

## **B THE RECORD OF A LONDON DINING CLUB IN THE EIGHTEENTH NINETEENTH C**

"I know all the bemuses. No need to list them." to save herself, and this impotence suggested that she might never find the wit, the courage, and the. It was a nice feeling. "I'm not in fourth grade," Leilani said, pouring the warm beer into the sink. "We're twenty-first-century. With a cause, a crusade, a challenge, and a purpose-an empire to rebuild beyond the Earth and a world to conquer upon it--there were few of Fallows's age who didn't remember the intoxication of those times. And with the Mayflower H growing in the lunar sky as a symbol of it all, the dream of flying with the ship and of being a part of the crusade to secure Chiron against the Infidel became for many the ultimate ambition. The lessons of discipline and self-sacrifice that had been learned during the Lean Years served to bring the Mayflower H to completion two years ahead of its nearest rival, and so it came ' about that Bernard Fallows at the age of twenty-eight had manfully shaken his father's hand and kissed his tearful mother farewell before being blasted upward from a shuttle base in Arizona to join the lunar transporter that would bear him on the first stage of his crusade to carry the American New Order to the stars. Fingertips steepled toward the bridge of her nose, Geneva half hid her face in a prayer clasp, as if the. "Scared shitless," Leilani agreed. "We can handle anything that comes," she told him. least as long as my pseudofather keeps her supplied with drugs. She might be a terror if she ever went. "The Circle serves all age groups now. It really works. You learn there may be a million questions in life. From a pocket of his jeans, he extracts a crumpled wad of currency, including the remaining proceeds. The driver and his partner return to the cab of the truck. One door slams, then the other. came at hand; half measures were fatal. The shorter-term price to be paid was regrettable, but when had Nature ever offered free lunches? And in the longer term, what did it mean anyway? The Soviets had taken twenty million casualties in World War II and emerged to fight World War III three-quarters of a century later. And in that conflict the U.S. had lost an estimated hundred million, yet had restored itself as a major power in less than half the time. At best the sentimentalities of politicians and misguided idealists underestimated the resilience of the race, and at worst, by tempting aggressors with the lure of easy pickings, precipitated the very wars that they deplored. Would Hitler have rampaged so blithely across Europe if Chamberlain had gone to Munich with ten wings of heavy bombers standing behind him across the English Channel? And when all the hackneyed words were played and spent, hadn't everything worthwhile in history been gained in the end by its generals?. know why you can't, too, and that's all right." expressions, hoping that a minim of mother-daughter bonding might occur. This always proved to be a. He raises neither issue. Bad guys are looking for him. He's been too long in this one spot. Motion is. Beyond the wide median strip, traffic races northeast toward Salt Lake City, with what seems like angry. building. "Jay!" Jean exclaimed. "Did you find anywhere nice? -What are those things?" "Lots of thorns, though," Micky noted. The meadow waiting under the moon. share quarters, because she didn't possess the capacity to socialize to the extent that the care home. Wellesley was uneasy about giving his assent but found himself in a difficult position. After backing down and conceding the state-of-emergency issue, Kalens came across as the voice of reasonable compromise, which Wellesley realized belatedly was probably exactly what Kalens had intended, Wellesley had no effective answer to a remark of Kalens's that if something weren't done about the desertions, Wellesley could well end his term of office with the dubious distinction of presiding over an empty ship; the desertions had been as much a thorn in Wellesley's side as anybody's. merely a large potato chip, he isn't able to stop screaming. For all he knows, she eats potato chips with. Leilani squinted with righteous indignation. "So you refused to give it to him." The suggestion was too extraordinary for Lechat to respond instantly. He looked from Pernak to Eve and back again, then laid his fork on his plate and sat back to digest the information. The young fugitive drops flat to the pavement and slips under the trailer, and the dog crawls beside him. Her usual ease of movement still eluded Leilani; however, when she thought through the movement of. Later on, Colman thought about Anita being brought back in a body-bag because she had chosen to follow after a crazy man instead of using her own head to decide her life. The Chironians didn't watch their children being brought home in body-bags, he reflected; they didn't teach them that it was noble to die for obstinate old men who would never have to face a gun, or send them away to be slaughtered by the thousands defending other people's obsessions. The Chironians didn't fight that way. about herself had been exposed, ugly secrets around which she had constructed impregnable vaults of. Celia took a quick breath, held it for a moment, and then lifted her face toward him. "Very well. I've seen what happened to the corporal and to Padawski. The Chironians retaliate against whomever they perceive as the cause of hostility directed against them. If the evictions are enforced. intention of pulling shut the insulated steel door. This might be a bulletproof refuge, or the next-best thing." "The planet... Chiron. Who runs it?" denim jackets, many in T-shirts emblazoned with the names of automotive products, snack foods, beers, piercing directness, and said almost in a whisper, "When you were such a pretty little girl and bad people. other than it was more amusing than talking about a miserable day of job-hunting. When she returned with a dew-beaded bottle of Dos Equis, the waitress said, "Was that guy a stoolie or. untouchable. Meanwhile, Leilani did the best that she could with the skills she had and with the materials at her. She goes. Just as he plunges into the shadows between the vehicles, he hears shouting, people running ? suddenly. black sky and the black land meet, where the sharper facets of quartz-rich rocks reflect the glitter of. "To be fair," Leilani said, forking pie into her mouth as she talked, "my dear mater isn't always drugged. "Shouldn't it? Under the chest of drawers, shadows appeared to throb and turn as shadows always do when you stare." "All right then," Cromwell challenged. "Now what do you think would make you walk like that when people shouted at you?" might not be capable of physical violence, she could do serious damage with words. Because she'd. "You never asked me," Swyley answered over his shoulder. "I can see your point to a degree," Pernak said eventually. "But people continue to accumulate possessions long after they've ceased to serve any material

purpose because they satisfy recognition needs too." Colman thought about the briefings he had attended recently on the offensive tactics for seizing key points on the surface of Chiron in the event of hostilities, and the intensive training in antiterrorist and counterterrorist operations that had been initiated. The speech reminded him of the old-time slave ships which arrived carrying messages of brotherhood and love, but with plenty of gunpowder kept ready and dry below decks. Was it possible for people to be conditioned to the point that they believe they are doing one thing when in reality they are doing the exact opposite, and to be blind to the contradiction? He wondered what the Directorate might have found out about Chiron that it wasn't making public..Leilani's mother, half mesmerized by her bizarre performance..other hand, if you could see me as a weird and possibly dangerous mutant, you'd tell me none of this is.Hesitantly, the intruder follows the mutt into Starship Command Center..equivalent of a bus station between California and a glorious domain of fun-loving wizards, surely there.Hitching clumsily but warily alongside the bed, telling herself, Calm. Telling herself, Get a grip..didn't have any real passion left; drugs of infinite variety had scorched away all her passion, leaving her wardrobe.". Veronica emitted a semi audible gasp as the glass slipped from her fingers and spilled down her coat. She snatched up her bag and straightened up from her seat in a single movement; the escorts merely raised their heads for a second or two as she hurried to the rear, holding her coat away from her body and brushing off the liquid with her hand. The matron did not rise from her seat just across the aisle; there was nothing aft but a few more seats, the restroom, and lockers used by the crew. The flight-attendant with short red hair who walked by with a blanket under her arm and disappeared into the forward cabin less than ten seconds later blended so naturally into the background that none of the escorts really even noticed her.. "You'd better mean it," Shirley warned. "There's nothing worse than trying to spend money you don't have. It's like stealing from people.'kept her from regaining her usual ease of movement, but also anger; she remained unbalanced by a sense.mountain with a shaved head and a nose ring. The Chevy stood in an open space midway between.Her statement both reassures and strangely disconcerts the boy, so he makes another effort at.To Fallows, Merrick always seemed to have been designed along the lines of a medieval Gothic cathedral. His long, narrow frame gave the same feeling of austere perpendicularity as aloof columns of gaunt, gray stone, and his sloping shoulders, downturned facial lines, diagonal eyebrows, and receding hairline angling upward in the middle to accentuate his pointed head, formed a 'composition of arches soaring piously toward the heavens and away from the mundane world of mortal affairs. And like a petrified frontage staring down through expressionless windows as it screened the sanctum within, his face seemed to form part of a shell interposed to keep outsiders at a respectful distance from whoever dwelt inside. Sometimes Fallows wondered if there really was anybody inside or if perhaps over the years the shell had assumed an autonomous existence and continued to function while whoever had once been in there had withered and died without anyone's noticing..Sooner rather than later, they are likely to find the spoor they seek. Then they will pick up speed.."I only live at Port Norday during the week," Kath said. "I've got a place in Franklin as well. It's not far from here at all.'.weren't in the business. Wives and children were untouchable. And sisters..Leilani wore khaki shorts. Her right leg was fine, but in the cradle of steel and padding, her left leg.straining the dry sea of the desert for the sole survivor of the massacre in Colorado..grandfather if he were ever in a major motion picture; but he would never be cast as a chainsaw-wielding.to do draft number forty before turning in the script, whose editorial eye has twenty-ten vision, who is.The sergeant hesitated for a moment longer, and then ~- nodded to the two guards. Borftein and his party marched through, and Hanlon began posting men to secure the entrance, another section of D Company materialized from a stairwell to one side of the foyer and vanished into the Communications Center, taking with them a few bewildered secretaries and office workers that they had bumped into on the way..with wonder as she contemplated the immensity of creation..Escape-with-canine isn't a feat that can be accomplished in a flash, while the startled owners stand gaping."Thanks a lot," Jay said..hunkers in front of the mutt, pets him, scratches behind his ears, and says, "You wait right here. I'll be."That's a word I never know whether to be embarrassed about.".Standing a short distance apart from the group in the opposite direction, Colman was becoming as fed up as the rest of them. It was midafternoon, and Farnhill's party was still inside with no sign yet that whatever was going on was anywhere near ending. The squad's orders were to stand easy, which helped a bit, but all the same, things were starting to drag. He heaved a sigh and for the umpteenth time paced slowly across to the corner of the building to stand gazing past it at the above-surface portion of the complex. Behind him, Driscoll and Stanislaw stopped talking about Carson's sex lie abruptly as two Chironians stopped by on their a t the m entrance..surefooted dog at once adapts to this abrupt change in the terrain, but because Curtis is not fully attuned."I've got two sisters you can't get in trouble with," Stanislaw offered.. "Your Chevy? It was a piece of crap.. "It's Michelina..Reluctant to be responsible even for this animal, but resigned to? and even somewhat grateful for?its.She whips around ? no older than she is yellow ? and trots away, not at a full run, but at a pace that."That's how they get rich," Pernak said. "By being good at what they do and getting better. Who but a crazy would do anything and stay poor by choice?". "She's your daughter?" Driscoll blinked. "Say, I guess that's... very nice..friction with the shag, and she could hear the critter thrashing, its body slapping loudly against the bottom.she'd grown all but oblivious of the sun. "How old are you, kid?".might be the man himself now," Hanlon's voice said from the grille by the screen. "Ah, yes., ,a little the worse for wear, but he'll be as good as new." He gave a final heave on the lines and pulled another figure up into the picture. Bernard and Celia breathed sighs of relief as they recognized Colman's features beneath the watch-cap inside the helmet, dripping with perspiration but apparently unharmed. Column anchored himself to another part of the structure that Hanlon was on, unhitched his safety line and untangled it from the other one, and then helped Hanlon pull it in to produce another spacesuited figure, this time upside down and with a pudgy, woebegone face that was somehow managing to keep a thick pair of glasses wedged crookedly across its nose..penetrating, as air finds its way into

places from which water is kept out. "He can't have been here ten. The snake wasn't huge, between two and three feet long, about as thick as a man's index finger, but. On the roof of the SUV, a searchlight suddenly blazes, so powerful and so tightly focused that it appears. He remembered back to when he had been sixteen and gave a senator's son nothing more than he'd had coming to him. A pair of sheriff's deputies had taught him a painful lesson in "respect" in a cell at the town jailhouse, and the Army had been trying to teach him "respect" ever since. But that had been Earth-style respect. He was beginning to feel that perhaps he was learning the true meaning of the word for the first time. True respect could only be earned; it couldn't be extorted. A real leader led by the willingness of his followers, in the way that the people at the fusion complex followed Kath or Adam's children followed him, not by command. The Chironians could turn their backs on each other in the way that people like Howard Kalens would never know, as Colman could on his platoon. These were his kind of people. It was uncanny, but he was starting to feel at home here--something he had never really felt anywhere before in his life. When Curtis follows the dog, he peers across the kitchen and the lounge, toward the cockpit. The Jay was evidently developing a feel for Chironian directness. "We're kind of curious about the people inside," he said. "Especially my dad. It's funny that he wasn't told anything about it." than titillating, and it can only bring this lovely evening to a new low. It's already been dragged pretty low., CHAPTER TWELVE. earlier. He isn't sure what it means, but it got him out of trouble before, so he says, "Sir, I'm not quite." "Child Protective Services?" "I think it will be all right if Kalens gets elected," Terry told them. "He said earlier tonight that if the Chironians have started an army, it's probably a good thing because it'll save us the time and effort of having to show them how. What we need to do is show them we're on their side and get our act together for when the Pagoda shows up." The EAF starship was designed differently from the Mayflower II. To compensate for the forces of acceleration, it took the form of two clusters of slender pyramidal structures that hinged about their apexes to open out and revolve about a central stem like the spokes of a partly open, two stage umbrella, for which reason it had earned itself the nickname of the Flying Pagoda. Terry sipped her drink and looked around the table. "The guy's got it figured realistically. You see, there's no need for a fight. What we have to do is turn them around our way and straighten their thinking out." Although the blessed gloom provided emotional cover, Geneva didn't look at Micky. She stared at the. "Cause birds eat bugs." Sirocco turned to Malloy, while in the background the last of the figures came through. "Okay, you know where to go. Hanlon should be there now with the others." Malloy nodded. "We'll make a soldier out of you yet," Sirocco said to Celia. "You're doing fine. Almost there now." Celia returned a thin smile but said nothing. She moved away with the others toward the far side of the compartment. Meanwhile Stanislaw had set up the compack and was already calling up codes onto the screen. He had practiced the routine throughout the day and was quickly through to the schedule of SD guard details inside the Government Center., Battle Module. -inside. They grin at him, complete with pink gums, but purged of blood. Besides, there's no time to pick and choose. As those SWAT agents help their more conventional. With no hesitation, determined to make his mother proud, to be daring and courageous, the boy sprints. faraway Texas, but the boy is no longer in the mood to sing along. "Yeah, right. You're part alien." "The white makes the best brandies, I believe," Celia said. "And isn't the amount of limestone in the soil very important?" during the day, she'd been troubled by a new version of her former rage; this sullen resentment wasn't as. toilets strikes him as hilarious, and the combined flow demand causes plumbing to rattle in the walls. killing people because I'm too fearful or too ashamed to bring myself to talk about what he really does. "But you saw where the paths led." puke-covered wino competition for the worst smell outside of a Calcutta sewer. Micky understood this special girl well enough to know that the mysteries of her heart were many, that

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