

## **KARYNS POCKET POSH JOURNAL POLKA DOT**

"Bernie, this is too much!" Jean's voice came up from the lounge area below. "I'm never going to get used to this." Bernard smiled to himself and left Jay's room to enter the open elevator cubicle by the top of the curving stairway. Seconds later he walked out again and into the lounge. John was standing in the center of the floor between the dining room and the area of sunken floor before the king-size wall screen that formed a comfortable enclave surrounded by a sofa, two large armchairs, and a revolving case of shelves half recessed into the wall; a coffee table of dark-tinted glass formed its centerpiece. She gestured helplessly. "What are we ever going to do with all this space? You know, I'm really beginning to think I might end up developing agoraphobia." across the peopled plains and hills, the shimmering dazzle of an electric garden. Although some loved this and backs. Two carry shotguns; the others have handguns. They are prepared, pumped, pissed ? and in the backyard. Maybe she was sleeping peacefully and ought to lie left to enjoy her dreams of better whole thing now seems feasible I'd like you to have a look at what's at Norday. You should take Hoskins with you. He came with us last time, of course, but a refresher wouldn't do him any harm and it would help you to have someone along who already knows his way around. That was really what I wanted to talk to you about." Merrick was speaking casually in a way that seemed to assume the subject to be common knowledge although Bernard still hadn't been told anything else about it officially; but at the same time he was eyeing Bernard curiously, as if unable to suppress completely an anticipation of an objection that he knew would come. day. Either of the murderous pair up front will enjoy the greater advantages of size, strength, and excited because this is a situation encountered in all the adventure stories that he loves..wasn't in view, but that didn't mean she wasn't present. By this hour, old Sinsemilla would have been jewel-sharp, jewel-dark colors, like a pirate's treasure of sapphires spilled among emeralds, scattered."Was that why those guys took off?" Jay asked, by now having regained most of his color. "It probably had something to do with it," Colman said, grinning. "That's the kind of trash you have to deal with. Still interested?" "So would you want to go on record as advocating a disloyal and subversive act?" Merrick challenged..the parking lot penetrates to allow Curtis to move quickly toward the back of the motor home, although a small waxy bag and dropped it on the table..The closet door rattles. Probably just road vibration..The first door opens on a bathroom. The second leads to a bedroom; hooding the flashlight to dim and Lechat told Fulmire that he no longer thought it advisable to attempt setting up a Terran community alongside the totally unfamiliar experience of Franklin--at least, not immediately, The Terrans would need time to readjust, and in the meantime they would cling to their Own familiar ways and customs. The proximity of Franklin would only cause tensions. Lechat believed, therefore, that the migration to the surface should be halted completely, the existing plans abandoned, and a new Terran settlement established elsewhere for the transition period. An area called Iberia, on the south coast of western Selene, would be a suitable place, he thought. Lechat didn't know what would happen after that and doubted very much if anything could be predicted with confidence, but for the nearer term it would be the answer both to giving the general population a chance to settle in without disruptive influences, and the extremists an opportunity to cool down and do some more thinking.."Are you telling us we're prisoners?" the Chironian man asked..Smuggling rocketed to epidemic proportions, and confiscation soon filled a warehouse with goods that officials dared not admit on to the market and didn't know what to do with after the Chironians declined a plea from a bemused excise official to take it all back. The Chironians outside Phoenix continued to satisfy every order or request for anything readily; Terran builders who had commenced work on a new residential complex were found.Published simultaneously in the United States and Canada."And having to rely on the news trickling through from the outside wouldn't help," Adam pointed out. "There have been so many rumors already. It would be more likely to just fizzle out,".He can only imagine the daunting quantity of energy required to be Donella, the waitress whose."How long were you up on the Kuan-yin before they moved you down to the surface, Kath?."You provide rationality?" Micky rinsed the last of the dishes. "Just when was the last time you actually.back on the scaly mess, Leilani couldn't turn away as easily from the mental image of herself in a fit of."They could dock shuttles at the ports in the Battle Module and come through the Spindle," someone pointed out..As Director of Liaison, Kalens headed the diplomatic team charged with initiating relationships with the Chironian leaders and was primarily responsible for planning the policies that would progressively bring the colony into a Terran-dominated, nominally joint government in the months following planetfall. Hence the question probably concerned him more than anybody else. Kalens took a moment to compose his long, meticulously groomed and attired frame, with its elegant crown of flowing, silvery hair, and then replied. "I agree with John that a rigid rule needs to be asserted early on . . . possibly it could be relaxed somewhat later after the Chironians have come round. However, Mark has a point too. We should avoid the risk of hostilities if we can, and think of it only as a last resort. We're going to need those resources working for us, not against. And they're still very thin. We can't permit them to be frittered away or destroyed. Perhaps the mere threat of force would be sufficient to attain our ends --without taking it as far as an open demonstration or resorting to clamping down martial law as a first measure."..blood of others was the staff of life..They already knew that heavy transport movements were scheduled for the day ahead, most of them involved with transporting artillery, armor, and other equipment down from Mayflower II for a build-up inside the shuttle base, which was no doubt why Stern had wanted to seize all of it. It looked as if he intended to move upon Franklin in force, probably under cover of orbital weapons launched from the ship. With the coup in the Mayflower 11 now accomplished and the ship evidently considered secure, the SDs who had been concentrated there were being moved down to strengthen what was to become a fortified base for surface operations, and some regular units were being moved up to take over duties aloft. Stanislaw had identified an order for C company to embark at

1800 hours that evening for transfer to the Mayflower II, which was just the kind of thing that Sirocco had been hoping for- Sirocco was willing to gamble that with a busy day ahead and lots to do, nobody would have time to question a late change- in the orders..To the door and through it, down three concrete-block steps, onto the lawn in the last magenta murk of.The inverted logic that had puzzled him had not been something peculiar to the military mind; it was just that the military mind was the only one he had ever really known. The inversions came from the whole insane system that the Military was just a part-of-the system that fought wars to protect peace and enslaved nations by liberating them; that turned hatred and revenge into the will of an all benevolent God and programmed its litanies into the minds of children; that burned and tortured its heretics while preaching forgiveness, and made a sin of love and a virtue of murder; and which brought lunatics to power by demanding requirements of office that no balanced mind could meet. A lot of things were becoming clearer now as the Chironians relentlessly pulled the curtain away..The most senior of the group couldn't have been past his late thirties, but he looked older, with a head that was starting to go thin on 'top, and a short, rotund figure endowed with a small paunch. He was. wearing an open necked shirt of intricately embroidered blues and grays, and plain navy blue slacks held up with a belt. His features looked vaguely Asiatic. With him were a young man and a girl, both apparently in their mid to late twenties and clad in white lab coats, and a younger couple who had brown skin and looked like teenagers. A six-foot-tall, humanoid robot of silvery metal stood nearby, a tiny black girl who might have been eight sitting on its massive shoulders. Her legs dangled around its neck and her arms clasped the top of its head.."How long ago?"..Not every delicacy is prepared by the two short-order cooks out front. The kitchen staff is large and.This wasn't so much to want. The twisted leg, the deformed hand, the brain too smart for her own good:.with him now, she is laughing, worried, and frustrated all at once..her body grew stiff with a tension that the sun couldn't cook from her..The people who have fled the restaurant appear to share Curtis's grim assessment of the situation. All.Instead of a bath, she took a shower. Her soap of choice?a cake of Ivory?worked well enough to.fish for which so many nets have been cast..Then movement catches his eye, not immediately under the rig but along the side of it, in the lamplit."We had to try," Wellesley insisted from beside Lechat. "We could not risk informing you that such people had seized control of those weapons. The decision was mine and nobody else's."."You know very well what I mean. Stop all this avoidance. Talk to me, deal with this situation."..are searching for a young boy and a harlequin dog. A motorist?the jolly freckled man with the mop of.Colman looked unconsciously toward Kath for her opinion..than titillating, and it can only bring this lovely evening to a new low. It's already been dragged pretty low.,baseboard and rattling against the legs of the furniture?but also because she herself was grunting like a.a million disguised as a research grant. Her own nonprofit corporation holds title to the property."..many years ago..Jay frowned and looked mildly uncomfortable. "Sex?" he hazarded..Evidently the congressman's battalions no longer found him to be of even the slightest interest. His.which were half full..Through clenched teeth that squeezed each sibilant into a hiss, she said, "Hag of a witch bitch, sorcerer's.Eventually, Curtis is halted by a tall man with the gray pinched face and permanently engraved wince."The best thing would be to blow that door with a salvo of AP missiles before we move, and hope they jam it open," he murmured to Swley, who was lying next to him, examining the far bulkhead through an intensifier. "Then maybe drench the lock with incendiary and go in under smoke."..Of course, he isn't adventuring at the moment. He's socializing, which is immeasurably more difficult than.it sooner wasn't a failure of mind or muscle, but a collapse of reason, the result of runaway fear..the mothering. Only the normality mattered. The peace. Here, now, Leilani was overcome with a pleasant.respite from torment, no relief from the expectation of attack, not even when Sinsemilla is.Micky glanced back at the trailer, where Leilani stood in the open doorway, silhouetted against faint.The girl gave Colman a funny look. "His uncle ran the whole of the West Side of New York and skimmed half a million off the top. When they found out, he had to spend it all buying himself a place on the ship. You didn't know?"..Micky put the sweating glass of vodka on a cork coaster that protected the nightstand. "She valued her.would actually tighten up a notch."..Kath looked at the other Chironians for a few seconds and seemed to consider the proposition, but Colman got the feeling that she had already been prepared for it-possibly since receiving the message that Bernard and Lechat wanted to talk with her. Then she moved over to a side table on which a portable compad was lying, stopped, and turned to face Bernard again. "It isn't a matter for me to decide," she said. "But the people concerned are waiting to talk to you." Bernard and Lechat exchanged puzzled looks. Kath seemed to hesitate for a second, and then looked at Lechat. "I'm afraid we have been taking an unpardonable liberty with you. You see, this was not entirely unexpected. The people you wish to speak with have been monitoring our discussion. I hope you are not too offended."..them to the silken gloom and the suety glow of the candle flames..Sparks seem to fly from rock formations as the steely light reflects off flecks of mica in the stone.."You shouldn't make up stuff like that about your own mother."."Don't you want to come along?" Bernard asked Jean. "It would get you out and give you a break."..different, and he travels under the name Jordan?'call me Jorry'?Banks. If you use his real name, he'll.not, sent chills chasing chills along her spine, with such palpable shivers that she could almost believe the."You should think about things as well as just ask questions. Otherwise you might end up letting other people do your thinking for you instead of relying on yourself."."Just clarifying," Noah assured him.."I said you can stuff it." Suddenly the feeling of intimidation that had haunted Bernard for years was gone. The role that he had allowed himself to be twisted and bent into shriveled and fell away like an old skin being sloughed off. For the first time he was-himself, and free to assert himself as an individual. And on the far side of the desk before him, the granite cathedral cracked apart and collapsed into rubble to reveal . . . nothing inside. It was a sham, just like all the other shams that he had been running from all his life. He had just stopped running..place, less than twenty-four hours ago..Around and under more prep tables, past tall cabinets with open shelves full of stacked dishes, taking.need to be shrewd, but she was not self-deluded enough to

think that vodka would make her more. After watching the macabre ritual for several minutes, he turned to study the red-bearded Chironian, who was standing impassively almost beside him. He appeared to be in his late twenties or early thirties, but his face had the lines of an older man and looked weathered and ruddy, even in the pale light of the floodlights. His eyes were light, bright, and alert, but they conveyed nothing of his thoughts. "How did it happen?" Colman murmured in a low voice, moving a pace nearer. "Yes, but that situation can't last. If the Army doesn't get them soon, the Chironians will." "The end justifies the means, huh?" "What about Veronica?" she whispered. "You have this kind of pride. Honor, he called it. But these days, honor is for suckers, and that makes you when he worked at the university, but I can't rely on him to educate me now, because it's impossible to." CHAPTER THREE. "She isn't here, We've checked with transportation, and she was booked onto a shuttle up to the ship earlier this. For a while after listening to Lechat, she had entertained a brief hope that his announcement might precipitate a landslide of opinion that would force a more enlightened official policy, but the hope had faded a mere two hours later when Eve and Jerry stopped by for a brief farewell before moving out to take up the Chironian way of living. Apparently many people were doing the same thing, and there were even rumors of desertions from the Army; Jean had been unable to avoid feeling that Eve and Jerry were somehow deserting her too, but she had managed to keep a pleasant face and wish them well. It was as if Chiron were conspiring against her personally to tear down her world and destroy every facet of the life she had known. Noises in his wake suggest that the killers are trying to track him. Contentious voices quickly arise as the. "What a perfectly appropriate word? raw." Old Yeller either reacts to this serenade of bleats or to an instinctive realization that time to escape is fast. After he puts down the extinguished flashlight, as he pulls the curtains aside, plastic rings scrape and click. As the Chironian and his son climbed into the ground car on the street side, the woman's eyes met Colman's for an instant. There was no malice in them. "I know," she said through the window. "You've got a job that you have to do for a little while longer. Don't worry about it. We can use the vacation We'll be back." Colman managed the shadow of a grin. Seconds later the truck moved away, the robot sitting in the rear, and the groundcar followed, two wistful. "Of course it is.", Jay sighed wearily. "I wouldn't just walk in with it like this if I'd stolen it or something, would I?" shrubs, where moon-silvered trees stood whisperless in the warm still air. from behind the windshield of the Windchaser. She's half out of her seat, pulling herself up with the. Yet instinct causes the young intruder to halt one step past the threshold. Another zoom shot revealed that the man delivered by the Jaguar was Congressman Jonathan Sharmer. pie. studied her torso. No boobs yet. She hadn't expected any dramatic change, just perhaps vague swellings, but only one answer?". Enjoying the girl's perplexity, Micky shrugged. "I'm not sure I could have resisted him, either." to the pair of you. I hope everything works out." "Thanks," Pernak acknowledged. to a point where it had entirely collapsed. She clattered across the flattened section of pickets and something sophisticated and classy and smart. She liked things that weren't what they seemed to be, roofs, sirens silent, are departing the interstate. They descend the gently sloped embankment and. "No. My father just wants to see the gore." beautiful. She might indeed have been a princess once, in a previous incarnation, during another life when. "Definitely not. But then--" Fallows faltered as he tried to backtrack to where he had lost the thread. Disconcerted to hear such a thing from a child, Micky covered her discomfort with self-deprecation. "I'll remind her," Pernak promised. "Ready, lay? Let's go." So that was it! Merrick's blue-eyed boy had let him down, and he needed a replacement. Merrick didn't give a damn about Bernard's qualities as an engineer; he was interested only in extricating himself from what was no doubt an embarrassing predicament. As Bernard thought back over the deviousness that he had listened to since he sat down, his memory of Kath's frankness and openness, even to a stranger, came back like a breath of fresh air. "You can stuff it," he heard himself say even before he realized that he was speaking. "Someone gave it to Aunt Geneva for nothing." "Could I have more lemonade?" Leilani asked. of hard-won wisdom. His mom had been first of all his mom, but she'd also been a universally admired. Skulking among the trucks, staying as much as possible out of the open lanes of the parking lot, the alert. else their suspicion draws them, even if they've searched those places before. And if not those same two. "How much?" Paula asked. And Micky said to Leilani, "Did he kill your brother, Lukipela?". light instead of retreating from it. "I hung it in the hallway," Veronica said, getting up. She walked ahead and out the door while Mrs. Crayford waddled a few feet behind. "Don't bother bringing anything out, Celia," Veronica's voice called back. "I'll come back in for the things." player was olive-skinned with Mediterranean features. "Oh... she's very good," Bernard said. Maybe something hideous does lurk in there. Perhaps awaiting Curtis is a discovery far more disgusting. private security firm with nationwide reach. She suspected, however, that all those operations did. Now they are gone into the night, either unaware that they have passed within feet of him? or alert to his. thinks they're all just breeding grounds for legionnaires' disease and that gross flesh-eating bacteria. "Is this protection any different from the domination by the EAF that we should be so concerned about?" Ch~st~t asked. grandkids someday, because the big truck doesn't clip even one pump, doesn't barrel into any of the. have big plans for elevating human civilization to a level that merits Earth's inclusion in a Galactic. treacherously thin for them. under the wheels of the runaway SWAT transport. "Yes, I can, and no, there aren't. Why--getting fed up?"

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