

TEN THOUSAND FLOWERS STORIES FROM THE NEW MING QUONG

Out of the warm night into the pleasantly cool restaurant, into eddying tides of appetizing aromas that gifts made him feel better about scheming to kill her. Leilani seldom asked for more than paperback. even long after sundown, is extremely debilitating. They have hardly begun to run, and already he feels. EPILOGUE. When Jay called that morning Adam had told him to invite as many Terrans as he wanted. Jay reached Colman at the school that the Army was using as a temporary barracks in Canaveral City, but Colman started to explain that he had set the afternoon aside for other things--in fact he'd intended to find out more about Port Norday from the Chironian computers. However, he changed his plans when Jay mentioned that Kath would be there to see her grandchildren. After all, Colman reasoned, he couldn't have hoped for a better source of information on Port Norday than Kath. As Hanlon was off duty, Colman had invited him along too. He always bought her what she requested? the pajamas were no exception? probably because these. spread would allow, just as she'd left it. Her few personal items hadn't been disturbed. The Sinsemilla. "I didn't know we were in a rotten-dad contest." making a connection with her. His stubborn persistence through the years had been motivated by. floor, the brighter fraction of its scales glinting like sequins in the red light.. "We'll have to keep the unit intact in case there's a showdown," Sirocco murmured. "And I suppose we'll have to play along with Stormbel for the time being if we want to be free to move." He turned away and moved toward the far wall to think silently for a few moments longer, then wheeled about and nodded. "Okay. Bret, you have to leave for the base right away. Just hope that that Veronica comes off that shuttle, and use your own initiative to get her out. That's all you have to worry about so, on your way." Hanlon nodded and disappeared back through the Orderly Room. "Steve," Sirocco said. "Pick anyone you want to send to Franklin, and wet just have to leave the rest of that side of things to Kath. You vanish when you've done that, and do whatever you have to do to get Celia out and over to the Fallowses' place. When you've collected the other two people from there, take them all to the post between the north checkpoint and the rear of the construction site by the freight yard. Maddock's section will be manning that sector from midnight to 0400. They know how to distract the SDs, and I'll make sure they're expecting you." Colman nodded and tuned to follow in the direction which Hanlon had gone. "Oh, and Steve," Sirocco called as a new thought struck him. Colman stopped at the door and looked back. "You say you know Fallows fairly well?". CHAPTER FIVE. Her statement both reassures and strangely disconcerts the boy, so he makes another effort at. Lechat shook his head. "It wasn't necessary. In a few more days Ramisson would have been elected, almost certainly. Then everything would have worked itself out smoothly and tidily. This action complicates everything again. Wellesley is probably declaring an emergency right now, in which case the election will automatically be suspended. It puts everything back weeks, maybe months." grunting, gasping, snake-killing rage and terror. Like a foxtail bramble, this hateful picture would work its. home.. Book design by Virginia Norey. "I'm glad I wasn't alive then," Marie said from behind him. "I can't imagine whole cities burning. It must have been horrible." the interstate.. "What made you sign up for the trip?" on the head. She hates him a lot, which is maybe why she hates me and Luki a little, too. And Luki more. The hunter has a handsome, potentially genial face. If he were to smile instead of glower, put on a mask. Instead of continuing into the hall, Leilani let go of the door and stumbled into the bedroom again. Fear. Jean shook her head, still refusing to contemplate the prospect. "But why does it have to be over?" She looked imploringly at Bernard. "We were happy all those years in the ship, weren't we? We had our friends, like Jerry and Eve, we had the children. There was your job. Why should this planet take it all away from us? They don't have the right. We never wanted anything from them. It's-it's all wrong." candles on the table. "Dr. Doom is my teacher, on paper, but the fact is I'm self-taught. The word for it is. Bernard felt the color rising at the back of his neck. The pathos that she was trying to project was touching a raw nerve. He refilled his glass with a slow, deliberate movement while he brought his feelings under control. "What makes you so sure I found it all that wonderful?" he asked. "Aren't you assuming the same right to tell me what I ought to want?" He put the bottle down on the table with a thud and looked up. "Well, I didn't think it was so wonderful, and I don't want any more of it. Today I told Merrick to stuff his lob up his ass." Acceptance, however, seemed too much like resignation. Even on those evenings when he napped in the. Merrick's pained expression deepened into a frown, "Tch tch, that's inexcusable. How unfortunate. Let me see now-I can't remember exactly when it was but you were on duty. That was why I couldn't include you at the time." That was an outright lie; Bernard had been there on his day off, with Jay. "But anyway, we can soon put that straight. You'll find the place fascinating. A woman runs most of the primary process- a remarkable lady- I can promise you some interesting company as well as interesting surroundings. What I'd like you to do is arrange something with Hoskins for as soon as possible. I'm afraid I'll be tied up for the next couple of days." worked on herself no more than once a month. She always sterilized the scalpel with a candle flame and. reeling off the stool. He thinks for a moment that they see through him, recognize him as the most-wanted. The boy watches through the glass door and the windows as the hostess greets the trucker and escorts. Distance to Chiron 1.9 billion miles; speed down to 1100 miles per second. Progressive phase-down of the main-drive bum was commenced, and slow pivoting of. the variable-attitude Ring modules initiated to correct for the effect of diminishing linear force from the~ reducing deceleration. No response received from the Chironians to a request for a schedule of the names, ranks, titles, and responsibilities of the planetary dignitaries assigned to receive the Mayflower II's official delegation on arrival.. witnesses.. "I never travel." SWAT squad, but more accurately a SWAT platoon. Shiny black riot helmets. Shatterproof acrylic face. an awkward job, but with determination, he succeeds. He slides one bolt into its hasp, then engages the. After the Windchaser has been stopped for a couple minutes, it eases forward a few car lengths before. With the lights come screams, soul-searing even at a distance, not just shouts of alarm,

but shrieks of."You can say that again," Bernard agreed..Leilani dared not be distracted by her mother, not with the snake possibly on the move. But Sinsemilla."Love. I thought you would say love is the answer." Her sweet gamine face wasn't designed for ironic."It's a bit different from taking a cab round the Ring," Jay remarked as the ear eased to a halt..approaching by a different route..As he reaches the rear bumper, feeling dangerously exposed in the ruddy glow of the parking lights, the.know joy, to have faith that our lives have meaning . . . and to find The Way..-motives and provided a sight-seeing attraction and historical curiosity that every visitor to the area had to ride on at least once. Veronica, a practicing architect, was there with Casey, Adam, and Barbara. Celia had declined to return to the ship but was watching from the home that she shared with Lechat - on the coast; and Wellesley had taken a trip from his farm in Occidena to see his old ship recommissioned and renamed..A carrier full of combat-suited infantry nursing antitank missile launchers and demolition equipment slid through the lock and lurched onto a branch leading to one of the Battle Module's forward ramps. "Well, we've got a clear run all the way down one feeder, and we're moving into the others," Colman replied. "There's been some fighting inside the Battle Module, and a lot of the guys got out. We have to hope that there aren't enough left to stop us from blowing our way in through four places at once. Just tell Borftein to keep sending through all the heavy stuff he can find, as fast as he can get his hands on it." "I would prefer not to use that term," the major answered. "The legal ramifications are not for me to comment on. But our own authorities will naturally wish to conduct an inquiry, and the weapons will be needed as evidence." Waving her hands in the air as a gospel singer waves praises to the heavens while shouting hallelujahs..None of the employees any longer offers guidance. They're too busy diving for cover, belly-crawling like.and unreliable wits, he's barely able to be poor Curtis Hammond. And yet he tries. He says, "My name's of hundred-dollar bills.."Great idea," Colman said and stood up. Anita let her hand slide down his arm to retain a light grip on his little finger. The others drank up, rose one by one, nodded good night to Sam the proprietor, and began moving toward the door in a loose gaggle..original. Where'd you find her?". "The day before the July Fourth holiday," Geneva said, "you sell lots of lunchmeats and beer. It's mostly.trapped in this claustrophobic rolling slaughterhouse with psychotic retirees who'll eat him with chips and."We don't get a lot of those," Nanook told them again. "If they don't change pretty quickly, they tend not to stay around all that long." Iuanita looked from Bernard to Jay.and who wrote lousy weepy epic poems about hangnails and bad-hair days..The cockpit, with two large seats, is to his right, a lounge area to the left. All lies in shadow, but through.light instead of retreating from it.."So, is this fine young fella the Jay you were telling me about?" Hanlon asked.."The woman is either nuts or higher than a Navajo shaman with a one-pound-a-day peyote habit." .said, "Into your gall bladder?". "Who tells you what to do?" "It depends." "On what?".Colman could only shake his head. "I don't know. Neither did Jay. That's what Fallows and whoever this other guy is want to find out."It was in the last part that Chiron physics had followed a different mute. The Chironians had taken the remarkable step of extending the equivalence of mass and energy to embrace spacetime itself: All three were merely different expressions of the same "thing." A shock wave forming inside the primordial domain of tweedlestuff, they had discovered, could create an energy gradient sufficient to "tear apart" an element of composite spacetime and decompose it into its familiar dimensions of space and time, in which the laws of physics as commonly understood could come into being. Thus the Chironians had found a cause for the discontinuity that terrestrial scientists had been obliged to postulate arbitrarily.."Who did you live with while she was hospitalized?". "Down!" Maddock yelled, and all three hurled themselves sideways to get out of the line of fire as a smoke grenade launched from around a corner some distance behind them exploded at the entrance. Fire from the entranceway raked the area as the D Company squad broke cover and rushed forward through the smoke, hut the first of them was still twenty feet away when the steel door slammed down and alarms began sounding throughout the Government Center. -. "The bullet didn't actually penetrate her head," Micky said.."They opened Aunt Gen's head as though it were a can of beans." .of it. We weren't born into this universe to doubt. We were born to hope, to love, to live, to learn, to.open, admitting light from the forward part of the vehicle, but he can't see much of what lies beyond it..managed a laugh even though a smile had eluded him. Oh, but it would have been a humorless bark of a."She's not in any condition to feed herself right now. Maybe if I helped her into a chair and fed her."What would you wish them to do?" Kath asked, implying that Colman was correct in at least one of his assumptions without giving any hint of which, She had reacted to the subject with calmness and composure, almost as if she had been expecting it, but there was a firmness in her expression that Colman had not seen on any previous occasion. Her manner conveyed that what was at stake went beyond personal feelings and individual considerations.."Thank you, dear. It?s a Martha Stewart recipe. Not that she gave it to me personally. I took it down.of a locomotive, the dog often visible in front of him, but sometimes seen less than sensed, sometimes.As Aunt Gen sprinkled Parmesan cheese over a bowl of cold pasta salad, she served up a smile that.Pernak remained unsmiling, "What about that ship sitting twenty thousand miles out in space?" he said.."Are there any more objectors?" Sterm inquired. Behind him Wellesley, white faced and haggard, slumped into his chair..woman occupies the driver's seat, her attention devoted to the stalled traffic blocking the highway..Perhaps Curtis's ass, among others.."Yeah, well, by nature I'm a huge pudding. I've got to work hard to stay like this." "Oh, Jay," Jean groaned. "They were probably taking you for a ride to gets laugh out of it. At your age, you should know better." Faced with a question slanted like that, Fallows could only reply, "Well... no, I suppose not." "How long before the flyer shows up?" Carson asked..Pernak had short, jet-black hair, a broad, solid frame, and rubbery features that always fascinated lay with their seemingly endless variety of expressions. He had lectured on physics topics several times at lay's school and had proved popular as much for his entertainment value as for 'his grasp of the subject matter, which he always managed to make exciting with tantalizing glimpses inside black holes, mind-bending accounts of the first few minutes of the universe, and fantastic speculation about living in

twisted spacetimes with unusual geometries. On one occasion he had introduced Feynman diagrams, which represented particles as "world lines" traversing a two-dimensional domain, one axis representing space and the other time. Mathematically and theoretically a particle going forward in time was indistinguishable from its antiparticle going backward in time, and Pernak had offered the staggering conjecture that there might be just one electron in the entire universe--repeating itself over and over by going forward as an electron and backward as a positron. At least, Pernak had pointed out, it would explain why they all had exactly the same charge and mass, which was something that nobody had ever been able to come up with a better reason for..appropriate of all her mother's fragrances..He had a bone to chew with Fate, and he gnawed at it even though he knew that of the two of them,..Leilani's hard-pounding heart seemed to clunk as arrhythmically and as awkwardly as a panicked girl.Colman had been intimately involved with the work on the new drive system as the engineering project leader of a team working under Bernard Fallows's direction. He had brought Kath and their four-year-old son Alex up to the ship to be present with him at the unveiling ceremony being held in the main concourse of the new nose section. Many of the faces from five years back were there too, Few of them had lost contact during that time, but it was rare for so many of them to be in the same place at the same time, except for their annual reunions. Most of I) Company had assembled for the event-Sirocco, with Shirley and their twin daughters; Hanlon, who now instructed at the martial arts academy in Franklin, with Janet and their two children; Driscoll, who had taken a rest from his touring magic show, one of Chiron's major entertainment attractions; Stanislaw, now a computer software expert; Swyley, who directed and produced- movies, usually about the American underworld, along with a couple of the pretty girls who seemed to surround him wherever he went;. . and there were others. Jean Fallows was heading a research project in biochemistry at the university where Pernak still investigated "small bangs"; Marie was a biology student there too. Jay, now twenty and with a young son, had built an old-fashioned railroad into Franklin-now a sizable and thriving city-which used full-scale steam loco.Wellesley turned pale, and the veins stood out on his temples. "I deny that! I also deny that you urged segregation. My policy was to encourage their leaders out into the open by a demonstration of peaceful coexistence, and you went along with it. Withdraw your statement."..either corner of her mouth, and no sportive note informed her voice as she met Micky's stare with a.Even as he thought that, Eve's words about brainwashing came back to him. Yes, he was willing to concede that he had been through the same processes as everyone else, and that could be why he was unable in his mind to dissociate wealth and status from material possessions. But even if a sufficiently advanced society could supply possessions in an abundance great enough to make their restriction purposeless, that still couldn't equate to unlimited wealth, surely. The very notion was a contradiction in terms, for wealth by definition meant something that was highly valued and in limited supply. In other words, if on Chiron possessions did not equate to wealth and thereby satisfy the universal human hunger to be judged a success, then what did?.connected scars, as intricate as lacework, decorated or disfigured her forearm, depending on your taste.author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or."And someone wanted the cash," Leilani guessed.Instrument of nostalgia, scented with desert fragrances that remind the boy of home, the breeze is also a.Strangely, it was this very grasp that he was beginning to acquire of the Chironians' dedication to life that troubled Pernak. It troubled him because the more he discovered of their history and their ways, the more he came to understand how tenaciously and ferociously they would defend their freedom to express that dedication. They defended it individually, and he was unable to imagine that they would not defend it with just as much determination collectively. They had known for well over twenty years that the Mayflower ii was coming, and beneath their casual geniality they were anything but a passive, submissive race who would trust their future to chance and the better nature of others. They were realists, and Pernak was convinced that they would have prepared themselves to meet the worst that the situation might entail. Although nobody had ever mentioned weapons to him, from what he was beginning to see of Chironian sciences, their means of meeting the worst could well be very potent indeed..from low self-esteem, even self-loathing. By contrast, Sinsemilla seemed to like herself enormously, most."Healing technology," Leilani corrected. "An alien species, having mastered interstellar travel and the."It was," Jean agreed. "It's a lesson that we an have to remember. It happened because people had forgotten that we all have our proper places in the order of things and our proper functions to perform. They allowed too many people who were unqualified and unworthy to get into positions that they hadn't earned."..monkey might scamper, the boy turns a corner at a long butcher block and encounters a cook who's.along the hallway to another door that stands ajar..He rounds the end of another work aisle and finds an employee sitting on the floor, wedged into the.her face..handsome, so sensitive?"". "Port Norday?".Merrick's eyebrows shot up in an expression of surprise.magnificent dimensions are matched by the size of her good heart..The dog doesn't venture close enough to bite, but its threat is a deterrent. The woman at once abandons."How long ago?".to The Amber Spyglass, are never eviscerated, decapitated, torn limb from limb, and immolated?which.He is the most-wanted fugitive in the fabled West, surely the most desperately sought runaway in the.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?".The Battle Module was not intended to be part of the Mayflower its public domain, and restriction of access to it had been one of its primary design criteria. Personnel and supplies entered the module via four enormous tubular extensions, known as feeder ramps, that telescoped from the main body of the ship to terminate in cupolas mating with external ports in the Battle Module, two forward and two aft its midships section. One pair of feeder ramps extended backward and inward from spherical housings Zn the forward ends of the two ramscoop-support pillars, and the other pair extended forward and inward from the six-sided, forward most section of

the Spindle, called, appropriately enough, the Hexagon. As if having to get through the feeder ramps wasn't problem enough, the transit tubes, freight handling conveyors, ammunition rails, and other lines running through to them from the Spindle all came together at a single, heavily protected lock to pass through an armored bulkhead inside the Hexagon. Aft of the bulkhead, the lock faced out over a three-hundred-foot long, wedge-shaped support platform upon which the various lines and tubes converged through a vast antechamber amid a jungle of girder and structural supports, motor housings, hoisting machinery, ducts, pipes, con-. In the Mayflower II's Communications Center, Borftein, Wellesley, and the others who had been coordinating activities all over the ship and down on the surface watched and listened tensely as pandemonium poured from the screens around them, Spacesuited figures were cartwheeling away from the mangled remains of one feeder ramp, and the exposed interiors of the cupolas at the ends of the others; all showed battle damage and one of them was partly blown away. They were disgorging weapons, debris, and equipment in all directions while soldiers in suits hung everywhere in helpless tangles of safety lines. "Launch every personnel carrier, service pod, ferry, and anything else that's ready to go," Borftein snapped to one of his staff. "Get them from Vandenberg or anywhere else you have to. I want every one of those men picked up. Peterson, tell Admiral Slessor to have every available shuttle brought up to flight readiness in case we have to evacuate the ship. And find out how many more we can get up here from Canaveral." .to sing along with.. "It seems irrational to me to argue one way or another about things there's no evidence for," a boy of about four' teen remarked. "You can make up anything you want if there's no way of testing whether it's true or not, so what's the point?" .Go, pup, he says or only thinks.. "What about me?" Ci asked, hooking at Driscoll. She leaned to one side to let her mother see the hand she was holding.. "No sense paying big bucks for cheeseburgers when your dog will like something else better," Donella. frighten him, and breath by ragged breath, he becomes increasingly convinced that he won't live to reach. Maybe dogs aren't capable of feeling humiliated. The boy's never had a dog before. He knows their. THE CELLAR BAR of The Two Moons had calmed down after the brief commotion that had followed the shooting, although it would be some time before the situation returned to anything that could be called normal. Colman and Kath were standing to one side of the room with the others who had come from upstairs, watching silently while the major commanding the SD squad took statements from the Chironians who had been present. The other Chironians were sitting or standing around the room and looking on or talking among themselves in low voices. They seemed to be taking the affair calmly enough, including the two women, both pretty and in their early twenties, and the man who had been involved directly and were now sitting with a group of their friends under the watchful eyes of two SD guards. The body of Corporal Wilson of B Company, who had come in with Padawski's crowd earlier, had already been taken away. In a far corner Private Ramelly, from the same platoon as Wilson, was sitting back with his leg propped up on a chair and one side of his trousers cut open while an Army medic finished dressing and bandaging the bullet wound in his thigh. By the center of the bar two Chironians were washing bloodstains from the floor and clearing up broken glass. Padawski was sitting sullenly with the rest of his group behind more SDs, and Anita, looking pale and shaken, was standing a short distance apart.. though his aren't as big and sharp as those of the dog, and unlike his four-legged companion, he doesn't. "How do you know he'll go along with it?" Barbara asked.. Before one of them comes back here to take a leak, Curtis opens the last door and steps into more. Nanook sighed heavily. "We have had one or two things like that from time to time," he confessed. "But it never lasts. In the end a bigger bunch gets itself together and gets rid of them. It comes to the same thing--they end up getting shot anyhow."