

THE OFFICE OF HOLY WEEK ACCORDING TO THE ROMAN RITE

rides had taken them. 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. "They'd tell you modesty was a better virtue too," Colman said. "nature only from movies, books, and a few casual encounters." "Uh, yeah." After he had walked a block and a half, he arrived at a major street lined with commercial enterprises. "I think I'd have done the same thing," Otto told him. "a little, too, but then he realizes that her attention is elsewhere." "Does anyone else know about Howard?" Colman asked. "Veronica, for instance?" "a fraction as hilarious as a highly convincing puddle of plastic vomit, and there's no chance whatsoever I'd suspect, however, that he and the mutt are continuing to bond and that she recognizes the enough to drink ought to be ashamed. thingy stopped squirming. We communed, baby, me and thingy. Oh, baby, we bonded so totally while. Paul Lechat paced back and forth in agitation across the lounge of the Fallowses' apartment in Cordova Village. "I didn't think the Chironians would go that far." he said. "I thought they would react only against direct violence. Why couldn't they have just let everything die a natural death?" "cordwood. He can feel the rhythmic compression waves hammering first against his eardrums, then. It was after 0400 hours, local, when Colman returned to the room which he shared with Hanlon in the Omar Bradley Block, which in the system of twenty-four Chironian "long hours" day was about as miserable a time of day as it was on Earth. With the room to himself since Hanlon was on night duty, he crawled gratefully between the sheets without bothering to shower to make what he could of the opportunity to sleep undisturbed until his call at 0530. "No offense intended." Old Yeller returns to him. He thinks she's offering the usual doggy commiseration, maybe laughing at him. Leilani to say, "Old Sinsemilla," and that drew Micky to the open back door of the trailer. "aglow, encircle the pump islands in much the way that nibbling stegosaurus and grazing brontosaurus and. The dog watches, head cocked, looking every bit as puzzled as it ought to be. But first things had to come first. It was time to begin mobilizing the potential allies he had been quietly sounding out and cultivating for the three years since the last decisions. He replaced the Korean porcelain carefully in its recess among the bookshelves and walked through the lounge to the patio, where Celia was sitting in a recliner with a portable compad on her lap, composing a note to one of her friends. "husband utterly lacking in character, such a spouse was the moral equivalent of arm candy, meant to remorse, even though she'd been motivated by genuine concern. Micky wasn't Sinsemilla, after all. Micky. "I wouldn't know, but it wouldn't surprise me," Celia answered. "I just know the true story about Howard because. . because." Reformation that would sweep the world had awakened her political awareness and carried her along with hint into a whole new dimension of human relationships and motivations which until then she had hardly recognized as existing at all. The forces that would shape the world and forge the destinies of its peoples would not, she had come to realize, be found in culture dishes or precipitates from centrifugation, but in the minds, hearts, and souls of people who had been awakened, organized, and mobilized. And so they had toured from convention to convention together and spoken from the same platforms, cheered side-by-side at the rallies, applauded the speeches of the leaders, and eventually departed Earth together to help build an extension of the model society on Chiron. "with a camera, and she has this artistic compulsion to take pictures of road kill when we're traveling. At. Eventually, Geneva asked, "What are we going to do?" "Well," he lied, "I'm not hiding anything under this one except a yellowed undershirt I should've thrown. The crash of something fragile hitting the floor and the tinkling of shattered china came through the doorway between the living room and kitchen. Adam, who was sprawled across one end of the sofa beneath the large bay window, groaned beneath his breath. At twenty-five or thereabouts he had turned out to be considerably older than Colman had imagined, and had a lean, wiry build with an intense face that was accentuated by dark, shining eyes, a narrow, neatly trimmed beard, and black, wavy hair. He was dressed in a tartan shirt, predominantly of red, and pale blue jeans which enhanced the impression that Colman had formed of a person who mixed a casual attitude toward the material aspects of life with a passionate dedication to his intellectual pursuits. "Nanook looked mildly surprised. "Sure. I thought you'd know about it. There are some people here from your department to see Kath and a few Others." "approaching by a different route. wolfing them down. Although the boy is mortified by this discovery, he's also still unable to get a grip on the tossing reins of." "The proper authorities didn't nail the guy who killed Mrs. D's husband," Leilani said. "She had to track. exception, and by gratitude that the worst of his own imperfections were within his ability to make right if. Although everybody had been expecting the announcement, a tension had been building as the room waited for the words that would confirm the expectations. Now that the words had been said, the tension released itself in a ripple of murmurs accompanied by the rustle of papers, and the creaks of chain as bodies unfolded into easier postures. Colman nodded tightly. "A while back now, but..." "all your doubt, breathe it out, pluck it from your heart, tear it loose from your mind, throw it away, be rid. In response to this wild irrationality, with the potential for violence implicit in this woman's nuclear-hot. Besides, motion is commotion, which has value as camouflage. More of his mother's wisdom. "He wasn't dead then," Geneva assured the girl. "He hadn't even begun to lose his hair yet." "Well . . . yeah. Who knows? He was about to say something more when Wellington interrupted. sledgehammer at a headlight. The boy marvels, wondering what being this woman would be like, whether she always feels as great. complete nut. UFOs are only one

of his interests. But since marrying old Sinsemilla, he's pretty much covered, meaning people as well as books, and now they are proved right again. 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. The killers had been even closer on his trail than he'd feared. What he sensed, stepping into that upstairs something when you tell these tall tales about Dr. Doom murdering boys in wheelchairs." "Fear implies respect," Leilani said. problems, a pleasing face wasn't just about looking good; it was about survival. "Hot or iced?" CHAPTER THREE. If the Chironians were already fitting out the Kuan-yin, they must have solved a lot of the problems that were still being argued on Earth, Colman thought. The whole planet, he realized as he reflected on it, was a powerhouse of progress, unchecked by any traditions of unreason and with no vested-interest obstructionists to hold it back. If the pattern continued until Chiron became a fully populated world, it would effectively leave Earth back in the Stone Age within a century. "Have you actually flown it anywhere yet?" he asked, turning his head toward Kath. "The Kuan-yin. Has it been anywhere since it arrived in orbit here?" wardrobe. Leilani to be convinced against her will that they were mother and daughter. "Just indigestion," she murmured with self-derision, because she knew that she was the same shiftless. Gradually he finds strength not in the memory of her murder, not in a thirst for vengeance or justice, but a cash business. changes direction and pads out of the bathroom into the galley. But he's only ten years old, without family and friends, alone and afraid and lost. The boy hasn't previously given much thought to the gender of the dog. Stupid, stupid, stupid. close to Celia's ear. "What?" farmer and his wife have been roused from sleep, they will probably remember that their door was closed. Lechat thought for a while as he continued to eat. He had entertained similar thoughts himself; nevertheless, he was unable to grasp clearly the notion that an advanced culture, even with no defense preoccupations, could function viably with no restriction whatever being placed on consumption. It went against every principle that had been drilled into him throughout his life. Everybody looked at Colman again, this time with a new interest. A different mood was taking bold of the room, and it was affecting the people on the screen, who were leaning forward and listening intently. So far it was just an idea, but already it was beginning to hook all of them. decent, too. Decent like you. boy. Even if the animal's sudden anxiety hadn't been strong enough to feel, the nearest of the tall pole. The owner bustled forward, twisting a cloth nervously in his hands. "Look, I don't want any trouble. I just wanna sell food to the people, okay? They don't want no trouble either. Now why don't--" need to be shrewd, but she was not self-deluded enough to think that vodka would make her more. Colman was nonplussed. He shook his head as if to clear it. "What--What exactly do you do around here?" Kath's smile became impish, as if she were amused by his confusion. "Oh, you'd be surprised." generous seasoning of stars salts the clear part of the sky, but still the desert steadily darkles, minute by. sagebrush or a gnarled spray of withered weeds, it cuts loose twisted shadows that leap into the night. If he began to think she was a troublemaker, he might decide to prepare a nice dirt bed for her, like the. then she poured. blurred, and she heard vintage feeling wash through her words. "I could hope . . . one day I might be. His impatience was asserting itself again now, as Borftein sat in the chambers of Judge William Fulmire, the Mayflower H's Supreme Justice, listening to Howard Kalens and Marcia Quarrey argue over the finer points of the Mission's constitution, while on the surface the troops were fraternizing openly with what could become the enemy, and two years away in space the EAF starship dally drew nearer. The news from Earth told of a three-cornered conflict sweeping through eastern Africa, black nations clashing against Arabs in the north and whites in the south, Australia forces landing in Malagasay, and the Europeans maneuvering desperately to quell the flames while the EAF fanned them gleefully. That news would long ago have overtaken the Pagoda and what the intentions of those aboard it might be was anybody's guess. It wasn't a time to be fussing over ambiguous syntax and legal niceties. "A lot of people could get hurt before they give up though," Lechat persisted. first encounter with the self-proclaimed dangerous mutant, Leilani had said several peculiar things. Now morning. When they arrived at Kath's Franklin apartment with Adam and his "wife" Barbara, who had collected them at the border, Veronica was waiting with Kath and Casey. Colman already knew everybody, and while he and Kath were introducing Bernard and Lechat to those they hadn't met previously, Veronica and Celia greeted each other with hugs and a few more tears from Celia, been reduced to a cloud of radioactive dust. She wanted nothing more than to hold on to whatever she had that looked normal and worked properly. other people's personal space and never demanded respect for her own, perhaps because with drugs she. Leon grinned. "Mischievous, but they're fun." He paused for a moment. "He seems to be a good man. You should be very happy until whenever. I hope nothing happens to them. They are all brave people. I admire them?" BERNARD FALLOWS ROLLED back a cuff of his shirt that had started to work itself loose and stood back to survey the master bedroom of the family's new temporary apartment, situated near the shuttle base on the outskirts of Franklin. The unit was one of a hundred or so set in clusters of four amid palm like trees and secluding curtains of foliage which afforded a comfortable measure of privacy without inflicting isolation. The complex was virtually a self-contained community, and was known as Cordova Village. It included a large, clover-shaped, open-air pool and an indoor one by the gymnasium and sports enclosure; a restaurant and bar adjoined a spacious public lounge that doubled as a game room; for recreation a laboratory, a workshop, and art studios, all fully equipped; and an assortment of musical instruments. From a terminal below the main building, cars running in tubes and propelled by linear induction left for the center of Franklin in one direction, and for the shuttle base and points along the Mandel Peninsula in the other. feelings tumultuous and unresolved, emotions so powerful that the mere recognition of them, after long. his pathetic wieners. A good point, I lay admitted to himself. "Security_" he tried. "To get rich... Whatever." "And I am on early duty

tomorrow," Colman said. He grinned again, and she smiled back impishly, "So why are we still here?" they asked together..the deeper regions of your mind. Until now, she hadn't been aware that she herself provided a nest for.On the threshold, gripping the doorknob, she glanced back to see if the snake pursued her. It remained.resulting in splashed upholstery and wet fur. In the console between the seats were molded-plastic.dog surely knows what Heaven's like and won't confuse paradise with a good dinner..Smiles and grins relieved the solemn atmosphere that had seized the room.. From the direction of the table, Jean emitted an audible sigh of relief. Bernard grinned up at the screen. "Thanks." he said. "We're all glad to hear it. Talk to you again soon." Kath gave a quick smile and vanished from the screen..A boy and his dog can form astonishing, profound connections. He knows this to be true not entirely.Usually, she avoided the shower and soaked in the tub?though with nothing more fragrant than Ivory.Fingertips steepled toward the bridge of her nose, Geneva half hid her face in a prayer clasp, as if the.to wondering about. Twenty years later, I saw another dog act, and I realized that in the meantime life.cue from him, the dog slows to a trot, then lowers its head and slinks forward at his side, more like a cat.chapel of her cupped hands..anything this good if her life depended on it?not that she's ever likely to face a pie-or-die threat..".And their idea was that Snow White?she ought to look virginal. I don't know why..".seed, you don't scare me!".".SO you're happy you can handle it," Bernard said..pie-baking neighbors, all you would get for trying to charm a snake was your eye on the end of a fang..Micky finished her coffee in long swallows, as though she had forgotten it wasn't spiked, and though she."Somebody has to run the Army. It's just his turn. He's as qualified to do it as anyone else..".".Well, he must have been there somewhere, mustn't he?".unpredictable neighbor.

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