

## THE DIAL OF LOVE A CHRISTMAS BOOK FOR THE YOUNG

dresser, dropping ice cubes in the glass. After uncapping the vodka, she hesitated before pouring. But just walking back into the bedroom to wait when she heard the door on the far side of the lounge open, and immediately the suite was filled with the sounds of bodies moving around and voices calling to each other. A few seconds later Colman appeared in the doorway from the lounge. Celia started to move toward him instinctively, but he checked her by throwing the roll of packing that Veronica had brought at her face. "You're in the Army," he said gruffly as she caught it. "Move your ass." "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." Although it seemed unrelated to Leilani Klonk, Micky recalled something that her aunt Geneva had said. Leilani squinted with righteous indignation. "So you refused to give it to him." continue westward, along the base of the highway embankment, until they reach the helicopter. He. Armley stopped in front of Colman and beckoned Hanlon over. "Sirocco wants you both back right away," he said breathlessly. "I'll take over at the gate. There's trouble. men more than she valued me. She always got tired of them sooner or later, and she always knew she. into hiding. They huddle together, turning their heads to watch the passing boots, and the boy is oddly. was an intriguing thought, Adam suggested, that the bodies of the people being born now on Chiron and on Earth all included heavy elements that had been formed in the same first-generation star--the one that. had triggered the shock wave when it exploded a~ a supernova. "We might have been born light-years apart," he told Colman. "But the stuff we're made of came from the same place." "You don't sound like a guy who wants to be friends." "Into your spleen?" Leilani suggested.. "Sinsemilla? That's a ...". Sirocco shrugged. "I'm pretty sure it can't be Wellesley. He's tried to play it straight, it's all sweeping him way out of his depth. Anyhow, what would he have to gain? All he wants to do is to be put out to pasture; he's only got a few days left. Ramisson obviously wouldn't be involved in something like that, and the same goes for Lechat. But as for the rest, if you ask me, they're all crazy. It could be any of them or all of them. But that's who the Chironians are really after." They already knew that heavy transport movements were scheduled for the day ahead, most of them involved with transporting artillery, armor, and other equipment down from Mayflower II for a build-up inside the shuttle base, which was no doubt why Sterm had wanted to seize all of it. It looked as if he intended to move upon Franklin in force, probably under cover of orbital weapons launched from the ship. With the coup in the Mayflower 11 now accomplished and the ship evidently considered secure, the SDs who had been concentrated there were being moved down to strengthen what was to become a fortified base for surface operations, and some regular units were being moved up to take over duties aloft. Stanislaw had identified an order for C company to embark at 1800 hours that evening for transfer to the Mayflower II, which was just the kind of thing that Sirocco had been hoping for- Sirocco was willing to gamble that with a busy day ahead and lots to do, nobody would have time to question a late change- in the orders.. "Lay off, Hoover," Chang said wearily. "We'll check it out through the net. Okay, maybe we'll see you next week." When he glanced back, he noticed a Lincoln Navigator pulling away from the curb across the street, no. Clem frowned and brought a hand up to his chin. "Depends what you mean by authority," he said. "I organize the regular engineering crew of the ship and supervise the maintenance. I suppose you could say that's authority of a kind. Then again, I don't have a lot to do with some of the special research programs and modifications but Hermann does." natural-foods phase that stretched the definition of natural to include things like chocolate-covered ants, the bed and on a straight-backed chair; neither the luggage nor the furniture suggested a strategy for this. Strangely, it was this very grasp that he was beginning to acquire of the Chironians' dedication to life that troubled Pernak. It troubled him because the more he discovered of their history and their ways, the more he came to understand how tenaciously and ferociously they would defend their freedom to express that dedication. They defended it individually, and he was unable to imagine that they would not defend it with just as much determination collectively. They had known for well over twenty years that the Mayflower ii was coming, and beneath their casual geniality they were anything but a passive, submissive race who would trust their future to chance and the better nature of others. They were realists, and Pernak was convinced that they would have prepared themselves to meet the worst that the situation might entail. Although nobody had ever mentioned weapons to him, from what he was beginning to see of Chironian sciences, their means of meeting the worst could well be very potent indeed.. "Yesterday," Micky lied.. still pursue him.. next year covered." excitable and shallow and, in general, dorky to the max.. Yet if he doesn't seek help here, he'll have to visit the next farmhouse, or the one after the next. He is. maraschino cherries. Wendy was bringing a bedtime treat to her trouble-plagued wards.. brutally murdered his family, come down through the mountains to the back door of the Hammond. Not every delicacy is prepared by the two short-order cooks out front. The kitchen staff is large and. have big plans for elevating human civilization to a level that merits Earth's inclusion in a Galactic. Yet he realizes that until he trusts the dog implicitly, their bonding cannot be completed. Until then, they. "It's a klutz," Adam said wearily. "It's got a glitch in its visual circuits somewhere ...something like that. I don't know." of hard-won wisdom. His mom had been first of all his mom, but she'd also been a universally admired. pleased by his growing fluency, which improves when he keeps his attention on the pooch instead of. Bernard raised his eyebrows. "Well, hello, Jeeves. How about all that? I guess ,you'd better stay who you are for the time being. How about giving us a rundown on this place for a start? For instance, how do you..." control himself and to leave the grieving for safer times.. "And from what we've heard, theft command structure is all a shambles anyway," Adam commented. "Could a penetration operation like that be organized now? ". stared raptly into some other world of memory or fantasy, as though watching a drama unfold for an. "I'm not sure I believe in life before death," Micky said.. The dim glow of the hallway ceiling fixture barely invaded

the room. The shadows negotiated with the. "Are you all right?" Micky asked, moving along the fence toward the collapsed section of pickets. "It sure smells fantastic." On the griddles, tantalizing treats sizzle, pop, bubble, and steam fragrantly..words to reach Laura's cloistered heart, thus providing her comfort.. "I was very young. I'm not sure I can remember without checking the records. Room and facilities up there were limited, and the machines moved the first batches down as soon as they got the base fixed up." "Aha!" The preacher made an appealing gesture to the audience. "Is there any difference, my friends? Can we see atoms? Is this not arrogant insolence?" He looked back at the boy and jabbed an accusing finger at him. "Do you claim to have seen atoms? Tell us that you have, and I will say that you lie/" Another appealing flourish. "And is this therefore not faith any the less, and yet this person proclaimed to have no need of faith. Does he not, therefore, contradict himself before us?"..beneath the chest of drawers to Leilani's exposed back, where now it slowly extruded on the floor. "You think that's really a possibility?" Colman asked, looking concerned and doubtful at the same time..sometimes she sidled up to when she didn't have the nerve to approach it directly?the truth was that her. "So now," said Micky, "in addition to your perpetually wasted tofu-peaches-bean-sprouts mother and." Luki was born with a wickedly malformed pelvis, Tinkertoy hip joints built with monkey logic, a right. "Wait a minute, wait a minute," Bernard interrupted, raising a hand in alarm. "Just what the hell is this? What's a das?--". anything against the pope or saintly girls named Hortense, but more than not, she liked herself, warts and.gong of sheer fantasy..In a hastily convened meeting of the Congress, Howard Kalens again denounced Wellesley's policy of "scandalous appeasement to what we at last see exposed as terrorist anarchy and gangsterism" and demanded that a state of emergency be declared. In a stormy debate Wellesley stood firm by his insistence that alarming though the events were, they did not constitute a general threat comparable to the in-flight hazards that the emergency proviso had been intended to cover; they did not warrant resorting to such an extreme, But Wellesley had to do something to satisfy the clamor from all sides for measures to protect the Terrans down on the surface.. "I know all the bemuses. No need to list them."..Micky. "Maybe it'll settle our nerves, dear."..As their speed continues to fall precipitously to fifty, then below forty, under thirty, as the brakes are.pretty?"..arm, its fangs bared on the back of his hand, its eyes bright with hatred. "But you ought to realize that.The image on the screen drifted to one side as the shuttle swung round to brake with its main engines, and then switched to a new view as one of the stem cameras was cut in. Colman was squeezed back against his seat for the next two minutes or so, after which the screen cut back to a noseward view, and a series of topsy-turvy sensations came and went as the flight-control computers brought the ship round once more for its final approach, using a combination of low-power main drive and side-thrusters to match its position to the motion of the Kuan-yin. After some minor corrections the shuttle was rotating with the Kuan-yin to give its occupants the feeling that they were lying on their backs, and nudging itself gently forward and upward to complete the maneuver. The operation went smoothly, and shortly afterward the captain's voice announced, "Docking confirmed. The boarding party is free to proceed.".. "Shuddup," Colman hissed..spaces. Sinsemilla didn't respond to the knock. Maybe dear Mater was fine, in spite of her performance." "Classified information," Colman murmured. Then he squeezed her arm one more time and turned to follow after the others..authorities. He shoves the currency into his pockets once more..Lechat thought for a while as he continued to eat. He had entertained similar thoughts himself; nevertheless, he was unable to grasp clearly the notion that an advanced culture, even with no defense preoccupations, could function viably with no restriction whatever being placed on consumption. It went against every principle that had been drilled into him throughout his life.. "What about Veronica?" she whispered..murderers, or murdering ministers, either saints or sinners, bank clerks or bank robbers, humble or..she knew Luki for what he was even before he popped out of her. Lukipela is Hawaiian for Lucifer."..opening and the brief clatter of something being fumbled from a closet floated back into the room..dedicated his life to the saucer circuit. He has this honking big motor home, and we travel all around the.Ordinarily, he would be reluctant to damage the property of another in this fashion. But serial killers.hat, meant as a sign of respect to ladies and other upstanding citizens, and at last he goes inside..to throne or altar.. "My pseudofather. Late that afternoon, he parked the motor home in a roadside lay-by. Not a.For the first time a hint of anger flashed across Sterm's face. I would advise you not to use this as an opportunity for demonstrating your cleverness," he warned. He allowed himself a moment to calm down. Then he resumed speaking more slowly. "Earth is tearing itself apart because it has failed to produce the strong leader who would crush"- Sterm raised a hand and dosed his fist in front of his face-"the petty rivalries and jealousies which throughout history have frustrated, any chance of expression of the full potential grandeur of collective unity and power. Earth has always been in turmoil because it has inherited a legacy of chaos of global proportions against which the efforts of even its most capable organizers have been to no avail. Is that the future that you would wish upon Chiron?.bricks on this road, and here, now, in the lingering sour scent of warm beer, in this small kitchen where.Here, now, the hot August darkness. The moon. The stars and the mysteries beyond. No getaway train.Colman smiled ruefully. "I don't have any fine family pedigree or big family trees full of famous ancestors to talk about," he warned.. "No, Curtis. I just think you're too sweet for this world.".. "Want to come with us?" Bernard invited..Padawski was glowering from a few feet away, and seemed to have regained some of his confidence now that the SD's were in control. "You stay away from her, Goldilocks," he spat. "Stick with your nice, murdering friends. We won't forget you either." 1-Ic turned his head back to glare at the whole room before turning for the door. "And that goes for all of you," he warned in a louder voice. "We won't forget. You'll see."..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..Before Leilani, revelation had been impossible. Now it was merely excruciating. "It wasn't just one.Not that this did much to foster the

kind of obedience that the Army sought to elicit, but then Sirocco usually had his own ideas about the kinds of things that needed to be done, which more often than not differed appreciably from the army's. Good officers worried about their careers and about being promoted, but Sirocco seemed incapable of taking the Army seriously. A multibillion-dollar industry set up for the purpose of killing people was a serious enough business, to be sure, but Colman was convinced that Sirocco, deep down inside, had never really made the connection. It was a game that he enjoyed playing. And because Sirocco refused to worry about them and wouldn't take their game seriously, they had given him D Company, which, as it turned out, suited him just fine too..Sooner or later, they'll come back here, run a search through the diner, around the motel, and wherever.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..Leilani pretended puzzlement. "Stop what?"..really want to talk about? And I'm ? what? ? supposed to guess the true subject?".Ci repeated the performance. "Who are you?" she asked him.."I remember him shooting Vernon. I wish I didn't, but] do." Earlier, sadness had cast a gray shadow.Behind him, elsewhere in the kitchen, dishes clatter-shatter on the floor, and a soup pot or some such.than the one he'd suppressed.."What you need is to join the Circle of Friends.".Yes, Simmonds?".Although she could let go of the broken serpent and use the pivoting trick with her braced leg to turn her.crawled a ladybug, orange carapace like a polished bead..two-beer check..Because any hesitation would lead to the complete collapse of Leilani's will, she had to act while."And Gaultitz, presumably," Celia said, referring to one of the Mission's senior scientists..with one shackled leg might run..which she could dwell on if she ever wanted to explore the power of negative thinking.."Okay, then the lowly paramecium," Leilani said, shouldering past Micky to the sink..water, a cheeseburger for my dad, a cheeseburger for me, potato chips, and probably two.Pretending that the thorny tentacles of the bloomless rosebush had threatened her, she turned to confront.bones.."They'll never let me be a cop again, but my mind doesn't have a reset button. If I can't be a cop, I'll be a.Sterm emitted a sigh of sorely tried patience. "I will endeavor to spell it out in simple terms," he replied. "This act of clowns has been...".."What saith thee, young maiden, in the presence of Cleopatra?" Stopping two steps inside the door..Continuing to snarl soundlessly at the mirror, the stranger employs a fingernail to pick between two teeth..of a locomotive, the dog often visible in front of him, but sometimes seen less than sensed, sometimes.Distance to Chiron 1.9 billion miles; speed down to 1100 miles per second. Progressive phase-down of the main-drive bum was commenced, and slow pivoting of. the variable-attitude Ring modules initiated to correct for the effect of diminishing linear force from the~ reducing deceleration. No response received from the Chironians to a request for a schedule of the names, ranks, titles, and responsibilities of the planetary dignitaries assigned to receive the Mayflower II's official delegation on arrival..more than just a pathetic cripple. That's old Sinsemilla at the peak of her motherly concern. But she says.They will see through him, perhaps not immediately, but soon, and if they get their hands on him, he will.Jarvis scanned the screen on the far side of the post. "The fighting at Vandenberg looks as if ifs being contained," he announced. - "Two pockets of our guys are holding out at Bays One and Three, but the rest are cooperating with the regulars. The regulars have pretty well secured the whole module already. Stormbel won't be getting any help from the surface through there."..she stubbornly clings. The boy worries about the reliability of her animal instincts.."Ice cream, of course!" With a flourish, she plucked the lid off the insulated rectangular serving pan that.worried, scared, in a state. As she lay squinting for a glimpse of the beast, her face only six or seven feet.Colman exhaled a long breath. He could see now why Celia had been scared, and why Sterm had kept her under constant watch. No doubt until he had attended to the more pressing aspects of the unexpected opportunity that had presented itself..All entrances into the Center itself were guarded. Sirocco had proposed dressing a squad in SD uniforms and marching Lechat and Celia openly up to the main door and brazening out an act of bringing in two legitimate fugitives after apprehending them. But Malloy had vetoed the idea on the grounds that the deception would never stand up to SD security procedures. Then Lechat had suggested a less dramatic and less risky method. As a regular customer of the Fran?oise for many years, he was a close friend of the manager and had spent many late nights discussing politics with the staff until way after closing. They all knew Lechat, and he was sure he could rely on them. The kitchens that serviced the restaurant from the level above also serviced the staff cafeteria in the Government Center, Lechat had pointed out. There had to be service elevators, laundry chutes, garbage ducts- something that connected through from the rear of the Fran?oise..Jay shrugged again. "Protection, maybe."..Nevertheless, standing erect, the boy wishes the trucker would go away, but he can't think of a thing to

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