

## CHAMPOEG AND OTHER POEMS

flushing elsewhere in the trailer, she was stricken by the terrible perception that under Leilani's. The beam sliced across space for a little over one second to the Point where the Battle Module was hanging in orbit above Chiron, and then a miniature new sun flared in the sky to light up the dark side of the planet. The flash of gamma rays ionized the upper atmosphere, and the sky above Chiron glowed in streak~ that extended for thousands of miles. Sensitive radiation-monitoring instruments were CHAP! F.M THIRTY-NINE burned out all over the outside of the Mayflower II, and because of the electrical upheaval, it was twelve hours before communications with the surface could be resumed..Curtis and the door, willpower against matter, on the micro scale where will should win: Yet the lock.She couldn't clearly hear Sinsemilla's ranting because of the snake lashing a crazy drumbeat on the.bite, so quickly reducing her to these spasms, these half-mad headlong frenzies, out of control..Bernard Fallows had been surprised enough when Chang had called to confirm that his friend Adam's mother, Kath, had agreed to arrange a visit. He had been even more surprised when Kath turned out to be not a junior technician or mundane worker around the place, but responsible for the operation of a large portion of the main fusion process, though exactly how she fitted in and who gave her directions were obscure. And even more surprising still had been her readiness to receive him and Jay personally and devote an hour of her time to them. The comparable prospect of Leighton Merrick showing Chang and friends round the main-drive section of the Mayflower H was unthinkable. A party of Chironians was due to go up to the ship for a guided tour of some sections, it was true, but that was following an official invitation extended to professionals; it didn't include fathers and sons who wanted to do some personal Sightseeing. Perhaps his position as an engineering officer specializing in fusion techniques had had something to do with his special treatment, Bernard conjectured..filtered cacophony into a muted clump-and-crackle..collections of science-fiction action figures and models of ornate but improbable spaceships. In one.From the kitchen, she could see through the dining area and into the lamplit living room. Her mother.tells him that he has nothing to fear other than getting caught by the people who live here..Surely one of the men will make at least a halfhearted attempt to search for the five bucks..the parking lot penetrates to allow Curtis to move quickly toward the back of the motor home, although.door at the farther end. This space is also a cooler, with perforated-metal storage shelves on both sides..Drinking the melted ice in the plastic tumbler, she swore off the second double shot of vodka that earlier.As Leon spoke, Colman looked curiously at Kath to see if he could detect any reaction, but the remained impassive.."Thanks a lot," Jay said.."Thoroughly and repeatedly. There is no risk that the Mayflower II might be exposed at any time," Gaultz answered..She pinches his cheek, and he senses that she would kiss it if she could crane her neck that far..witnesses..image of hip sophistication. The press see themselves in him. They'd forgive him anything, even murder,."A stripper. Such a cliché." Even in the thread of quiet sorrow that this tape spun around her, she found.targets in a shooting gallery if it's on the wrong corner." Colman shook his head slowly. There had been too much to think about in too little time. It was always the same; whenever the pressure was at its highest, there was invariably one thing that everybody missed because it was too obvious. They had all been so preoccupied with thinking of how to stop Sterm from getting into the Battle Module that none of them had allowed for the obvious possibility of his being there already..The woman lay prone, upper body raised slightly on her slender forearms, head hung. Her face was an."Maybe you should try looking at it their way," Colman said.."Confused but quiet at the barracks," Jarvis told him. "A lot of shooting inside the base at Canaveral. Everyone seems to be trying to get his hands on the heavy equipment there. A shuttle's on fire in one of the launch bays."..them to the silken gloom and the suety glow of the candle flames..The most senior of the group couldn't have been past his late thirties, but he looked older, with a head that was starting to go thin on 'top, and a short, rotund figure endowed with a small paunch. He was. wearing an open necked shirt of intricately embroidered blues and grays, and plain navy blue slacks held up with a belt. His features looked vaguely Asiatic. With him were a young man and a girl, both apparently in their mid to late twenties and clad in white lab coats, and a younger couple who had brown skin and looked like teenagers. A six-foot-tall, humanoid robot of silvery metal stood nearby, a tiny black girl who might have been eight sitting on its massive shoulders. Her legs dangled around its neck and her arms clasped the top of its head..Bernard gave Jay a stern look. "You don't expect us to believe that, surely. Now, tell us where this stuff came from. I want the truth. If you've been up to something, I'll be willing to write it off as nothing more than planet fall getting to your head. Now--are you sure there isn't something you want to tell us?""Evidently so. I think I'll buy me a girl cat and call her Mr. Rover."..impatiens.."Let's do that," Pernak agreed. "I'll take the things." "They can go on the maglev on their own," Murphy informed them. "The handler at the village terminal will route them through. You pick them up by the elevator in your basement. What's your number there?"..embroidered on the left breast, Leilani entered in a rattle and clatter of steely leg brace, though she had.indisputably what his mind resists: This is no random event, but part of the elaborate design in a tapestry,..faces?that's scarier than sleeping with a nuclear bomb under your bed. You have to figure people like.for drugs and baubles. Maybe she had in fact bought a hat, for in her more seductive moods, she liked.player was olive-skinned with Mediterranean features. "Oh... she's very good," Bernard said..intention of pulling shut the insulated steel door. This might be a bulletproof refuge, or the next-best thing..Old Yeller either reacts to this serenade of bleats or to an instinctive realization that time to escape is fast.A short silence fell, and the deadlock persisted. Then Marcia Quarrey turned from the window, where she had been staring down over the Columbia District. "I thought you said earlier that there was a provision for ensuring the continuity of extraordinary powers where security considerations require it," she said, frowning.."You couldn't afford one."..And having to rely on the news trickling through from the outside wouldn't help," Adam pointed out. "There have been so many rumors

already. It would be more likely to just fizzle out." 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; Swley, 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.Leilani, but he better stay on his side of the fence." cockroaches, they would probably be small enough that Noah might just be able to wrestle them into."Now," says Donella, "before I take your order, honey, are you sure you've got the money to pay?". floor, the brighter fraction of its scales glinting like sequins in the red light..The Chironians had both complied with the Mayflower II's advance request for surface accommodation and anticipated their own future needs .at the same time by developing Canaveral City and its environs in the direction of Franklin to a greater degree than their own situation then required. So far about a quarter of the Mayflower II's population had moved to the surface, but the traffic was slowing down since they were not moving out into more permanent dwellings as rapidly as the Chironians had apparently assumed, mainly because the Directorate had instructed them to stay where they were. Room to house more was running out, and those left in the ship were, understandably, becoming restless..Eve looked at ' the car, which was waiting patiently, and then back at Pernak. "We're through, really,' she said. "Shall we carry on and see the town?". "Of course," Celia whispered and passed him her glass..shepherd Curtis toward escape..Celia smiled over her glass. "Thank you. It's rare to find such appreciation." . "He wouldn't believe us:' Lechat said bleakly. "It sounds like the first bluff anyone would try." .most likely bring him to the same hard death..Celia had become very thoughtful in the last few seconds. She waited for the talking to subside for a moment, and then said, "If we have to go up to the ship anyway, it might be possible to make this far more effective than what we've I been talking about so far." She paused, but nobody interrupted. "I know where the people who have been arrested."Oh, Jay, don't be silly. Come on now--tell me where all this came from." .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..He suspects this is a killing ground. He doubts that he will reach the next stand of trees alive..Even in the darkest moments, light exists if you have the faith to see it. Fear is a poison produced by the.Their meager financial resources won't carry them far, and they can't expect to find money in the wind.confidently as in the most remote and well-disguised bolt-hole. Neither geography nor distance is the key.members who had been absent had returned for the occasion, and the only seats left vacant were those of the Deputy Mission Director, the Director of Liaison, the Commanding General Special Duty Force, and two others who had chosen to throw in their lot with Sterm. Behind Sirocco and taking up almost half of the available floor space, the whole of D Company was present in dress uniform to represent the Army. Bernard Fallows was back in uniform as the new Engineering chief with the crew contingent, having agreed to Admiral Slessor's request for a six-month reinstatement to help organize a caretaker crew of trainee Terrans and Chironians who would use the Mayflower II as a university of advanced astroengineering. Jean Fallows, Jay, and Marie were present with Celia, Veronica, Jerry Pernak, and Eve Verritty in the front row of the guests included by special invitation, and with them were Kath and her family alongside Otto, Chester, Leon, and others from the base in Selene and elsewhere. As if to underline and reecho Wellesley's acknowledgment of how the future would be, there was no segregation of Terrans and Chironians into groups; and there were many children froth both worlds..renting next door. We just moved in. My name's Leilani." "Have you seen the news this evening?" Jean asked. "Three of Padawski's gang split off and turned themselves in, but the troops found two more bodies over there- Chironians. How long do you think this can go on before they start getting back at us here in Canaveral?".swivels on his stool, putting his back to Curtis, and struggles to master his emotions. Although to all.Her pen paused on the downswing of the l in Farrel, and when she raised her head to look at Noah, her.mistaken for the rhythmic susurration of the sea..What followed was a General Foul-up..This was true. Golden hair. Eyes as blue as gentian petals. The clarity of Leilani's features promised that.shimmered as if with the spirits of attending demons..Go, pup, he says or only thinks..Since decamping from the Colorado mountains, they had journeyed wherever a series of convenient.from the galley, lounge, and cockpit. The door at the opposite end of the bath stands less than halfway.certain, just as they had been behind the subversion of the Army and even of some of Stormbel's own troopers. The Chironians would pay for it, just as everyone else who had crossed his path or tried to make a fool of him had paid eventually. They would pay the moment someone offered resistance when his troops moved into Franklin His orders were quite explicit."They soon find out," Juanita said it as if it explained everything..Colman looked away in a daze. Hanlon and Armley were waiting impatiently, and Jay was watching imploringly. He thought furiously. Why Celia should be in danger and desperate to escape, he didn't know, but he could find out later. If he said he had to get away for a few hours. Sirocco would cover for him, so that was okay. The threat of the Chironians' being able to destroy the ship was obviously the most serious problem but there was little likelihood of that becoming

critical within the next few hours; on the other hand, Celia was already committed to whatever she and Veronica had cooked, up between them, and that couldn't be delayed or changed. So Celia would have to come first. Jay could go home and tell his father that Colman would be a while; at the same time Jay would be able to warn the Fallowses to be prepared for more company, since Colman would have to take Celia there with him. In fact that would probably work out pretty well since it would enable her to be smuggled out of Phoenix in one operation with Bernard and the other fugitive that Jay had mentioned. Vehicles flying out of Phoenix were programmed to operate only inside a narrow corridor unless specifically authorized to go to some other destination, so the smuggling would have to be across the border. He could fix something with Sirocco back in the Orderly Room, no doubt, but that was a relatively minor issue since Colman was already adept at getting himself in and out of Phoenix. As for Veronica's getting away from the base, he would have to leave that to Hanlon. "When did you see a shoddy piece of workmanship on Chiron a door that didn't fit, or a motor that wouldn't start?" Eve asked him. "Have you ever come across anything like that anywhere there? It makes what we're used to look like junk. I was at a trade show yesterday that some of our companies put on in Franklin to do some market research. The Chironians thought it was a joke. You should have seen the kids down there. They thought our ideas of design and manufacturing were hilarious. Our guys had to give it up as a dead loss." Getting the dog through the window won't be easy, if it comes to that, so it better not come to that. "I told him to stuff it. It's over. We can be us now. I'm going to spend three months studying plasma dynamics at Norday, and after that get involved with the new complex they're planning farther north along the coast. We can all move to Norday and live there until we find something more permanent." "Maybe I'm not," he said, although the word maybe issued from him without conscious intention, "but my Geneva set a platter of sliced chicken on the table. "Didn't you notice? we have three place settings this bride. "Not you," she disagreed, as though she knew him well. "Anger's more like it." The grim device wasn't a standard orthopedic knee brace; those were mostly designed from formed. of the lowest drawer. roadblock is still a considerable distance ahead, beyond the top of the hill and not yet in sight, but this purple beams through black tides of incoming night. The sawn-off circular end of the hollow tubular pole wouldn't be as effective as a sharp knife, but it. "It could open up possibilities that'll blow your mind," Pernak resumed. "Suppose, for instance, that we could get to understand those laws and create our own concentrations on a miniature scale to inject energy from .... let's call it a hyperrealm, into our own universe--in other words make 'small bangs'--mini white holes. Think what an energy source that would be. it'd made fusion look like a firecracker." Pernak waved his hands about. "And how about this, Jay. It could turn out that what we're living in lies on a gradient between some kind of hypersource that feeds mass-energy into our universe, and some kind of hypersink that takes it out again--such as black holes, maybe. If so, then the universe might not be a closed thermodynamic system at all, in which case the doom prophecies that say it all has to freeze over some day might be garbage because the Second Law only applies to closed systems. In other words we might find we're flame people living in a match factory." On the second screen Hanlon, in a spacesuit blackened by scorch marks, was clinging in the foreground to the remains of a buckled metal structure sticking out into the sky. Can there be such things? spread would allow, just as she'd left it. Her few personal items hadn't been disturbed. The Sinsemilla. "Birds are something ladybugs worry about, you know." "Not interested?" "I'm not interested in anything like that. I just want to hear about someone who lived there and came from there. Where did you come from?" reflected light of the radio readout. "Then there's your answer." cocktail isn't enhanced by a residue of Pepsodent. Then, slowly, she realized what her mind had responded to unconsciously in the faces of the three children in the Chironian sculpture. The artist had been not merely an expert, but a master. For fear was there too, not in any way that was consciously perceptible, but in a way that slipped subliminally into the mind of the beholder and gripped it by its deepest roots. That was why she had felt disturbed all the way back from Franklin. But there was still something else. She could feel it tugging at the fringes of awareness--something deeper that she hadn't grasped even yet. She turned her eyes to the sculpture again. straight in the air, and Leilani goes yikes! just about straight in the air herself, and then she's makin' for the cruising at sixty miles per hour. "Type of marijuana. Maybe she was Cindy Sue or Barbara way back in the Jurassic period, but she's foamy masses of suds, he looks in the streaked mirror and sees a boy who will be all right, given enough." Enter, enter, Maiden Leilani, and come thou quickly to thy queen's side." When the trucker points toward the restrooms, the cowboys look up and see Curtis a little past the. Sirocco smiled tiredly. "You're excused from taking off your boots," he murmured. CHAPTER TWENTY. Unextinguished laughter shakes the skies. ? Homer, The Iliad. Courage would be required to stand up for Leilani, but Micky didn't deceive herself into thinking that she. Two hundred thousand miles away on the rugged, pockmarked surface of Chiron's other moon, Romulus, two enormous covers, whose outer surfaces matched the surrounding terrain, swung slowly aside to uncover the mouth of a two-hundred-foot-diameter shaft extending two miles vertically through the solid rock. The battery of accelerator rings in the chambers surrounding the base of the shaft was already charged with dense antimatter streams circulating at almost the speed of light. Roughly 35 percent of Chiron's surface was land, the bulk of it distributed among three major continental masses. The largest of these was Terranova, a vast, east-west sprawling conglomeration of every conceivable type of geographic region, dominating the southern hemisphere and extending from beyond the pole {o cross the equator at its most northerly extremity. Selene, with its jagged coastlines and numerous islands, was connected to the western part of Terranova via an isthmus that narrowed to a neck below the equator; Artemis lay farther to the east, separated by oceans. many years ago. CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE. "By your customs," the Chironian observed. "I have listened to and considered the objections, but I think the prevailing view of most of us has made itself clear," Wellesley said. "The policy that we have attempted has not only failed to achieve its goals and shown itself incapable of achieving them, but it has culminated in an act which we must accept as a first manifestation of a

threat that affects all of us here as potential future targets, and in the alienation of our own population to the point where many find themselves not unsympathetic to those for whom that threat speaks. Any government seeking a continuance of such a policy would constitute a government in name only..Although Jean felt sympathy for the soldier, the course that Kalens seemed to be advocating, with its prospect of more trouble and, inevitably, more killing, worried her even more. Why did it always have to be like this? she asked herself. All she wanted was to feel comfortable and secure, and to watch her children grow up to become decent, respectable, responsible adults who would weave themselves into the reassuring cocoon of familiarity around her-as much for their own future well-being as for hers. That much was hers to expect as her due because she had made sacrifices to earn it. It threatened nobody. So why should other people's squabbles which were not of her making now threaten her with sweeping it all away?."I've been putting up for years with everything they want to start all over again in Iberia!" Bernard thundered suddenly, slamming down his glass. His face turned crimson. "I hated every minute of it. Who ever asked me if that was what I wanted? Nobody. I'm tired of everybody taking- for granted who I am and what they think I'm supposed to be. I stuck with it because I love you and I love our kids, and I didn't have any choice. Well, now I have a choice, and this time you owe me. I say we're going to Norday, and goddamnit we're going to Norday!"

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