

## ANMERKUNGEN UBER DIE GESCHICHTE DER REICHSTADTE

"But there is no specifically defined right for the Director to extend that privilege to his successor," Fulmire replied. "You cannot attempt to extract any form of assurance from me concerning the possible resolution of such a question. My presuming the right to give any such assurance would be highly illegal, as would be any consequential actions that you might take. I repeat, I have no more to say." CHAPTER THIRTY FIVE. The snake lay looped like a tossed rope on the floor, as dead as Leilani had left it. Beyond the hard-packed barnyard earth lies a recently mown lawn. A concrete birdbath. Beds of roses. Barefoot, she went into the kitchen, where Geneva was preparing dinner. A small electric fan, set on the. What troubled Fulmire was the specter of Kalens's emerging from the midst of it all as a virtual dictator, with Borftein supporting him and straining to be let off the leash. Every faction would see such a concentration of power as a potential battering ram to be harnessed exclusively for the advancement of its own cause, and even more as an instrument to be denied at all costs to its rivals. In an explosive situation like that anything could happen, and Fulmire had visions of the whole Mission tearing itself apart in internecine squabbling with a strong possibility of bloodshed at the end of it all when frustrations boiled over. The only force that he could see with any potential for exerting a stabilizing influence was the more moderate consensus as represented by the Mayflower I's population as a whole; and Lechat, possibly, could provide a means of mobilizing it before things got out of hand. -an unfamiliar face by the side of Swyley, who was still standing. He had short-cropped hair, a hard-eyed, inscrutable, clean-shaven face, and was standing impassively with his arms folded across his chest. "Who's this?" Sirocco said "He's not from D Company," "Well, it sure doesn't pay any money." Colman turned his head toward Hanlon. "What do you say, Bret?" "Not anymore," Micky said, surprised to hear herself reply at all, let alone so revealingly. "If you mean systems of beliefs based, despite their superficial appearances to the contrary, on morbid obsessions with death, hatred, decay, dehumanization, and humiliation, then the answer to your question is no," she said, looking at Colman. She glanced at her grandchildren. "But if a dedication to life, love, growth, achievement, and the powers of human creativity qualify in your definition, then yes, you could say that Chiron has its religion." skids and nearly falls on a cascade of loose shale, thrashes through an unseen cluster of knee-high sage. "That's right. I don't own a gun." Geneva's sudden smile was more radiant than the candlelight. "Now. Colman came out of the Omar Bradley Block and began walking quickly toward the main gate. Vehicles were landing and taking off continually in the depot area while ammunition boxes were hastily unloaded from ground trucks; the barracks area seemed to be alive with squads doubling this way and that, and officers shouting orders. Sandbagged weapons pits that hadn't existed hours earlier had appeared at strategic places, and new ones were still being dug. demand. Since we are not talking about a technologically backward environment, a considerable degree of expertise in modern industrial processes would be essential to the fulfillment of that obligation, which gives us, in Engineering, an indispensable role. I trust you see my point." his panic. He throws the door open, plunges down the steps, and stumbles recklessly onto the blacktop. Shunning suicide, old Sinsemilla nevertheless embraced self-mutilation, though in moderation. She flat if you don't stay out of the way." Out of the warm night into the pleasantly cool restaurant, into eddying tides of appetizing aromas that what I've always thought. If I'd ever realized differently, I wouldn't have just. . . stood by." "No offense, Micky, but the story of Dr. Doom and his multiple homicides is a dreary tale, more tedious. twenty-one others in an economy pack at a discount hardware store. something that required no effort, no slightest sacrifice. Jay decided he'd had enough, excused himself with a mumble, and took his book into the lounge. His father was sprawled in an armchair, talking politics with Jerry Pernak, a physicist friend who had dropped by an hour or so earlier. Politics was another mystery that Jay assumed would mean something one day. "Well, maybe I've padded your bill to make up for not keeping that ten thousand," he said, though he. "Still, man, that was impressively more colorful than anything I was expecting. We got more than we." "Hi," the paunchy man greeted amiably. "I'm Clem. These are Carla and Hermann, and Francine and Boris. The big guy here is Cromwell, and the little lady up top is Amy. Well, I guess... welcome aboard." ". "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. "To your approval, I trust," he said. Celia had suggested a cognac earlier on, when Stern had asked her preference for an after dinner liqueur. "Yes," 'Sal replied. "Forty years ago this was just a few domes and a shuttle port. The main base that you came in through was only built about ten years ago. Back in the early days, the Founders started changing the designs that had been programmed into the Kuan-yin's computers, and the machines did their best to comply." She sighed. "And this is what it ended up like. We could change it, of course, but most people seem to prefer it the way they've always known it. There 'were some ghastly mistakes at times, but at least it taught us to think things through properly early on in 'life. The other towns farther out are all more recent and a lot tidier, but they're all different in their own ways." Another zoom shot revealed that the man delivered by the Jaguar was Congressman Jonathan Sharmer. sixty-year-old woman. "Micky, sweetie, did you have a good day?" "Too hard," Geneva declared proudly. "Which service?" the terminal inquired. "Communications," Fulmire answered, speaking slowly and with his face still thoughtful. "Find Paul Lechat for me and put him through if he's free, would you. And route this via a secured channel." "Dumb." not merely a passing madness or an enduring insanity, but also passion. If looniness could be converted. Some of the station's huge storage tanks hold diesel fuel, which is combustible but not highly explosive. diner, gift shop, and according to one highway sign glimpsed earlier, a "full range of services," whatever. The Mayflower II had the general form of a Wheel mounted near the thin end of a roughly cone-shaped axle, which was known as the Spindle and extended for over six miles from the base of the magnetic ram scoop funnel at its nose to the enormous parabolic reaction dish forming its tail. Colman groaned. The target

could only be the Kuan-yin. If the strike succeeded it would leave Sterm in command of the only strategic weapons left on the planet, and in a position to dictate any terms he chose; if he failed, then Sterm and his last few would take the whole of the Mayflower II with them when the Kuan-yin rose above Chiron's rim to retaliate. Outside the lock, the first carrier loaded with troops in zero-pressure combat suits moved away and disappeared into the tunnel that Brad and his party had appeared from. After trembling against the boot toe, the five-dollar bill blows free . . . and twirls under the truck. . . mystery, and moment. . . level of ambition is about I hat of an old basset hound on a hot summer afternoon. . . A lopsided smile tugged at the right corner of the girl's mouth, and unmistakable merriment enlivened her hands, something to keep the serpent away from her face. . . "What about when he was screwing the country?" bribed, anyway. They aren't politicians, after all. If the National Security Agency also has operatives in. The kit was a deluxe model, similar to any fisherman's plastic tackle box with a clamshell lid. Dr. Doom. "The potential's there." of kindness, the kitchen staff might warm at once to him and point him toward his quarry. . . either corner of her mouth, and no sportive note informed her voice as she met Micky's stare with a rousing the farmer and his wife. . . Colman nodded. "Gone to the storeroom with Hanlon and Lechat. Everything was quiet upstairs when we left" . . . hiding behind a sofa or curled in die fetal position on the floor of a closet. . . He turned back to find her holding a phial of capsules. She popped one into her mouth and smiled impishly as she offered the phial to Colman. "It's Saturday, why not live it up a little?" He scowled and shook his head. Anita pouted. "They're good. Shrinks say they relieve repressions and allow the consciousness to expand. We should get to know ourselves." "Jerry said some interesting things, and they make some sense," Bernard answered, setting the jig down on the bench before him, and sitting back on his stool. . . ~The Chironians might have some strange ways, but they have a lot of respect-for us as well as for each other. That's not such a bad way for people to be. Sure, maybe we're going to have to learn to get along without some of the things we're used to, but there are compensations." . . . searching for them in certain mountains in Montana and other places they like to hang out. So we're. "It's an idea," Bernard said, looking up at Lechat. "But it needs more of what Kath said-impact." . . . something seemed to turn with horrid laziness, like a body twisting slowly, slowly back and forth at the. "Mmmm. So you don't really know anything about his experience or aptitude. He was just someone you met casually who read too much into something you-said. Right?" "I need more than a few right now. How much did your Navigator cost?" Noah asked. . . Curtis, he examines his face in the mirror. . . "Not really." "I've talked to shrinks. They're all crazy. How do they know whether I know me or not? Do you know how your head works inside?" Anita shook it in a way that said she didn't care all that much either. Colman's scowl deepened, more from frustration at a promise that was beginning to evaporate than from disapproval of something that wasn't his business. "Then how do you expect a pill to figure it out?" "Cute little slippery thingy won't kill you, Leilani. Little thingy just wants what we all want, baby. Little mother anywhere." "I don't get your attitude." . . . psychology and self-esteem." "Well, that's something, anyway," Sirocco said. "Stay there, Bret, and don't let anyone touch anything. I'll get onto Brigade right away. We'll have some more people over there in a few minutes." He returned to Colman. "Get two sections out of bed, and have one draw equipment and the other standing by. And get an ambulance and crew over there right away for Emmerson and Crealey." Hanlon disappeared from the screen, and Sirocco tapped a call to Brigade. "It looks as if the fall-guy has gone down, Steve." Finally, he starts up toward the second floor. The stairs softly protest. As he ascends, he stays close to. "It's not subject to finite arithmetic," Pernak agreed. "But why does it have to be? Our ideas of currency are based on its being backed by a finite standard because that's all we've ever known. The gold-standard behind the Chironians' currency is the power of their minds, which they consider to be an infinite resource. Therefore they do their accounting with a calculus of infinities. You take something from infinity, and you've still got infinity left." He shrugged. "It's consistent. I know it sounds crazy to us, but it fits with the way they think". Jay jumped up and ran to a closet for a jacket. He looked at Jean as he pulled it on. "Yes, Mother, I'll be careful." "You want a glass?" she asked. "The bottle's probably cleaner." "Has to be," she agreed as she headed. Why does man kill? He kills for food. And not only food: frequently, there must be a beverage. . . A good point, Jay admitted to himself. "Security\_" he tried. "To get rich... Whatever." "Some of the Mayflower II's modules have sky-roofs with steel outer shutters, don't they," Kath said. "We all have to pay our debts," Nanook said unhelpfully. "I can remember the one that first taught me to talk," Abdul said. "It's still operating today, up there on the Kuan-yin. But the ones you see today have changed a lot." The display of tact seemed to do the trick. The Chironian held his eye for a moment longer, and then nodded. "Very well." Inwardly Colman breathed a sigh of relief. The women were evidently willing to allow the man to speak for them too. They exchanged quick, barely perceptible nods, stood up, and gathered their possessions. Two of the SD troopers moved to assist them with a show of respect that Colman found surprising. . . Jay was evidently developing a feel for Chironian directness. "We're kind of curious about the people inside," he said. "Especially my dad. It's funny that he wasn't told anything about it." "It's a wonderment, isn't it?" the girl said. "More than a wonderment. It's impossible." Chang laughed. "It's okay. We won't be going very high, and it'll be more walking than anything else. There won't be anything more risky than maybe a few daskrends showing up." . . . back toward the Windchaser, not with so many altercations likely to be rejoined if they do. They can't. "Is it?" Geneva still leaned forward. The slow unsynchronized throbbing of the candle flames cast an. "Maybe," Leilani continued, "you think that would be interesting conversation, even if sort of gross, but." "I agree," Marcia Quarrey said. She looked at Borftein. "If that's the case, then sending in the SD's would only confirm their fears. It would be the worst thing we could do." "Better late than never, I suppose," another commented, glancing at the painter, who was still there. The painter nodded but didn't reply. . . Donella declares, "If anyone around here has a box of chocolates for a brain, then he's sitting in front of." "How old were you then?" Eve asked curiously. . . She had to escape from the snake. Get to her bedroom. Try to barricade that door against her mother's. Bernard noticed several

young girls who couldn't have been much more than Marie's age wheeling or carrying babies, before he registered with a jolt that the babies were probably their own. Mixed with the shock of the realization came a twinge of relief that he had left lean and Marie at home. Explaining this was going to require some delicate handling. And the way Jay was eyeing the Chironian girls Spelled more trouble in store farther along the line. In some ways, looking back, the simple and orderly pattern of life aboard the Mayflower II had had its advantages, he was beginning to realize.. "I don't explain the doctor," Leilani said. "I just quote him." "He sounds like a perfectly dreadful man,." "They must be, mustn't they," Mrs. Crawford agreed blissfully. She shook her head. "In some ways it seems almost criminal to take them, but..." she sighed, "I'm sure they'd just be wasted otherwise. After all, those people are obviously savages and! quite incapable of appreciating the true value of anything." Celia's throat tightened, but she managed to remain quiet. Mrs. Crayford fussed with her pile of boxes. "Oh, dear, I wonder if I should leave some of them here after all and have them picked up later. I'm not at all sure we can carry them the rest of the way with just the two of us." Merrick motioned silently toward a chair on the opposite side of the desk and continued to gaze at the screen without ever glancing up. Fallows sat. After some ten seconds he began feeling uncomfortable. What had he done wrong in the last few days? Had there been something he'd forgotten?... or failed to report, maybe?... or left with loose ends dangling? He racked his brains but couldn't think of anything. Finally, unnerved, Fallow managed to stammer, "Er .. you wanted to see me, sir." ..overheating vehicles.. To the girl, Geneva said, "So you don't believe Lukipela went off with aliens." "How far have they penetrated?" Colman asked.. "He's been all over television," Leilani said.. A maximum-zoom shot captured the young brunette who answered the bell. In skintight shorts and a. to the pair of you. I hope everything works out." "Thanks," Pernak acknowledged.. from movies and books, but from experience with animals in the past.. But a stepfather who had committed eleven murders? Who killed elderly women? And a little boy in a. She might remain in this state for five or six hours, in rare cases even as long as eight or ten.. Micky kept the vodka under the sweater because she didn't want to see it each time that she opened the. to sing along with.. Dim gray rectangles float in the dark: curtained windows. He crosses the room toward them, struggling. "I didn't think it would, so I won't say it."

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