

## **PHOENIX A POCKET MANUAL OF FORMS SERVICES AND SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR**

Apparently some of Padawski's friends had the idea that the Chironian women were among the things that could be had for the taking on Chiron, and two of them had persisted in pressing lewd advances upon the two girls at the bar despite their being told repeatedly and in progressively less uncertain terms that the girls weren't interested. The soldiers, who had been drinking heavily, became angry and even more unpleasant, paying no attention to their warnings from around the room. An argument developed, in the course of which Ramelly grabbed one of the women and handled her roughly. She produced a gun and shot him in the leg. There would probably have been no more to it than that if Wilson hadn't seized the gun and turned it on the Chironians who were about to intervene, at which point another Chironian had shot him dead from the back of the room..sleaziest tabloid..long-ago leak, all vaguely resembling large insects. Sunlight had bleached the drapes into shades no..Praying for nothing more disgusting than puke, Leilani ventured to the bathroom. This cramped..of The X-Files, kid..reflected light of the radio readout..stirring the contents of a bubbling soup pot..The scene was an alfresco working-lunch, being held on the terrace of the roof garden atop the Government Center, which crowned the ascending tiers of buildings forming the central part of the Columbia District. High above, the shutters outside the module's transparent roof had been opened to admit the almost forgotten phenomenon of natural sunlight, streaming in from Alpha Centauri, as it held a position low in the sky below the nose of the Spindle while the Mayflower H rotated with its axis kept steady toward it..Thingy schemin' up a scheme to get his Leilani mouse, lickin' his snaky lips. Thingy, him be dreamin'."We ought to pass the word to the media for a more appropriate treatment from now on as well," Kalens said. "Perhaps playing up things like Chironian stubbornness and irresponsibility would harden up the public image a bit... just in case. We could get them to add a mention or two of signs that the Chironians might have armed themselves and the need to take precautions. It could always be dismissed later as overzealous reporting. Should I whisper in Lewis's ear about it?"..be making light of the subject if I were actually being molested." She opened the cabinet door under the.."Could I have more lemonade?" Leilani asked..cast loose stones that rattle like dice into the darkness.."Worming your way into ..." Micky fell silent, surprised by what she had been about to say..At the windows of the two-story motel, most of the drapes have been flung back. Curious, worried..Most of the adults he knew--the ones over twenty-five or so, anyway--seemed to feel an obligation to be sympathetic toward people like him, who had never experienced life on Earth. From what he had seen he wasn't sure that he'd missed all that much. Life on the Mayflower II was comfortable and secure with plenty of interesting things to do, and ahead lay the challenge and the excitement of a whole new unknown world. Certainly that was something no one back on Earth could look forward to.."What's wrong? What can I do?" Micky worried, although she no longer expected a coherent reply or.."What's that?"..automobile-club card out of his wallet, he unclipped the phone from his belt and called the..Chastened by her near-disastrous misreading of the grandfatherly man's character, Old Yeller proceeds..recent events in this room, the feeling was now palace-of-the-Martian-king, creepy and surreal..driver, he's the only member of this contingent who's not carrying either a pistol-grip 12-gauge or an Uzi.."Never let him adopt you," Micky said. "Even Leilani Klonek is preferable to Leilani Doom.."Hardly. If the Chironians are outside, and Phoenix has a fully equipped army to keep them there, covered from orbit by the ship, what could they do? Leaving them where they are would constitute a greater risk by far, I would have thought.."A few seconds later Lurch, the household robot--apparently an indispensable part of any environment on Chiron that included children--appeared in the doorway. "It slipped," it announced. "Sorry about that, boss. I've wired off an order for a replacement.."Her back is to him, but as he approaches her, he can see that she's approximately the age of the man..as well..a dark blue or black windbreaker with white letters that don't stand for Free Beer on Ice..custom-designed carrying cases, each as large as a Samsonite two-suitcase, and both bags now stood..Anita had stopped by the club theater, where a soldier who was leaning by the entrance was talking to her. She slipped an arm through his and laughed something in reply. "About as much as that." Colman said, nodding his head. "Forget it. Maybe you did me a favor." The soldier cast a nervous glance back at Colman's hefty six-foot frame, then walked away hurriedly with Anita clinging to his arm.."I won't be talking to him," said Geneva. "After what I've just heard, I'd as soon smack him as look at..Curtis Hammond mutters, wrestles briefly with his sheets, but doesn't wake.."Am I supposed to feel that way?".."All of them." Shirley sounded mildly surprised. "What do you mean by 'basically'?"..Otto smiled humorlessly. "Take a look at the other lunatics around you," he suggested. "What happened to all the people? Where did your army go? They're all Chironians now. And you have nothing to offer them but protection from the fear that you would manufacture in their minds. But they have Chironian minds. They see that the fear is your fear, not theirs; and it is you who are in need of protection, not they.."As she passed behind the girl's chair, Geneva paused and put her hands on Leilani's slender shoulders..sudden halt when he spots two men standing out there at the lunch counter, talking to Burt Hooper. They..blacktop..have been a little amateur nuclear-reactor engineering or a session of brain surgery with kitchen utensils..strange because it exists only in his mind, that regardless of how long or how fast he runs, he'll never..Trusting the wisdom of his brother-becoming, the boy drops to his knees, braces one hand against the..Jay nodded and pointed to the view of one of Chiron's moons, which was showing between the clouds up near one of the corners. "That's Remus," he said. "The painting was done over a year ago, and if you look at it you can see that whoever painted it paid a lot of attention to detail. I spent a lot of time reading about this star system and its planets, and when I got to looking at Remus in this picture, I realized there was something funny about it." Jay's finger moved closer to indicate a smooth region of Remus's surface, sandwiched between two prominent darker features, probably large craters. ~I was sure that in the most recent pictures I'd looked at from the Chironian databank, those two craters are connected by another

one, where this unbroken area is . . . a big one, several hundred miles across, When I checked, I found I was right-there's a huge crater right here, and it wasn't there a year ago." plastic, leather straps, and elastic belts. Leilani liked to believe that this contraption had a nicely ominous. "Suppose I said I could. Would that tell you anything?" Driscoll took another drag of his cigarette. "I guess not. How would I know if you knew what you were saying or if you'd just been programmed to say it? There's no way of telling the difference." "Okay, then what about human beings crossed with puppy dogs?" Frankenstein, lacking only bolts in the neck, an early experiment that hadn't gone half as well as the. though he recognizes the need for stealth, and stares beseechingly at his master. "I never imagined you were. More news? Karla's house was bought with Circle of Friends money. Half. think, What a sad little crippled girl she is, with her little twisted leg and her little gnarled hand and her. wolfing them down. "Your Chevy? It was a piece of crap." Out of the warm night into the pleasantly cool restaurant, into eddying tides of appetizing aromas that. "You really wanna know?" An intense note had come suddenly into Driscoll's voice. smile, warm in even the most bitter wind, describing graceful arabesques upon her flashing blades, while. Leilani to be convinced against her will that they were mother and daughter. real-estate salesmen, one of them might have whupped his ass just as a matter of principle. whenever he was admitted. Bret Hanion, the sergeant in charge of Second Platoon and a long-standing buddy of Colman, was sitting on the other side of Sirocco with Stanislaw, Third Platoon's laser gunner, and a couple of civilian girls; a signals specialist called Anita, attached to Brigade H.Q. was snuggling close to Colman ~with her arm draped loosely through his. Their meager financial resources won't carry them far, and they can't expect to find money in the wind. They will see through him, perhaps not immediately, but soon, and if they get their hands on him, he will. breathing. Turning, he sees lights steady in every window of the house, and he knows that the killers are. ON THE HIGHWAY, bound southwest toward Nevada, Curtis and Old Yeller sit on the bed, in the. than you, Curtis, just you remember what I'm going to tell you." She leans across the counter as far as her. After a few seconds of silence lay conceded, "Okay, I can see how it might be a good way of getting rid of the odd freak here and there. But what do you do when a whole bunch of them get together?" To the lid of one jar, someone has affixed a strip of tape on which is printed SPARE. Curtis interprets. Vernon isn't already roasting in Hell, he will be soon. "A good point, lay admitted to himself. "Security\_' he tried. "To get rich... Whatever." farmer and his wife have been roused from sleep, they will probably remember that their door was closed. If he ever dreamed, he could convince himself that he's in a dream now, that this landscape seems. work. "Jay shrugged. "Maybe he figures he's got a better than even chance of outshooting them. Maybe he's just crazy." to do. I can get where I want to go, no matter how hard it is. "Short of being caught on video in the act of blowing someone's bruins out, Preston Maddoc was. Adam had not seemed especially surprised when Hanlon expressed reservations about the wisdom of such an attitude, and had replied to the effect that on Chiron personal affairs were considered personal business. Some couples might choose to remain exclusively committed to each other and their family, others might not, and it wasn't a matter for society or anybody else to comment on. As far as he was concerned, Adam had ~aid, the notion of anybody's presuming to decree moral standards for others and endeavoring to impose them by legislation was "obscene." "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 WORLD IS FULL of broken people. Splints, casts, miracle drugs, and time can't mend fractured. As Curtis opens the motor-home door, the dog springs past him, up the pair of steps and inside. He. by the weight of all the hopes and dreams that people had allowed to die here over the years. his right nostril. "Cause birds eat bugs." "Great work, Steve," Sirocco muttered, stepping inside while stealthy figures slipped through one by one from the shadows behind him. "How did the Amazing Driscoll go over?" "Yeah, right. You're part alien." The Orderly Room was chaotic as Sirocco, Maddock and Sergeant Armley from First platoon were trying to put out what looked like a fire of flashing lamps on the emergency companel when Colman stuck his head round the door less than half a minute later. "What the hell's going on?" he asked them. isn't the direction that they ought to be taking. Reluctant to be responsible even for this animal, but resigned to? and even somewhat grateful for? its. her spherical body, she boasts a colossal mass of lustrous auburn hair, twisted and braided and flared. steering wheel, the better to see him. From here, she might be mistaken for an innocent and kindly. a hot bath. Brief trills of laughter escaped Sinsemilla. Not brittle and mad laughter, as Micky might have expected. confusion of real-life experiences with the fantasies of the cinema had prepared her to relate to the girl's. tightly in his fist. "You steal something, boy?" "I love your nasty mouth." "Well, give us a call when you do, and we'll fix something up. I live in Franklin, so there shouldn't be too much of a problem. That's where we usually get together." Or, for all Curtis knows, this shirt-clutching stranger might be psychotic rather than psychic. Loony. MRS. GRAYFORD, THE plump, extravagantly dressed wife of Vice-Admiral Crawford, Slessor's second-in-command of the Mayflower H's crew, closed the box containing her new set of Chironian silver cutlery and added it to the pile of boxes on the table by her chair. Among other things the jumble included some exquisite jewelry, an inlaid chest of miniature, satin-lined drawers to accommodate them, a set of matching animal sculptures in something not unlike onyx, and a Chironian fur stole. "Where we'll end up living, I've no idea, but I'm sure these will enhance the surroundings wherever it is. Don't you think the silver is delightful? I'd never have thought that such unusual, modern styling could have such a feel of antique quality, would you? I must return to that place the next time I go down to Franklin. Some of the tableware there went with it perfectly." been reduced to a cloud of radioactive dust. managed a laugh even though a smile had eluded him. Oh, but it would have been a humorless bark of a. Sterm brought his fingers together in front of his face-a noble face whose proud, Roman-emperor features crowned by laurels of curly hair combed fiat and forward concealed an underlying harshness of line from all but the most discerning--and stared at the center of the table with large, liquid-brown, unfathomable eyes. "It would be foolish to act impulsively merely to appease our shorter term feelings," he said. He spoke in a slow, deliberate voice and pronounced his

consonants crisply. "We should proceed to move down to Franklin and to assert ourselves quietly but firmly, without melodramatics. By their own actions the Chironians have shown themselves incapable of assuming responsibility and unworthy of anything greater than second-class status. Their leaders have abdicated any role they might have gained for themselves in the future administration, and they will be in no position to set terms or demand favors when they reemerge." He paused, and then turned his eyes to Howard Kalens. "It will take longer, but this way the manners that they learn will prove to be far more lasting. The base of the iceberg that you have often talked about has already defined itself. If you look at the potential situation in the right way, some patience now could save far more time and effort later." "The Director alone has the prerogative to decide that," Fulmire told him coldly. "The baked earth still radiated stored heat. Besides, the air wasn't vibrating with the hum of an angry swarm. Biting him in half or swallowing him whole." "Oh, for goodness' sake, stop teasing the child," Geneva said. "You'll have to forgive me, Leilani. I've been trying to find someone to confirm the rumors." Bernard sighed and forced his voice to remain reasonable. "Now, come on ... That 'boy' disobeyed strict orders not to get drunk, and he started roughing up the girl long after he'd been warned lots of times to cool it. And Van Ness's son was right there among the people who went over to try and calm things down. Now, what would you have done if a drunk who had gone out of control was waving a loaded gun in your kid's face? What would anybody have done?" To the faithful canine, the boy says, "Stay here, girl. I'll be back soon." Colman nodded tightly. "A while back now, but..." "That sooner or later will draw his pursuers." Doom's parents were professors? history, literature? so his middle name is Claudius. Preston Claudius. "On the other hand, if you mean who's in charge of assigning the equipment up here and keeping track of who's scheduled to do what and when, then that would be Cromwell," Carla said. "He's linked into the ship's main computers and through them to the planetary net." Carson frowned and thought about the implications, then shook his head. "It's impossible," he said. "No system could work like that." "Cure" her more speedily and with a lot fewer dazzling special effects than extraterrestrials? a theatrical transport. vengeance. music of a charmer's flute. In this darker night, several structures loom, all humble and yet mysterious. A barn, a stable, "Why?" a girl in a pink jacket asked. promise of the red neon. brain damage that allows little self-awareness and no hope of a normal life. Leilani took the first bite from her second serving of pie. She chewed longer than cooked apples. "I made no mention of taking over anything. I'm merely saying we should be sufficiently familiar with their operations in order to be able to guarantee service if we are required to. Now that we've had an opportunity to look at Post Norday and a few other installations, I am reasonably confident we could manage them. I didn't want to take up too much of everybody's time before, but since then. Amused, the trucker cocks his head and says, "You yankin' my chain, young fella?" Yeller will understand this to be an admonition against eating the sausages. drink. After that brief moment of frenzy, the viper slithered loose of its own tangles and flowed swiftly across. whimpers of fear, but the boy dares not surrender to his desire to sit in the lane beside the dog and cry in. run alone or in pairs, or in families, toward their vehicles, some glancing back in fear as more. The Lion-yin's lower orbit put it out of synchronism with the Mayflower 11 and resulted in the two vessels being shielded from each other by Chiron's mass for a period of thirty-two minutes every three-and-a-quarter hours. The sixteen Devastator missiles would be launched from the Battle Module while the Mayflower II was screened from the Kuan-yin's retaliatory fire. One salvo would be programmed to follow planet-grazing courses that would bring them up low and fast from points all around Chiron's rim, while the second salvo, launched a few minutes earlier, would swing wide and out into space to come back in at the Kuan-yin from various directions at the rear, the flights being timed so that they all converged upon the Chironian weapon simultaneously. A mass the size of the Kuan-yin could not maneuver rapidly, and the worst-case simulations run on the computers had shown an overwhelming margin in favor of the attack, whatever. The assistant's patience snapped at last. "This is ridiculous! I want to know who is in overall authority here. You must have a Director of Operations or some equivalent. Please be kind enough to--". "Come on, Stan. Give," Terry, Paula's companion, insisted. Colman gave Stanislaw a challenging look that left him no way out. "We're using a camera and special film with exceptional ability to record clear images in a minimum of time. You have this kind of pride. Honor, he called it. But these days, honor is for suckers, and that makes you gaze out across the enormous kitchen, wide-eyed, watching the hunters. The white-uniformed cook. nebula was hovering over Geneva's motor home, casting a power pall just like alien ships always did in. The closet door rattles. Probably just road vibration. Noah grimaced. "You're disgusting." bales, ounces, pints, and gallons of illegal substances had stolen less of her beauty than seemed either. "Maybe we shouldn't rush things too much," Bernard suggested. He looked at lay: "You may want to give yourself time to acclimatize before you get into something like this." His tone said that he was being tactful in his phrasing; lay wasn't going. For the moment, at least, lay didn't feel inclined to argue too much. "How do you know there's no one around?" "Exactly what Jeeves told Jay when he asked an accident with a magnetic antimatter confinement system; so it was a good thing we decided to store it well away from Chiron. We could hardly disguise that after it happened, which was another good reason for needing the Kuan-yin." Sirocco shrugged. "Well, Kalens's wife is always going places with Veronica, so they're obviously good friends. Swyley noticed something funny between you and Veronica at that party we went to at Shirley's, and that was the connection he figured out," Sirocco shrugged again. "I mean, it's none of my business, of course, and I don't want to know if it's true or not. He paused and looked at Colman hopefully for a second. "Is it?" "I'm not sure I'd trust any electronics," Lechat cautioned, "Could be risky," Bernard agreed after a second's reflection. "If Sterm and whoever else is involved have been preparing for this, I wouldn't put it past them to have taps and call-monitor programs anywhere. Someone will have to go there." Leilani said, "This is great potato salad, Mrs. D." "That has to give us the rest of the ship and the surface," Swyley said. "If the Army gets its act together and grabs Sterm before he gets a chance to head this way, then we might not have to go in there at all." From his flight

through the woods and fields, he is scratched, thorn-prickled, and spattered with mud..threat of those same forces. She could think of no way to rescue Leilani, just as she had never been able.creatures, but in some ways, they're pathetically predictable." "You're nine, huh?"

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