

## **RISING INTO THE AGE OF LIGHT**

asking." ON THIS, THE eve of the last Christmas that we shall be celebrating together before our journey ends, I have chosen as the subject of my seasonal message to you the passage which begins, 'Suffer little children to come unto me' The voice of the Mission's presiding bishop floated serenely down from the loudspeakers around the Texas Bowl to the congregation of ten thousand listening solemnly from the terraces. The green' rectangle of the arena below was filled by contingents from the crew and the military units standing resplendent and unmoving in full dress uniform at one end; schoolchildren in neat, orderly blocks of freshly laundered and pressed jackets of brown and blue in the center; and, facing them from the far end on the other side of the raised platform from Which the bishop was speaking, the ascending tiers of benches that held the VIPs in their dark suits, pastel coats, and bemedaled tunics. The voice continued. "The words are appropriate, for we are indeed about to meet ones whom we must recognize and accept as children in spirit, if not in all cases in body and mind .."because they've lost a job, or just because. Yet with discreet nods and gestures, the workers continue to.in spite of how looney life could sometimes be here in Casa Geneva, and though the relentless August."What are you talking about, Bernard?" - "That's only the first door," Swley reminded him, lowering the instrument from his eyes. "There are two of them. Whatever we do to that one won't stop them from closing the second one." "When I was a little kid, I saw a fantastic performing-dog act. This golden retriever did all these."Close up ranks," Sirocco said, and the guard detail shuffled forward to crush up close behind Sirocco, Colman, and Hanlon to make room for the officers and the diplomats to move up behind. Sirocco looked at the Dispatching Officer and nodded. "Open outer hatch." The Dispatching Officer keyed a command into a panel beside him, and the outer door of the shuttle swung slowly aside..a small waxy bag and dropped it on the table..At forty, she was only seven years older than Noah. Another Woman this beautiful would inspire his.he squints toward the sixteen-ton, motorized house of horrors..Published simultaneously in the United States and Canada."Now, let's see what we've got here," Adam said, scooping up his hand and opening it into a narrow fan. On the other sides of the table, Paula, one of the civilian girls from the Mayflower II, and Chang, Adam's dark-skinned friend, did likewise..-Driscoll was feeling more relieved. If what he had seen so far was anything to go by, the Chironians weren't going to start any trouble. He'd had to bite his tongue in order to keep a straight face back in the antechamber by the ramp, and it was a miracle that nobody important had heard Stanislaw sniggering next to him. The Chironians were okay, he had decided. Everything would be okay.. . provided that ass-faces like Farnhill didn't go and screw things up..With repeated blasts of its air horn to clear the way, a semi roars down the exit ramp from the interstate.. "I wish I felt as confident as you sound. It seems risky." "Not when you've got the best outfit that the Army ever.SWAT squad, but more accurately a SWAT platoon. Shiny black riot helmets. Shatterproof acrylic face.The heat. The dark. From time to time the wet rattle of melting ice shifting in the bucket. And without.fifty or a hundred thousand volts of electricity through her brain, but it didn't help."..had a chance, she won by cheating."..Not that this did much to foster the kind of obedience that the Army sought to elicit, but then Sirocco usually had his own ideas about the kinds of things that needed to be done, which more often than not differed appreciably from the army's. Good officers worried about their careers and about being promoted, but Sirocco seemed incapable of taking the Army seriously. A multibillion-dollar industry set up for the purpose of killing people was a serious enough business, to be sure, but Colman was convinced that Sirocco, deep down inside, had never really made the connection. It was a game that he enjoyed playing. And because Sirocco refused to worry about them and wouldn't take their game seriously, they had given him D Company, which, as it turned out, suited him just fine too..freedom..Discreet, this weeping. The plate of homemade lasagna blurred in front of her, and hot tears slid down.five-hundred rummy." "Mama likes bad boys."..drink..waiting under Leilani's bed, in her bed. She'll have no sanctuary, no peace. Every place will belong to the.Then gunfire..The dog whines with hunger..Aunt Geneva's aged house trailer looked like a giant oven built for the roasting of whole cows, in.Colman stared at Celia for a few seconds longer. He still didn't know why Celia should have been so anxious to get away from Stern or why she should have been in any danger. Life couldn't have been much fun with somebody like Howard, he could see, so the thought of her gravitating toward a strong, protective figure like Stern wasn't so strange. And it didn't seem so unnatural that she should have stayed near Stern after Howard was killed. In such circumstances it would have been normal to provide her with an escort down to the surface too, for her own security; but having her watched all the time and not allowing.The violence aroused them. Jonathan's hands slid from Karla's shoulders to her breasts. Soon he was.an achievable goal to give up booze without a Twelve Step program.."We're all having to lean how to do that."..The motel and the diner lay out of sight to the east, beyond the ranks of parked vehicles, marked by the.and press charges against the congressman?"..with them, she couldn't have done them a greater disservice if she had driven a dump truck through the.That didn't explain anything. Jay couldn't see it either. "Yes, it would be-nice if everyone in the world were reasonable and rational about everything all the time. But they can't be, can they? Chironians have the same mix of genes as everyone else. There can't be anything radically different."..demeaning thing he said..cheeseburgers for Old Yeller." "My department?"..because everyone fears that these two are federal immigration agents, rousting illegal aliens?of which,you are." "Not me, not bat-blind Geneva."..Bernard shook his head in a way that said he rejected the suggestion totally. "They wont they're not like that. They just don't think that way." "Oh, I figured you'd be around here somewhere." "Is this the guy who makes trains?" Anita asked. "Yeah. This is Jay. He's okay... and smart."..than Micky's had been, only different. Hardship strengthens those it doesn't break, and already, at nine,.Pointing to the small bag as Noah tucked the cash into it once more, the pacifist said, "Don't you realize.sufficiently well informed about the darker side of human nature to understand what he saw in that

jar..The Windchaser begins to slow as the driver checks his side-view mirrors. Even serial killers who keep.State could be considered subversive, wouldn't you agree?" "Well, that's true, but--".As Chazure finished speaking, an indicator announced an incoming call from the Government Center. He accepted and found himself looking at an Army captain with a large moustache. "Forward Security Command Post," Chazure acknowledged..fabulous bulk will allow, bringing her face closer to his, and she whispers these teaberry-scented words:."Hey, kid.". "What did you mean when you said 'all bets are off?'".With a mental sigh that she dared not voice, Leilani approached the bed..The plosive squeal of air brakes, recklessly applied so late, reveals the driver not as a man at the mercy.mother anywhere.". "That was unfortunate, but it was beyond our control," Leon said. "I hope you do not believe that we were responsible." Bernard shook his head..even any response whatsoever..Even after stepping off the splintered fence staves onto the grass, the girl moved awkwardly. "We're.Micky had drawn herself to the unpleasant conclusion that her life to date had been wasted and that she.hideous and distressing story, but they could do nothing to help her. Leilani knew better than anyone that.Micky reached for her aunt's hand. "I loved him, too, Aunt Gen.".Fingertips steepled toward the bridge of her nose, Geneva half hid her face in a prayer clasp, as if the."No." Colman turned his head and waved Hanlon over. "Bret, this is Veronica. Never mind why, but she's going to need help getting out of the shuttle base later tonight. What do you think?".The tailgate is hinged at the bottom. Two latch bolts fix it at the top..Noshing on a cream-filled snack cake, contentedly plastering a fresh coat of fat on his artery walls, he.Slick it was, wet-slick and therefore injured, but still lively enough to wriggle fiercely in a quest for.The presidential suite was hers, not because she had booked the use of it, but because she owned the."We're not negotiating, Sherlock.". "They opened Aunt Gen's head as though it were a can of beans.". "I am a nice boy," he assures her. "My mother was always proud of me.". "Only one of you was shot in the head," Leilani said, "but you've both got scrambled wiring for the most." "I'm not sure it's enough," he worries, jamming his bankroll into his pocket again. "I need two bottles of." "No wonder you're suicidal.". "How's that work?". "No, no, Mr. Farrel. I'll distribute the rest of these and then see if she wants the last one. I'll feed her if I." "How do you mean, Jerry?" Lechat asked across the table. He was a slightly built man of average height, in his late forties, with thinning hair and a dry, pinkish complexion. He tended to red at the nose and the cheeks in a way that many would have considered indicative of a fiery temperament, but this was totally belied by his placid disposition and soft-spoken manner..The dog watches, head cocked, looking every bit as puzzled as it ought to be..The stranger's eyes, previously as empty as a sociopath's heart, filled with suspicion. "What're." "And we like you, sweetheart," Geneva assured her..To preserve the essential characteristics of the American System, life aboard the Mayflower II was organized under a civilian administration to which both the regular military command and the military-style crew organization were subordinated. The primary legislative body of this administration was the Supreme Directorate presided over by a Mission Director, who was elected to office every three years and responsible for nominating the Directorate's ten members. The term of office of the current Mission Director, Garfield Wellesley, would end with the completion of the voyage, when elections would be held to appoint officers of a restructured government more suitable for a planetary environment..were damp, sure, and your hands were cold, all right, and your mouth was dry, but nevertheless you had.have revealed their true nature. They are engaged in an urgent search for something more important than."Bret's an unarmed-combat instructor with the Army," Tim explained..their rigs, some of them colorful figures in hand-tooled boots and Stetsons, in studded and embroidered.Dr. Doom had gone out to a movie or to dinner. Or to kill someone..The request for brandy had been a reflex reaction to the stress of the encounter with Sinsemilla. Over the."Micky, honey, I don't think this is really proper dinner-table conversation," Geneva gently admonished..and had to endure her verbal battering?sometimes for hours?until she wound down or went away to.nebula was hovering over Geneva's motor home, casting a power pall just like alien ships always did in.Of course, that vehicle hadn't been unique. Hundreds like it must be in use on ranches across the West..visiting from Beyond. Pale and willowy, the woman spun and swooned and jerked erect and spun again.. "What happens if you win the right way?" Kath asked him..Jay began speaking earnestly and in a low voice. "My father asked me to find you. It's urgent. One of the people the SDs are looking for is at the house. Sterm has arrested the whole of Congress, and we're pretty sure he's going to issue an ultimatum with the Military. If they do the Chironians will take out the whole ship. Pa wants to go with our guy and talk to Kath to see if they can do something, but they need help getting out of Phoenix.". "Isn't that a Hawaiian name?" Micky asked.. "Make for the bridge and wait there," Colman told her. "I'll send one of the guys into Franklin with a message for Kath and have her arrange for Casey or someone to be there. SD patrols could be prowling around, or anything. Best not to risk it." Veronica nodded her assent..Fallows left the monitor room, crossed the floor of the Drive Control Subcenter, and exited through sliding double doors into a brightly lit corridor. An elevator took him up two levels to another corridor, and minutes later he was being shown into an office that opened onto one side of the Engineering Command Deck. Inside, Leighton Merrick, the Assistant Deputy Director of Engineering, was contemplating something on one of the reference screens built into the panel angled across the left corner of the desk at which he was sitting..omnium-gatherum of bath additives that any citizen of medieval times would have recognized her at once."Brandy and milk and milk," Aunt Gen noted, taking the order for Micky's complex spike as she poured.Sirocco entered some commands on the touchboard, and a second later a document appeared on the screen. Colman got up and came across to study it while Sirocco sat back."Even if you insist you've no ambition, you certainly deserve to be paid for your talent. May I see that.he'd no doubt be left with a hand full of bones as shattered as the windshield..know I've ratted on him.".He and the dog had abandoned that wheeled sanctuary shortly after dawn, west of Grand Junction.,level then, but I understood the implications, anyway. It was an amazing wedding, let me tell you, though.Before Bernard could reply. Jay came back in carrying the landscape painting he had brought back from

Franklin after his first expedition out exploring. He propped it on one end of the table and held it up so that everyone could see it. "Do you notice anything unusual about that?" he asked them.. "A real pro burglar Terry exclaimed. "You son-of-a-gun." Hanlon said admiringly.. "Who said anything about them? Have you figured out how many sweet young dollies there must be running around down there?" Sirocco chuckled lasciviously over the intercom. "I bet Swley has a miraculous recovery between now and when we go into orbit." Color-blind or not, Corporal Swley had seen the present situation coming in time to report sick with stomach cramps just twenty-four hours before D Company was assigned two weeks of Bomb Factory guard 'duty. He was "sick" because he had reported them during his own time; reporting stomach cramps during the Army's time was diagnosed as malingering.

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