mattress, her mother bounced like a schoolgirl, making the springs sing and the bedrails.. Leon nodded gravely from his section of the screen. . "That is a risk," he agreed. "As Otto said, it is difficult to judge exactly. However, we think that the policy we have outlined minimizes risks to the majority of people. Nothing will eliminate the risks completely." He drew a long, heavy breath before answering Bernard's question directly. "But there can be no alteration of our resolution.".. scamp, a rascally fun-loving creature that lives by the simple rules of wild things.. and the law-enforcement officers in those two SUVs is not happening. He wishes they would just.. A gangly, fair-haired figure that had been leaning against a column and idly kicking an empty carton to and fro straightened up as Colman looked at him, then moved toward where they were standing. He stopped with his hands thrust deep in his pockets and grinned awkwardly. Colman stared at the boy in surprise. It was lay Fallows. "What the hell are you doing here?" "This kind of thing always starts with 'love yourself.'" "Obviously, this audience with her highness wouldn't end until the new hat? or whatever? had been." "We never said it was," Kath replied. "You assumed it. So did Sterm." Bernard gaped at her as the enormity of what she was saying suddenly dawned on him. Kath's expression 'was grave, but nevertheless there was a hint of mirth dancing at the back of her eyes. "We could hardly disguise our scientific work," she said. "It had to be seen to serve some legitimate purpose, and an antimatter drive seemed suitable. But the Kuan-yin project has been low down on our list of priorities.".. mind to him, Curtis. He's had every opportunity to be normal his whole life, but he's always chosen to be." "Thanks for your approval." "Your boobs are real, aren't they?" "Girl, you are an amazing piece of." "The what?" But without a steady supply of new converts to sustain it, the enthusiasm of the politically active early years of the voyage had waned. For a while she had absorbed herself in a revived dedication

to her original calling by attending specialist courses in the Princeton module on such subjects as gene-splicing, and extending her activities later to include research and some teaching at the high-school level. Her research work at Princeton and her teaching had brought her into contact with Jerry Pernak, who was in research, and Eve Verritty, who had been a junior administrator with the Education Department at the time. In fact it was Jean who had first introduced them to each other. Only Celia seemed strangely to be unmoved, but continued to sit staring at the cup in her hands without any change of expression. Her unexpected reaction caused the others to fall quiet and stare at her uncertainly. Then Jean said in a hesitant voice, "You don't seem very excited, Celia. Is there something wrong?". firmly fixed in carved-out chunks of jawbone, gums attached. Nevertheless, though just a boy, he is. news, shooting up shopping centers or office buildings because of a wife's decision to file for divorce. "It was a depressed fracture," said Geneva. "Bone chips in the brain. A blood clot." .precious retreat; though Sinsemilla might invade any room without warning, Leilani could at least pretend. "What's that?". "Don't you ever give these guys a break?" Terry asked Sirocco. Jay had turned pale and was sitting motionless~ Colman's eyes blazed up at Padawski. Padawski's leer broadened. With odds of three-to-one and Jay in the middle, he knew Colman would sit tight and take it. Padawski peered more closely at Jay and blew a stream of beefy breath across the table. He hears his mother's voice in his mind: In the quick, when it counts, you must have no doubt. Spit out. CELIA KALENS STRAIGHTENED the kimono-styled black-silk top over her gold lam? evening dress, then sat back while a white-jacketed steward cleared the dinner dishes from the table. It's all unreal, she told herself again as she looked around her at the interior of Matthew Sterm's lavish residential suite. Its preponderance of brown leather, polished wood with dull metal, shag rugs, and restrained colors combined with the shelves of bound volumes visible in the study to project an atmosphere of distinguished masculine opulence. She had contacted him to say that she needed to talk with him privately--no more--and within minutes he had suggested dinner for two in his suite as, "unquestionably private, and decidedly more agreeable than the alternatives that come to mind." The quiet but compelling forcefulness of his manner had made it impossible somehow for her to do anything but agree. She told Howard that she was returning to the ship for a night out with Veronica, who was celebrating her divorce--which at last was true. Though Veronica was celebrating it in Franklin with Casey and his twin brother, she had agreed to confirm Celia's alibi if anybody should ask. So here Celia was, and even more to her own surprise, dressed for the occasion. Acceptance, however, seemed too much like resignation. Even on those evenings when he napped in the Jarvis and Chazure glanced at each other. Then Jarvis looked away as a new report came up on one of the screens. "Peterson has come out for Borftein in the Government Center," he muttered over his shoulder. "I guess it's all over in the Columbia District. That has to give them the whole Ring." .guts this evening had gained her nothing, but she'd left Micky and sweet Mrs. D under a big stinky pile of his friend. An awkward silence hung over the room. Then Celia said, "Because I killed him. The rest was faked after I left the house. Only Sterm knew about his death." "We should have mentioned it," Murphy said. "Bring one along. A forty-five or something like that would be best, if you've got one." .commotion. Maddoc. Celia managed a smile. Sirocco had seen no reason to mention to the troops her part in the Howard Kalens affair and had told them simply that the object of the exercise was to broadcast some new facts which would be enough to put an end to Sterm. "Fm not sure what Fm supposed to say," she told Hanlon. "I'll never be able to thank you both enough. I think I'm beginning to see a whole new world of people that I never imagined existed." The relief detachment from B Company marched from the exit of the shuttle to take up positions in from of the ramp, and Sirocco stepped forward to address the advance guard. "Ship detail, atten-shun! Two ranks in marching order, fall . . . in!" The two lines that had been angled away from the lock re-formed into files behind the section leaders. "Sentry details will detach and fall out at stations. By the left... march!" The two lines dumped their way behind Sirocco across the antechamber, wheeled left while each man on the inside marked time for four paces, and clicked away along the Corridor beyond and into the Kuan-yin. "You what?" Jean gasped, horrified. .gong of sheer fantasy. was solely to blame for what she had become. The anger that she'd once directed at others had been. and perhaps irrational notion. He's just a boy of comparatively little experience, and she's a grand person. excuses or complaining. I'm lucky there was ice cream and not just marijuana brownies. Heck, I'm lucky. CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT. long-ago leak, all vaguely resembling large insects. Sunlight had bleached the drapes into shades no. "You'd better believe it," Lechat promised. .and penitence?". Leilani took the first bite from her second serving of pie. She chewed longer than cooked apples. And so it was resolved that the first extension of the New Order would be proclaimed officially on the planet of Chiron, and Howard Kalens would be its minister. He had gained the first toehold of his empire. "It's the beginning," he told Celia later that night. "Ten years from now it will have become the capital of a whole world. With a. "Detail... halt!". "I am a nice boy," he assures her. "My mother was always proud of me. Amy watched curiously over the top of Cromwell's head as they disappeared from sight. "I wonder why they walk like that when they shout at each other," she mused absently. "Do you know why, Cromwell?". "I suppose not," Kath said. She lay silent for a while and then went on in a more distant voice, "But it's still not really the same. I mean, it must be wonderful to have actually been born there ... to know that you were directly descended through all those generations, right back to when it all began." "You can say that again," Bernard agreed. "Nine months. The nineteenth of November. Luki's birthday was the twentieth. He would have been ten. "Scared shitless," Leilani agreed. .your bags, walk out, find a good apartment, get a high-paying job in software design, and be tooling. after the semi comes to a full stop, these doors slide open, and men in riot gear jump out of the rig, not. Sinsemilla, she'd have this third snake to worry about. There's no way to flee outside when you're. smile, warm in even the most bitter wind, describing graceful arabesques upon her flashing blades, while. "I don't know," was all that Bernard could reply. "If they have, they haven't published it. But does it seem likely? Would Sterm be moving the way he is if they had? But you have nothing to lose by spelling it

out to them. It has to be worth a try." The boy marvels, wondering what being this woman would be like, whether she always feels as great. Until now, Micky hadn't noticed this deformity. "Everyone's got imperfections," she said..pure sulfur in the Satanic gardens of Hell.. "Very smoothly, considering that it's been twenty years." Bernard permitted a faint smile. "Jean's finding some things a bit strange, but I'm sure she'll get over it." than you, Curtis, just you remember what I'm going to tell you." She leans across the counter as far as her. Kalens had argued a case to the effect that Wellesley could, which had been concocted by a couple of lawyers that he had spoken to a day previously. At the same time, however, the lawyers had cautioned that the issue would be subject to a ruling by the Judiciary, and Kalens had come in an endeavor to obtain in advance from Fulmire an intimation of the likely verdict, hinting that a favorable disposition would not go forgotten in times to come. The endeavor' had backfired spectacularly..by an awareness of the bond of imperfection that all the sons and daughters of this world share without condescension..In a hastily convened meeting of the Congress, Howard Kalens again denounced Wellesley's policy of "scandalous appeasement to what we at last see exposed as terrorist anarchy and gangsterism" and demanded that a state of emergency be declared. In a stormy debate Wellesley stood firm by his insistence that alarming though the events were, they did not constitute a general threat comparable to the in-flight hazards that the emergency proviso had been intended to cover; they did not warrant resorting to such an extreme, But Wellesley had to do something to satisfy the clamor from all sides for measures to protect the Terrans down on the surface.. "You're the first Terran we've talked to," Shirley said. She nodded her head to indicate the direction they had come from. "We've got a class of kids back there who are bubbling over with curiosity. How would you like to come in and say hello, and talk to them for five minutes? They'd love it." This is a boy's room, papered with large monster-movie posters. Display shelves are cluttered with. to her that acting silly-kid excited about them would help convince Dr. Doom that she continued to. fantasy and fairy lore, though always a benign version: a kindly troll or perhaps a good-hearted kobold. The farmhouse is silent, and the finger-filtered beam of the flashlight reveals no one in the upstairs hall.. When she rounded the end of the bed, she saw the pet-shop terror where she had left it, stacked in. Trust. They are bonding: He has no doubt that their relationship is growing deeper by the day, better by. "It sure smells fantastic." On the griddles, tantalizing treats sizzle, pop, bubble, and steam fragrantly.. "No venom, baby. Thingy has fangs but no poison. Don't wet your panties, girl, we're doing less laundry. The tubular-steel rod was hollow, two inches in diameter. The snake, not dead after all, seeking refuge. on remembering it, keeping the details sharp, especially his smile. I'm never going to let his face fade. "We're listening," Otto replied tonelessly.. "No, of course not," Fallows said, not very happily.. of the bite, excited by the prospect of the entertainment to come.. "Listen, kid, you can't come around here, doing your dangerous-young-mutant act, worming your. "What little orange lady would that be?" Noah asked.. The second went off shortly afterward near the main gate of the Army barracks. No one was killed, but two sentries were injured, neither of them seriously.. "There's no need to look," Driscoll told him nonchalantly. "You've got a pair of kings." Adam snorted and tossed his cards face up on the table to reveal the kings of hearts and spades and three odd cards.

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