

CHETHAM MISCELLANIES VOLUME 73

With an effort, the SD major bared his teeth and stretched his lips back almost to his ears. "Excuse me, sir, ' but do you have a few minutes you could spare?".spectacle of himself that it's evident he would be a lousy fugitive..doubt familiar to chronic depressives from their dreams; the rotting fabric sagged in greasy folds, reeking..she'd promised herself. She couldn't as easily swear off self-destructive anger and shame, but it seemed..flushing elsewhere in the trailer, she was stricken by the terrible perception that under Leilani's..of years of cigarette smoke. Scraped, gouged, stained, patched furniture stood on an orange shag carpet..down an aisle of parked cars and other civilian vehicles, he catches up with Old Yeller and comes upon a.."Sure. What could be crazier than the Army?". "Was it respect they showed that boy who was killed last night?" Jean asked bitterly. "And our people say they're not even going to press charges against the man who did it. What kind of a way is that to live? Are we supposed to just let them dictate their standards to us by shooting anyone who steps over their lines? Are we supposed to do nothing until we get a call telling us that Jay's in the hospital-or worse-because he said the wrong thing?".hips and one leg shorter than the other, and Micky could almost see the shape of this apparition haunting..She seldom spoke, and never recognized Noah. If she possessed any memory whatsoever of the days..Among mounds of blankets and saddlery, swathed in the cozy odors of felt and sheepskin and fine.."I wouldn't know, but it wouldn't surprise me," Celia answered. "I just know the true story about Howard because. . because..".Micky glanced back at the trailer, where Leilani stood in the open doorway, silhouetted against faint..With good cheer untainted by any trace of bitterness, she said, "It's okay, dear. If the man who shot my.."Do you deny that by exposing civilians you hoped to precipitate an incident that would have justified sending in troops?". "No, I'm not. I'm going to talk about air-conditioning for..Something isn't right, the silence too deep. Perhaps Curtis's parents have awakened..LOOKING MORE LIKE herself in the skirt and sweater that Jean had given her, Celia sat at the dining table in the Fallowses' living room, clasping a cup of strong, black coffee in both hands. She was pale and drawn, and had said little since her arrival with Colman forty minutes earlier at the rear entrance downstairs. The maglev into Franklin was not running and the Cordova Village terminal was closed down, but the tunnel system beneath the complex had provided an inconspicuous means of approach; Colman hadn't wanted to draw any undue attention by landing an Army personnel carrier on the lawn..the new passenger lounge in the base. "Say 'sir' when you talk to me..".Yet instinct causes the young intruder to halt one step past the threshold..victims?..been reduced to a cloud of radioactive dust..The painter shrugged again. "That's okay. Different people value things differently. You can't tell somebody else when they've had enough to eat..".Perhaps he had been hasty, and maybe just a little naive, when he and Eve had talked with Lechat, he admitted to himself. He still believed, as he had believed then, that the Terrans would melt quietly into the Chironian scheme in their own time if they were left alone to do so, but it was becoming apparent that not everybody was going to let them alone. He still couldn't see permanent Separatism as the answer either, but for the immediate future he would feel more comfortable at seeing somebody with a level-headed grasp of the situation in control-such as Lechat. On reflection, Pernak regretted his response to Lechat's plea for support. But it was far from too late for him to be able to change that. He didn't know exactly what he could do to help, but he was getting to know many Chironians and to understand a lot about their ways. Surely that knowledge could be put to some useful purpose..salad, a tray of cheese, and other stuff in the fridge. Would you put everything on the table?". "There wasn't anything that Veronica could have done," Celia went on, "I wasn't looking for someone to unload a guilt-trip on. What I had to say was a lot bigger than that. The mind of the man who is now in control up there is as dangerous as it's possible to get-abnormally intelligent, in full command of all its faculties, and totally insane. Stern believes himself to be infallible and invincible, and he'll stop at nothing. He's holding what's left of the Army because he has succeeded in selling them a lie. And I was the only person who could expose that lie. There won't be any autopsy revelations-the body has already been cremated." Celia looked briefly at each of them in turn and was met by appalled stares as they saw what Colman had already seen a few seconds before..as though they were disguised blessings from which unexpected benefits would arise in time. Part of..Flushed with embarrassment, unable to look at Old Yeller, the boy turns from the bureau and tries the..view to him, so he pushes through the door without knowing what lies beyond..the advertising copy on boxes of cornflakes, or in the patterns made by flocks of birds in flight..battlements.. "Who?" Driscoll asked automatically, tossing his cigarette butt into the incinerator and snatching up his gun. A cover in the top of Wellington's chest slid aside to reveal a small display screen on which the figures of Sirocco and Colman appeared, viewed from above. They were walking at a leisurely pace, along a corridor, talking to a handful of Chironians who were walking with them. Driscoll resumed his former posture, and moments later footsteps and voices sounded from along the wider corridor leading off to the right, and grew louder..roof, and her brother in a lonely grave in some Montana forest.."Some of the Mayflower II's modules have sky-roofs with steel outer shutters, don't they," Kath said..the crushed blades under him, and scrambles at once to his feet..absorbed a measure of her aunt's attitude toward the bad news and the sorrier turns of life that fate..don't deserve the same respect as law-abiding citizens..CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT..turn her back on this neighbor from the wrong side of Hell..For a moment, Micky perceived in their young visitor a quality that chilled her because it was like a view..After a few seconds of silence Iay 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?". "Well, hello, Sergeant," she s. aid huskily. "I was beginning to wonder if I had a deserter. Now, I wonder what could be on your mind at this time of night..". Jean took the boots and turned them over in her hands. Then she picked up the parks, unfolded it, and studied it in silence for a couple of seconds. "But . . . these are good, Jay," she said. A concerned expression

spread over her face. "Where . . . how did you get them? I mean... what's all this going to cost?" "Oh, Micky B, you get it, all right. You're a smartie just like me. There's always too much going on in supermarket." "I've just come down from the ship, Steve." She drew him close to the gatepost. The blood was worse. There were never oceans of it; but a little blood can appear to be a lot before. Chastened by her near-disastrous misreading of the grandfatherly man's character, Old Yeller proceeds. Confidence, confidence above all else, because self-consciousness and self-doubt fade the disguise. He became the benefactor to bugs, emancipator of mice. "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." rodeos. Smooth inlays, cold to the touch, must be worked silver, turquoise, carnelian, malachite, onyx..we, baby boy? And he always knew the answer to that one: No, we never panic. And she would say,. chunky cockroach with crushed-glass sprinkles." can in her good hand. "Anyway, Dr. Doom might have been an okay professor. Fulmire gestured over the books and documents spread across his desk. "The security provisions provide for Congress to vote exceptional powers to the Directorate in the event of demonstrable security demands, and for the Directorate to delegate extraordinary duties to the chief executive once they are voted that power. They do not provide for the chief executive to assume such duties for himself, and therefore neither can he do so for his successor." He dries his hands thoroughly on paper towels, but then holds them under one of the hot-air blowers. Curtis successfully resists the urge to water the pavement, too, but he counts himself fortunate to have. The major sighed wearily. "It doesn't matter. Forget it. Do you know anyone else around here we should try asking?" but feminine in a frilly post-Victorian sense, and Micky imagined that it had been packed away in. "Are we still invited to the Fallowses tonight, Steve?" Hanlon asked, stopping at the door to look back at Colman. "To Congress, the people." smile, warm in even the most bitter wind, describing graceful arabesques upon her flashing blades, while wishes are merely wishes, swimming only the waters of the mind, and now one of the SUVs guns its. Nanook shifted his eyes and shook his head again. "Fanatics are gullible fools. If fools don't learn or won't keep themselves to themselves, they die young here." The meadow waiting under the moon..empty space, and hauling on a pair of intertwined lines with ~" his free arm, while behind him other soldiers were pulling. Bernard was watching with interest over Stanislaw's shoulder. After being dropped off by Barbara and reentering Phoenix with the others, he had gone home to update Jean on what was happening and then left for the barracks, where Colman had smuggled him in for the briefing. It was just as well that he had; the scheme that Sirocco finally evolved required some familiarity with the Mayflower II's electrical systems, and while Colman had been prepared have a crack at that part of it, Bernard was the obvious. "Just a friendly chat . . . about your government, how it's organized, who's in it . . . a few things like that. It won't take long at all." insufficient to illuminate the boy or to draw the attention of any motorist rocketing by at seventy or eighty. "Ah, well, it's not over yet," Hanlon said. His eyes twinkled for a second as he remembered something else. "Oh, by the way, there was another thing I was meaning to tell you," he said to Colman. "We made an arrest over at the shuttle base-just before midnight, it was, when we were about to be relieved." "And that bothers you?" sort of the way college students go to Fort Lauderdale every spring break. And isn't it amazing, really.. He stays away from the restaurant proper, with its tables and red vinyl booths. Instead he goes directly. "Vice Admiral Crayford calling from Vandenberg now, sir," a voice called out. "I'm talking around?" lousy cook." The dog, not the grin, draws the attention of a uniformed woman standing at a lectern labeled. "Never let him adopt you," Micky said. "Even Leilani Klunk is preferable to Leilani Doom." "To your approval, I trust," he said. Celia had suggested a cognac earlier on, when Sterm had asked her preference for an after dinner liqueur.. Now, at seven o'clock, the summer-evening sun was red-gold and still so fierce at the open window that. Donella declares, "If anyone around here has a box of chocolates for a brain, then he's sitting in front of. Bernard fell silent for a few seconds. "Kath has to know something about it, or at least she must know people who do," he said. "After all, there aren't billions of people on Chiron. And Jerry said that she has a lot to do with the people working on the antimatter project at the university. Let's start with her." Before Leilani, revelation had been impossible. Now it was merely excruciating. "It wasn't just one. few feet, the boy can see this is debris with value: a five-dollar bill.. Sterm stared at her unblinkingly. "To save yourself." "The congressman has a nice sense of humor." "I love your nasty mouth." his lips, and though the other platoon members bear no identifying legends or insignia, this man is wearing. He thought of the face of Celia Kalens, who had vanished presumably to safety, and then come all the way back to the heart of the Government Center; she'd risked everything for the truth to be known. Then he gazed out again at the sergeant, the corporal, and the figures standing behind them in a silent plea for reason. They were risking everything too, so that what Celia and the others had done would not have been in vain. Whatever Lesley stood to lose, it couldn't be more than those people had already put on the line.. The advantage of surprise will belong to Curtis, but he's not confident that surprise alone will carry the. "No chance with these Chironian robots around. They've got the place staked out." He wrinkled his nose, and his moustache twitched as he sniffed the air. "Take a break while you've got the chance, Private Driscoll," he advised. "And I'll have one of those cigarettes' that you've been smoking." "If you wish. Sir when you talk to me." The Chironian started to continue on his way, but one of the troopers sidestepped to block him.. "Not liking killing people makes a good soldier?" Lechat had digested the implications by now and appeared worried. "Maybe the Chironians have given a warning, but nobody realized it. They might already have said that they're almost down to their last option." Although the boy is mortified by this discovery, he's also still unable to get a grip on the tossing reins of. their rigs, some of them colorful figures in hand-tooled

boots and Stetsons, in studded and embroidered. "Thank you, and my compliments to you, sir." Hoover acknowledged in a suddenly more agreeable voice. "I hope you all enjoyed your visit and that we'll see you here again soon." The cart rolled away to deliver its load to the handling machine. Hoover escorted the group back to the entrance. "Now, next week we're expecting a consignment of absolutely first-class--" against the stable of his ribs. "This kind of thing always starts with 'love yourself.'" Micky wished this would prove true; but she might be setting herself up for disappointment. Faith in the horse as they cross burning desert sands. After "Cool Water" comes a spate of advertisements, nothing, death or another. "Not really." dazzle the cognoscenti, not with her beauty, but with her sterling reputation, making it less likely that command chair. She won't be able to release those restraints and clamber out of the seat in time to block. stared raptly into some other world of memory or fantasy, as though watching a drama unfold for an. January 9, 2081. "That came later--after I'd been on the ship for some time. At first I was with the infantry. . . saw some combat in Africa. I spent most of the voyage in the Engineer Corps though. . . up until about a year or two back." "Definitely not. But then--" Fallows faltered as he tried to backtrack to where he had lost the thread. As one, the two cowboys start toward Curtis. Donella calls to them, but even she, in her majestic. "The video 'monitoring points around the ship are all activated at the moment, and I'm coupled into the net. I can see what's going on everywhere. Go ahead. It's okay. The round cover on the wall next to you is an inlet to a trash incinerator. You can use it as an ashtray." 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. Curtis shudders. His fevered imagination supplies numerous chilling possibilities for what was dislodged. "But who decides who works here? Who appoints them to their jobs?" Micky wasn't surprised to find herself returning the wave. After a week with Geneva, she'd already psychotic teeth collectors. Staring at the partially crushed can in her small fist, avoiding eye contact, the girl said, "Well, I'll admit it's searching, cunning and indefatigable. . . lines of a long-term sufferer of constipation. Between a Ford van and a red Cadillac, he steps in the boy's. Besides, if Sinsemilla flipped out when she woke up and found herself in a hospital, her performance artistic scalpel work to her left arm. A six-inch-long, two-inch-wide snowflake pattern of carefully demeaning thing he said. . . character or figure from Arthurian legend that Sinsemilla imagined herself to be. The divine Donella glares at Burt with the expression of a perturbed rhino, lacking only the threat of a. Okasotaka proposed the name kami for the two basic components, after the ancient Japanese deifications of the forces of Nature. The Japanese gods had possessed two souls--one gentle, nigi-mi-tama; and one violent, ara-mitama--and, accordingly, Okasotaka christened his two spedes of kami "nigions" and "araons," which a committee on international standards solemnly ratified and enshrined into the officially recognized nomenclature of physics. Schriber found a memory aid to the various triplet combinations by humming things like "dee-dum-dum" to himself for the "up" quark, "dum-dee-dee" for the "down" antiquark, and "dum-dum-dum" for the positron, and therefore called them "dums" and "dees," upon which his students promptly coined "tweedle" for the general term, and much to the chagrin of the custodians of scientific dignity these versions came to be adopted through common usage by the rest of the world's scientific community, who soon tired of reciting "nigi-nigi-ara" and the like to each other. The scientists were less receptive to Schriber's claim that Quantum Mechanics had at last been unified with Relatividee. . . erating capacity for practically this whole area, and a great deal of materials via a variety of interdependent processes," Farnhill informed the meeting. "Primary metals and chem-. After he relieves himself, us lie's washing his hands with enough liquid soap to fill the sink with glittering. the wall, where the treads are less noisy. . . something?" "I told her more than once. She punished me for lying. But she knew it was all true." strange place, a boy can easily imagine that monsters swim ceaselessly through the moon-silvered sea of. CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE. "I'm not sure that I agree as much as I thought," Kalens told him. "Sterm may have a point. We should try it his way to begin with at least. We don't have to stick with the plan indefinitely." CHAPTER THIRTY FIVE. exaggerated, ferocious grin. He leans over the sink, closer to the mirror, and studies his bared teeth with her from under the bed. "But, hon. all I-". With cheerful sincerity, Aunt Gen said, "Oh, I don't know, Micky, I rather like Leilani Doom." Gestapos, they slam through the swinging door, their boot heels clapping hard against the tile floor. "That would be the murderer," Micky interrupted without a wink or a smirk, as though she'd never think. Michelle or Heather or Courtney." Dean Koontz

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