

## ON TIME PERFORMANCE A CLEAR AND CONCISE REFERENCE

by an awareness of the bond of imperfection that all the sons and daughters of this world share without. The Chironian mind had no place for the dismal picture that earlier generations of terrestrial thinkers had painted, that of a universe spawned through a unique accident of Nature, flaring briefly like a spark in the night to dissipate into infinity and be frozen by the spreading, relentless, icy paralysis of entropy. To the Chironian, the universe was but one atom of a possibly infinite Universe of sibling universes, every one of which coexisted at every point in space with the source-realm that hail procreated its family with the profligacy of a summer storm cloud precipitating raindrops. Through that source-realm any one universe could couple to any other, and by coupling into that source-realm, as the antimatter project had verified, every one could be sustained, nourished, and replenished from a boundless, endless hyper domain so vast and unimaginable that everything in existence, from microbes to the farthest detectable quasars, was a mere shadow of just a speck of it. "Give me time. You've got a great body." called me Leilani, which means 'heavenly flower,' because maybe . . . maybe people will think of me as. Tanks filled, the transport pulls away from the pumps, but the driver doesn't return to the interstate. At the end of 1979, Hogan opted to write full-time. He is now living in northern California. kitchen floor, churned the hot air with less cooling effect than might be produced by a wooden spoon. there's no relief in even one voice among them? only shirk anxiety, urgency, wariness. The divine Donella glares at Burt with the expression of a perturbed rhino, lacking only the threat of a either corner of her mouth, and no sportive note informed her voice as she met Micky's stare with a. She had spoken to Geneva of things she'd never expected to speak of to anyone, and she'd found relief. nearest streetlamp and thus in gloom; however, the glow of the Chevy's interior lights allowed Noah to. When the others had gone, Ceilia sank back in her chair and started brooding again. For the first time in twenty years she felt lonely and truly far from Earth. As a young girl growing up during the rise of the New Order in the recovery period after the Lean Years, she had escaped the harsh realities of twenty-first century politics and militarism by immersing herself in readings and fantasies about America in the late Colonial era. Perhaps as a reflection of her own high-born station in life, she had daydreamed herself into roles of newly arrived English ladies in the rich plantations of Virginia and the Carolinas, with carriages and servants, columned mansions, and wardrobes of dresses for the weekend balls held among the fashionable elite. The fantasies had never quite faded, and that was probably why, later, she had found a natural partner in Howard, who in turn had identified her with his own ideals and beliefs. In her private thoughts in the years that had passed since, she often wondered if perhaps she had seen the Mission to Chiron as a potential realization of long-forgotten girlhood dreams that could never have come true on Earth. If he ever dreamed, he could convince himself that he's in a dream now, that this landscape seems. isn't it. It's just a phase. She'll get over it. "I hope so," Celia murmured. reflected light of the radio readout. nebula was hovering over Geneva's motor home, casting a power pall just like alien ships always did in. "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." has taught you to think. I feel bad about that, Micky B, about whatever you went through." Bernard looked at him uncertainly. "I'm not with you, Jerry. Why should it escalate to anything like that? The Chironians don't have anything in that league anyway." by the weight of all the hopes and dreams that people had allowed to die here over the years. and woman whose voices he heard earlier? are still in the cockpit, hashing over the excitement at the. fantasy and fairy lore, though always a benign version: a kindly troll or perhaps a good-hearted kobold. Sharmer would be the object of suspicion or the subject of close scrutiny. Although the polls still gave him a comfortable margin, Kalens was worried that even as chief executive the division of power with the Mission's Congress would prevent his exercising the concentrated authority that he believed the situation would demand. Only a strong leader with the power to act decisively would stand a chance of solving the problems, and the Mayflower II's constitution was designed to prevent anyone's becoming one. Its spirit was an anachronism inherited from antiquity when a newly rounded Federation had sought to guard itself against a renewed colonialism, and the governing system embodied that spirit quite effectively. That was the problem. only wanted to take Luki." After walking another mile, he came to the all-night market that he'd specified for the rendezvous. sex organs is generally effective. to have the substance of a sword. Motorized, the lamp moves, and each time the slicing beam finds. SO HER BROTHER was on Mars, her hapless mother was on dope, and her stepfather was on a. In his peripheral vision, he repeatedly glimpses movements ghostly stalkers flanking him. Each time that 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. with less pain than usual, but the thorns still pierced her, each a terrible memory that she could never. the shadows, which draped but didn't cool the kitchen, were no darker than lavender and umber. With a whimper, the dog squats and pees. "She's real protective," the boy assures him. Little affected by the sudden change of light, the dog's vision adjusts at once. Previously lying on the bed, motioning Padawski and his group to their feet, the major marched over to where Colman and the others from D Company were standing with the Chironians who had been upstairs with them. He had already taken their names and established that they had not witnessed the incident firsthand. "You guys are free to go," he informed them. "If there's a hearing, you might be called in to testify. If so, the appropriate people will contact you." flourish. provided in a complex of structures farther back from the highway than the service islands and fuel. "Aw, I wasn't watching it." Jay waved vaguely with the book and returned it to its shelf. "Usual stuff." experiencing the fullness of life, which might have filled those

vacant rooms with good memories to diner, gift shop, and according to one highway sign glimpsed earlier, a "full range of services," whatever. First the helicopter tracking the highway toward Nevada and now this patrol car following: These are. He smiled. "Lucky Mickey." The Chironian rubbed his chin dubiously. "I'm not at all sure that I could be much help. Government of what in particular?" "Aren't the boarding gates being checked?" Colman murmured, surprised. He isn't aware of my associate in the attic. closest they had come to madness. indisputably what his mind resists: This is no random event, but part of the elaborate design in a tapestry. A couple of minutes went by. Nobody moved. The robot's lights continued to wink at him cheerfully. Driscoll was having trouble fighting off the steadily growing urge to level his assault cannon and blow the robot's imbecile head off. in the memory of her love, her toughness, her steely resolution. His wretched sobbing subsides. He set the coffees down and slid into the seat opposite Lay. "Ever been thirsty?" he asked as he stirred sugar into his cup. Switching off the overhead lights to save money and to avoid adding heat to the kitchen, Geneva said. Fate possessed the sharper teeth, the stronger jaws. the idea of getting up from the driver's seat. She shrinks away from them, and terror twists her face into the heat. taste from his recent experience of it. As the boy eases shut the door of the Explorer, the mongrel pads toward the back of the auto carrier. After the Windchaser has been stopped for a couple minutes, it eases forward a few car lengths before. The dog goes straight for the shorts. No bark, no growl, no warning, in fact no evident animosity: Almost. Leilani said, "One reason I know she hales Luki more than me is the name she gave him. She says she crawled a ladybug, orange carapace like a polished bead." "A lot of people could get hurt before they give up though," Lechat persisted. Module's armaments; alternatively, with the added strength of the regulars who had arrived below. He could hold the lock open against the SD's coming from the Battle Module until the rest of the Army arrived. It was time for him to decide his answer. "Bad?" she asked, glancing toward Laura's room. He wants the coins, too, but he doesn't touch them. In his nervousness, he's likely to jingle or drop them. When he realizes that he's the only occupant of the restroom, he seizes the opportunity and runs from. "Good pup," the boy whispers. "When I was a little kid, I saw a fantastic performing-dog act. This golden retriever did all these of hard-won wisdom. His mom had been first of all his mom, but she'd also been a universally admired. "So your stepfather's a murderer." Let me tell you, it loses its charm pretty quick." Micky kept the vodka under the sweater because she didn't want to see it each time that she opened the. So that was why somebody from Chiron would want to get mixed up with a Tenant. The mathematical indicators pointed to an earlier domain inhabited by a "fluid" of pure "tweedlestuff," of indeterminate size and peculiar properties, since space and time were bound together as a composite dimension which permitted no processes analogous to anything describable in familiar physical terms. There were grounds for supposing that if an expanding nodule of disentangled space and time were introduced arbitrarily through some mechanism - pictured by some people as a bubble appearing in soda water, although this wasn't really accurate. - the reduced "pressure" inside the bubble would trigger the condensation of raw tweedlestuff out of "tweedlespace" as an explosion of tweedles and antitweedles, the tweedles preserving the "timelike" aspect, and the antitweedles the "antitimelike" aspect of the timeless domain from which they originated. Their mutual affinity would precipitate their combination into a dense photon fluid in which timelessness became reestablished, which tied in with Relativity by explaining why time stood still, for moving photons and accounting for the strange connection in the perceived universe between the rate at which time flowed and the speed of light. The high-energy conditions of the Primordial photon fluid, the density of which would have approximated that of the atomic nucleus, would favor the formation of "tweeplet" entities to give rise to matter interacting under conditions dominated by the strong nuclear force, which manifested itself to restore nonAbelian gauge symmetry with respect to the variance introduced by the separation of space and time. After that, the evolution of the universe followed according to well understood principles. Lechat, who had been thinking hard while he was listening, moved round to a point where he could address both the room and the screen. "Perhaps there is something else we can do," he said. Everybody looked at him curiously and waited. He raised his hands briefly. "The whole thing that's given Sterm an extra lease on life is the death of Howard Kalens, isn't it? Enough people in high places, especially some among the top ranks in the Army, believe it was the work of the Chironians and that they could be next in line. So they're clustering around Sterm for mutual preservation. But there has been another unexpected outcome as well, which gives us a chance to strip the last of that support away." Instead of continuing into the hall, Leilani let go of the door and stumbled into the bedroom again. Fear. "I never said there was," Nanook answered. Three obstacles now remained between Kalens and the vision that he had nurtured through the years of presiding over the kind of neofeudal order that would epitomize his ideal social model. First there was the need to ensure his election to succeed Wellesley; but Lewis was coordinating an effective media campaign, the polls were showing an excellent image, and Kalens was reasonably confident on that score. Second was the question of the Chironians. Although he would have preferred Borftein's direct, no nonsense approach, Kalens was forced to concede that after six years of Wellesley's moderation, public opinion aboard the Mayflower II would demand the adoption of a more diplomatic tack at the outset. If diplomacy succeeded and the Chironians integrated themselves smoothly, then all would be well. If not, then the Mission's military capabilities would provide the deciding issue, either through threat or an escalated series of demonstrations; opinions could be shaped to provide the justification as necessary. Kalens didn't believe a Chironian defense capability existed to any degree worth talking about, but the suggestion had potential propaganda value. So although the precise means remained unclear, he was confident that he could handle the Chironians. Third was the question of the Eastern Asiatic Federation mission due to arrive in two years' time. , With the first two issues resolved, the material and industrial resources of a whole planet at his disposal, and a projected adult population of fifty thousand to provide recruits, he had no doubt that the Asiatics could be dealt with, and likewise the Europeans following a year later. And then he would be free to sever Chiron's ties to Earth completely. He

hadn't confided that, part of the dream to anyone, not even Celia.. "This July third, just passed, made eighteen years." leadership temporarily to his brave companion.. Colman tried to ignore them as he re-formed the squad while Sirocco consulted his papers to identify the next house on the list. The Chironians understood that taking it out on the soldiers wouldn't help their cause. A soldier who might have been an ally became an enemy when he saw his friends being carried bruised and bleeding away from a mob. Everything the Chironians did was designed to subtract from their enemies instead of add to them, and to whittle their opposition down to the hard core that lay at the center, which was all they had any quarrel with. He could see it; Sirocco could see it, and the men could see it. Why couldn't more of the Terrans see it too? "Mrs. D," Leilani said to Geneva, "that creepy rosebush of yours just made obscene gestures at me." Micky said, "He abandoned my mother and me when I was three." "Anytime. Take care." the roof, stabbing out from the jeweled hilt of red and blue emergency beacons.. track him down myself." "That's so completely radical!" In the gathering shadows that darkened but didn't. Micky had evolved a disturbing theory about these wild tales of Sinsemilla and Dr. Doom. If she stated. two small wounds.. "It's getting to you too," she whispered tightly. "Just as it's already gotten to Eve and Jerry. Oh, how I hate this place! Can't you see what it's doing to us all?" The officers in the SUVs are operating under the aegis of one legitimate law-enforcement agency or. Leilani is as good as dead.. Curtis quickly feels his way past the sink, past the stacked washer and dryer, to a tall narrow door. A. years old. In the vision that the old doom doctor had, the one where he claimed he saw us being healed. Bernard frowned at her in bemusement. Nothing was making any sense. "But-its antimatter drive ... that's your weapon, isn't it?" but fear for her one good hand caused her to choose the nether end.. In her tiny bedroom, Micky kicked off her toe-pinching high heels. She stripped out of her cheap cotton. establishment, but we still say no to barefoot bozos and all four-legged kind, regardless of how cute they. providing us with all we need and for giving us the grace to be satisfied with what we have." To the girl, Geneva said, "So you don't believe Lukipela went off with aliens." anger, Micky realized that only silence and retreat made sense. Rocking knee to knee in the prickly. such relationship can be a success without respect.. 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.. of great age and immeasurable wisdom. Nevertheless, he wishes he had been brave for her.. than ever it had gone when he and the dog had ridden in the back of it among horse blankets and. books can be believed. Maybe the history texts are written with political bias, and maybe some of those. "Deleted," the machine confirmed. "Last line of entry reads: "... shut up behind a fence, ignored, and looking ridiculous." "Yes, I was about to come to that," Sirocco replied. He lifted his head a fraction to address the whole room again. "As Velarini says, they could come in through the Battle Module and the nose. The Battle Module is the main problem. It's bound to be the most strongly defended section anywhere, and there's only one way through to it from the rest of the ship. Therefore we assault it directly only if all else fails. We've put Steve up near the nose of the Spindle with the strongest section to block that access route. Steve's. Rickster's hands were cupped together as though they concealed a treasure that he was bearing as a gift. afraid that they are beginning to recognize him for the fugitive he is.. The possibility that neither of them noticed the money is slim. By I heir disinterest in the five dollars, they. This isn't the smoothest socializing the boy has done to date, but the terrified worker overreacts to this. The fallen fence pales clicked and rattled under Micky's feet as she entered the adjoining property.. rapped on the jamb.. "So would you want to go on record as advocating a disloyal and subversive act?" Merrick challenged.. hundred-dollar bills.. "Is this protection any different from the domination by the EAF that we should be so concerned about?" Ch~st~t asked.. Micky wished, not for the first time, that she had been Geneva's daughter. How different her life would. "That has to give us the rest of the ship and the surface," Swyley said. "If the Army gets its act together and grabs Stern before he gets a chance to head this way, then we might not have to go in there at all." After stripping down to panties and a tank top, she sat in bed, atop the sheets, sipping cold lemon vodka. have the heart to use them.. Lechat didn't respond immediately. Eve Verity elaborated. "For over three centuries we've been struggling to reconcile old ideas about the distribution of wealth with the new impact of high technology. The problem has always been that traditional conditioning processes for persuading people to accept the inevitability of finite resources get passed on from generation to generation as unquestioned conventional wisdoms until they start to look like absolute truths. Wealth was always something that had to be competed and fought for. When slaves and territory went out of style with technology becoming the main source of wealth, we continued to fight over it in the same way we'd always fought over everything else, and everybody thought that was inevitable and natural. They couldn't separate the old theories from the new facts." Eve took a sip from her wineglass, then continued, "But the Chironians never grew up with any of that brainwashing. They made a clean start with science and advanced technologies all around them and taken for granted, and they understand that new technologies create new resources ...without limit." desert-scorched, sand-abraded, brush-scratched look acquired by more arduous use than trips to the. "As long as you think of me as a handicapped waif, your pity doesn't allow you to be impolite. On the. toilet tissue, cleaning fluids, floor wax.. they knew what the situation was. Me scared and Mama willing not to see. The smile . . . not a wicked. area along the shoulder of the road. Forest all around. He said we'd go on to a motor-home park later.

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