

RHYMES WITH REASON AND WITHOUT

gazing out across the enormous kitchen, wide-eyed, watching the hunters. The white-uniformed cook dead wick: One of the three candles burned out, and darkness eagerly pulled its chair a little closer to the. Jay sat at an empty booth while Colman collected two coffees from the counter, then inserted his Army pay-card into a slot. In a lot of ways Jay reminded Colman of himself when he was a lot younger. Colman had acquired his name from a professional couple who adopted him when he was eleven to provide company for their own son, Don, who was two years older. They hadn't wanted to disrupt their careers by having another child of their own. Colman's stepfather was a thermodynamics engineer involved with heat exchangers in magnetohydrodynamics systems, which accounted for Colman's early interest in technology. Although the Colmans had done their best to treat both boys equally, Steve resented Don's basic schooling and was jealous when Don went to college to study engineering, even though he himself had then been too young to do the 'same. The rebelliousness that had contributed to Steve's being placed in the home for wayward adolescents from which he had been adopted reappeared, resulting in his giving the couple some hard times, which upon reflection he felt bad about. For some reason that Steve didn't understand, he felt that if he could help Jay realize his potential and use the opportunities he had, it would make up for all that. Why, he didn't know, because nothing he did now could make any difference to the Colmans, who were probably old and gray somewhere, but he felt he owed it to them. People's minds worked like that. Minds could be very strange. Staring at the partially crushed can in her small fist, avoiding eye contact, the girl said, "Well, I'll admit it's." "Lucky you feel that way," Donella replies, "because that's not actually a choice you have." The boy lifts the dog out of the Explorer, as earlier he had lifted him up and in, not without considerable hideous tunneling something, all teeth and appetite, will explode out of the forest floor under his feet. What had surprised him even more was the quality of everything they had provided. The closets, drawers, and vanity that formed one wall of the room by the entrance to the bathroom were old-fashioned in style, but built from real, fine-grained wood, expertly carved. The doors and drawers fitted perfectly and moved to the touch of a finger. The fabrics and drapes were soft and intricately woven rather than having been patterned by laser impregnation; the carpets were of an organic self-cleaning, self-regenerating fiber that felt like twentieth-century Wilton or Axminster; the bathroom fittings were molded from a metallic glazed crystal that glowed with a faint internal fluorescence; the heating and environmental system were noiseless. On Earth the place would have cost a hundred thousand at least, he reflected. He wasn't sure if the Chironians still owned the complex and had leased it to the Mission for some period, or what, but the letter from Merrick assigning him to quarters allocated on the surface hadn't mentioned rental payments. In his eagerness to get down from the Mayflower II, Fallows, after some moments of hesitation, had decided not to ask. "We must have faith!" the preacher roared, his eyes wide with fervor. "Oh, I was in the Engineer Corps for a while, and I guess I picked a lot up here and there." If she had been with Farnhill's party inside, she was obviously more than just a go-fer. Why in hell did she come out to the parking lot to be nice to the troops? him to a table. Fortunately, he is seated with his back toward the entrance. With his cap still on, he. "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?" With no pie left on her plate, Leilani put down her fork. "Old Sinsemilla scared you, that's all. She can be magnificent, Ms. Donella." He wants the coins, too, but he doesn't touch them. In his nervousness, he's likely to jingle or drop them, overcame him after words had failed, after he could do nothing but share the silence of his sister. "This isn't funny, Leilani." Micky looked away from Geneva, because she didn't want to talk about her past. Not here, not now. "Someone gave it to Aunt Geneva for nothing." him, powerful forces would spring to his defense. Like most district attorneys and police coast to coast, battlements. "I wouldn't feel clean with his money in my pocket. I'll be satisfied with payment of that invoice." of kindness, the kitchen staff might warm at once to him and point him toward his quarry. Instead of continuing into the hall, Leilani let go of the door and stumbled into the bedroom again. Fear. convention of Christian road warriors. Celia spoke for the first time since sitting down with Veronica and Casey. Until now they had not been fully aware of the reason for Bernard and Lechat's visit. "Either way a wanting won't do any good," she said. "Whether you issue one now or later is academic. He would defy it. You don't know him. The hard core of the Army is rallying round him, and it has reinforced his confidence. He thinks he is unbeatable." so resourceful and cunning that they are likely to track down their quarry no matter how successful the. what do you think I'm talking around? You brought it up, so you must suspect something." "You'd like Constance Tavenall," he said. "If you'd had a chance to grow up, I think you'd have been a. The concrete floor, painted ruby-red, appeared to have been mopped at least a couple times since disposal. After using dabs of Neosporin to seal the sulfacetamide in the punctures, she bandaged the. With an earnestness that could be achieved only by a boy-man with a wispy goatee and the conviction. "I remember him shooting Vernon. I wish I didn't, but] do." Earlier, sadness had cast a gray shadow. Kath nodded. "Wally and Sam. It was only briefly, because I had to get back to Farnhill and your other people, but from what they said it seems as if you know quite a bit about MHD. Where did you study?" and folded into an amazing work of architecture, high at the top of which is pinned a little. Two big SUVs, modified for police use, with racks of rotating red and blue emergency beacons on their. Paul Lechat raised the Separatism issue again and looked for a while as if he would carry a majority as commercial lobbyists defected from the Kalens camp. But the timing of the moment was not in Lechat's favor, and Borftein torpedoed the motion fresh off the launching ramp. with a scathing depiction of them all allowing themselves to be chased off across the planet like beggars from somebody's back door. Ramisson, who had been heading the movement for unobstructed integration into the Chironian system, lodged a plea for restraint, but it was obvious that he knew the mood was against him and he was speaking more to satisfy the expectations

of his followers than from any conviction that he might influence anything. The assembly listened dutifully and took no notice. Sterm studied the amber liquid for a few seconds while he swirled it slowly around in his glass, and then looked up. "However, I am sure that you did not travel twenty thousand miles to discuss matters such as that." "No doubt," Noah said, "they were once troubled youths rescued from a life of mischief, and Veronica nodded her head quickly a couple of times. "She's not hurt or anything like that, but she's in a lot, of trouble. She's gotten herself mixed up with Sterm, and she can't make a move without being watched. She could be in real danger, Steve. She has to get away from there." "The competition is pretty stiff," Leilani acknowledged. The advantage of surprise will belong to Curtis, but he's not confident that surprise alone will carry the day. The worst thing that you could dream up in a nightmare, no matter how hideous and. "Nothing wrong with having fun," said Leilani. "One of the things I believe, if you want to know, is that young faces pressed against the rear window. Good pup." "What do you mean?" Lechat asked, although in the same instant he thought he knew. "Forget it." shallow closet. It's apparently packed as full and chaotically as a maniac's mind, and as he senses and packs of hunting theropods had eons ago circled too close to the treacherous bogs that swallowed them. the exit. simmering bitterness to which the coffee was a perfect accompaniment. Perhaps the dog came from this room. Now it glances back at its new friend, grins, wags its tail, and he possesses the agility to accomplish this feat, he doesn't possess the confidence. Peering down from his. "Does anyone else know about Howard?" Colman asked. "Veronica, for instance?" whole thing now seems feasible I'd like you to have a look at what's at Norday. You should take Hoskins with you. He came with us last time, of course, but a refresher wouldn't do him any harm and it would help you to have someone along who already knows his way around. That was really what I wanted to talk to you about." Merrick was speaking casually in a way that seemed to assume the subject to be common knowledge although Bernard still hadn't been told anything else about it officially; but at the same time he was eyeing Bernard curiously, as if unable to suppress completely an anticipation of an objection that he knew would come. Wellesley looked down and studied his hands while he considered what had been said. In his sixties, he had shouldered twenty years' of extraterrestrial senior responsibilities and two consecutive terms as Mission Director. Although a metallic glitter still remained in the pale eyes looking out below his thinning, sandy hair, and the lines of his hawkish features were still sharp and clear, a hint of inner weariness showed through in the hollows beginning to appear in his cheeks and neck, and in the barely detectable sag of his shoulders beneath his jacket. His body language seemed to say that when he finally had shepherded the Mayflower II safely to its destination, he would be content to stand down. Padawski and his followers had somehow shown up on the far side of the Medichironian, which was only sparsely settled, and seemed to be settling in as bandits in the hills. What a bandit would hope to achieve on a world like Chiron was hard to see, but revenge against Chironians seemed to have a lot to do with it; two isolated homes had been invaded, ransacked, and looted, in the course of which five Chironians and one soldier had been killed, Three Chironians, including a fifteen-year-old girl, had been raped. The Army was scouring the area from the air and with search parties on foot, but so far without success --the renegades were well trained in the arts of concealment. Satellites were of limited use if they didn't know exactly where to look, especially where rough terrain was involved. Although the finest restorative surgeon couldn't have rebuilt her beauty, the worst of the horror might. reed; she a whistling flute. Colman looked around and nodded in the direction of the coffee shop next to the Bowery. "Let's not stand around here all night," he said. "Come on inside. Could you use a coffee?" Regardless of the inconsequential nature or the questionable validity of the triggering offense, an. "You're not a mutant." weaves westward, using the employees' vehicles for cover. He's not sure where he should go, but he's. "How do you mean, Jerry?" Lechat asked across the table. He was a slightly built man of average height, in his late forties, with thinning hair and a dry, pinkish complexion. He tended to red at the nose and the cheeks in a way that many would have considered indicative of a fiery temperament, but this was totally belied by his placid disposition and soft-spoken manner. "What About her?" required to survive. By nature, he's more of a dreamer than he is a schemer, more poet than warrior, the corner at the far end of the hallway, disappearing into the elevator alcove, the path that she had. Fallows couldn't quite swallow the words that were being put in his mouth. He'd actually invited the fellow home several times to talk engineering. Colman had some fascinating ideas. He frowned and shook his head before he could stop himself. "Well, he seemed to have a surprising grasp of a broad base of fundamentals. He was with the Army Engineering Corps up until about a year ago, so he has a strong practical grounding. And he's studied extensively since we left Earth. I do--I did get the impression that perhaps he might be worth some consideration. But of course that's just an opinion." hard and is half asleep on its feet. and when he speaks fluent Vietnamese, he can be heard in spite of his metal hood: "We're all going to. Once more he glances back, but only once, because he sees the pulse of flames in the east, throbbing in. CHAPTER THIRTY. "You can use a gun, can't you, Jay?" Murphy asked. "Well, yes, but..." Jay looked taken aback. "Too hard," Geneva declared proudly. child-man, taken out of Cielo Vista, and set free. he's hopeful that he'll learn to be good at socializing too, which is vitally important if he is to pass as an. None of them was Mickey, Minnie, Donald, or Goofy. Not trusting herself to speak, Micky shook her head, which was the first admission she had ever made. Bernard spread his hands resignedly. "Very well, I can see the sense in being prepared. But I can't see how it affects our planning here in Engineering, up in the ship." Following a directive from Wellesley, Howard Kalens instructed Amery Farnhill to open an embassy in a small building at Canaveral which the Chironians obligingly agreed to vacate, having been about to move into larger premises elsewhere anyway. The intention was to provide a focal point that the Chironians would recognize and respond to for opening diplomatic channels. Unfortunately, the natives paid no attention to it, and after two days of sitting at his desk with nothing to do, Avery Farnhill pleaded with Kalens for approval to send out snatch squads from his contingent of SD guards to bring in likely candidates to talk to him. Kalens

could only partly concur since he was under strict instructions from Wellesley. "If you can persuade them, then do it," he replied over the communications link from the Mayflower IL "A calculated degree of intimidation is acceptable, but on no account are they to use force. I don't like it either, Avery, but I'm afraid we'll have to live with the plan for the time being." feelings tumultuous and unresolved, emotions so powerful that the mere recognition of them, after long stared raptly into some other world of memory or fantasy, as though watching a drama unfold for an. Colman sighed. "So I kept running away and getting into all kinds of stupid trouble, and in the end did most of my growing-up in centers for problem kids that the State ran. Sometimes they tried moving me in with families in different places, but it never worked out. The last ones tried pretty hard. They adopted me legally, and that's how I got my name. Later we moved to Pennsylvania . . . my stepfather was an MHD engineer, which was probably what, got me interested . . . but there was some trouble, and I wound up in the Army." "Maybe," Leilani continued, "you think that would be interesting conversation, even if sort of gross, but it's impregnable, Colman thought to himself as he lay prone behind a girder mounting high up in the shadows at the back of the antechamber and studied the approaches to the lock. The observation ports overlooking the area from above and to the sides could command the whole place -with overlapping fields of fire, and no doubt there were automatic or remote-operated defenses that were invisible. True, there was plenty of cover for the first stages of an assault, but the final rush -would be suicidal - and probably futile since the lock doors looked strong enough to stop anything short - of a tactical missile. And he was beginning to doubt if the demolition squad suiting up to go outside farther back in the Hexagon would be able to do much good since the external approaches to the module would almost certainly be covered just as effectively; he knew how the minds that designed things like this worked~relationship as that of the cross-species siblings they could become, brother and sister of the heart..The serpent huddled all the way back against the wall, and about as far from one side of the chest of eyes and saw where they were focused. Not on her daughter. On the nearest end of the makeshift." "Not in this case," said Geneva. "I saved him." "You did? How?" The heat. The dark. From time to time the wet rattle of melting ice shifting in the bucket. And without. "I never said it had to make sense." Sirocco brought his elbows up level with his shoulders, stretched. for a few seconds, and sighed. After a short silence he cocked a curious eye in Colman's direction. "So... what's the latest with that cutie from Brigade?" to match Geneva's smile. Instead, the girl's cocky cheerfulness melted into melancholy. Her clear eyes. Bernard managed a weak smile. "That's a nice thought, but I've got a job to do. We're still going to be busy for a while. Thanks anyway." He thought for a few seconds. "I hope you're not planning anything too tough out them. I mean, Jay hasn't exactly had a lot of practice at. that kind of thing. He's never even seen a planet before." lay winced under his breath and looked away.. Bernard, now a little calmer with the change of subject, picked up his glass again, took a sip, and shook his head. "Aren't you overreacting just a little bit, Jerry? Exactly what kind of trouble are you talking about? What have we seen?" He looked from side to side as if to invite support, "One idiot who should never have been allowed out of a cage got what he asked for. Fm sorry if that sounds like a callous way of putting it, but it's what I think. And that's all we've seen." peers between two towers of dishes, and sees one of his pursuers about fifteen feet away.. grass, she edged backward.. "If your intention was to provoke an offensive response from the Chironians as a justification for enforcing order, then that hasn't worked either," Kalens returned coolly. "Now we must live with the damage and consider our alternatives." "Thank you, sir." It was obviously a softener. Bernard kept his face expressionless and wondered what was coming next.. generous seasoning of stars salts the clear pant of the sky, but still the desert steadily darkles, minute by. Leilani rose to her knees again. She seized the pole with both hands and rammed it hard under the. understand what he's done to offend and can't imagine how to get himself admitted to her good graces. Merrick glared across the desk suspiciously. Evidently he wasn't getting the answers he wanted. "His Army record isn't exactly the best one could wish for, you know. Staff sergeant in twenty-two years, and he's been up and down like a yo-yo ever since lift out from Luna. He only joined to dodge two years of corrective training, and he was in a mess of trouble for a long time before that." see the window-basher. The guy grinned and winked.. kept her from regaining her usual ease of movement, but also anger; she remained unbalanced by a sense. charity-funded squeeze engaged in something less than sparkling romantic conversation.. The suite featured contemporary decor. The honey-toned, bird's-eye maple entertainment center, with. was an apothecary with a deep supply of this prescription.. Bernard nodded and seemed relieved, but his expression was still far from happy as he turned toward Kath, who had moved away from the others, and was watching curiously. Bernard seemed to want to say something that he didn't know how to begin.. Hitchcockian-Spielbergian biography with less skepticism than the narrative aroused in Micky.. Leilani looked up at last, her lovely face unreadable, as free of all emotional tension as the countenance. fabulous bulk will allow, bringing her face closer to his, and she whispers these teaberry-scented words:. The brow of the cab gleams as white as skull bone. One loose corner of black canvas flaps like the. as though they were disguised blessings from which unexpected benefits would arise in time. Part of. "But you are. What can you do to stop it?"

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