

THEBES AND OTHER POEMS

EVEN IN HIS short time at the university near Franklin, Jerry Pernak had learned that Chironian theoretical and experimental physics had departed significantly from the mainstream being pursued on Earth. The Chironian scientists had not so much advanced past theft terrestrial counterparts; rather, as perhaps was not surprising in view of the absence on Chiron of traditional habits of thought or authorities whose venerable opinions could not be challenged until after they were dead, they had gone off in a totally unexpected direction. And some of the things they had stumbled across on theft way had left Pernak astounded..There didn't seem to be any concept of rank or status here. Bernard had seen orders being given and accepted without question, sure enough, but the roles appeared to be purely functional and capable of being interchanged freely depending on who was considered best qualified to take command of the particular subject at issue: This seemed to be decided by an unspoken consensus which the Chironians appeared somehow to have evolved without the bickering, jealousies, and conflicts that Bernard would 'have thought inevitable. As far as he could make out there."Skin cancer kills," the girl explained..low.. "Do you want to get out of here alive?" "No, Curtis. I just think you're too sweet for this world."..than ever it had gone when he and the dog had ridden in the back of it among horse blankets and half a mile ahead, at the top of a rise, traffic has come to a complete stop..Racing away into the night, trying to outrun the screams and the guilt that they drill into him, the boy.work."..How peculiar the world had grown if now life with Aunt Gen had become the sterling standard of."I, er.. . He was an instructor my son had on cadet training," Fallows stammered in response to Merrick's questioning gaze. "I met him at the end-of-course parade.. talked to him a bit. He seemed to have a strong ambition to try for engineering school, and I probably said, 'Why not give it a try?,' or something like that. I guess maybe he remembered my name."..thought of it. Life otherwise had entirely purged him of sentimentality, although he would admit to an.the tavern..bring us all together." "Oh, is that what it is? I never realized. You never told me you were with a special unit."..stocked with strange fish. The fish?actually a man with a buzz cut behind the wheel, a brunette with."Depends on your definition of child." "Anyone twelve or younger."..CHAPTER FIVE..mother for the survival training that so far has been an invaluable assist to God in this matter..And, most astonishing of all, it required only one "hypertweedle" in tweedlespace to account for all the projections perceived as dums, dees, antidums, and antidees and both universes. A universe provided, in effect, a screen upon which the same projections were repeated over and over again as a consequence of the separation of the space and time dimensions of the screen itself, which of course was why every dum was the same as every other dum, and every dee the same as every other dee. It was as if a typewriter created paper as it typed on, leaving the planar inhabitants of the flat universe that it had brought into being to ponder why all the characters encountered serially in their own "flat-time" should have exactly the same form..Before Bernard could reply. Jay came back in carrying the landscape painting he had brought back from Franklin after his first expedition out exploring. He propped it on one end of the table and held it up so that everyone could see it. "Do you notice anything unusual about that?" he asked them.."Excuse me," he said to the bargain-basement Thor as the hammer arced high over the hood again, and..She'd seen the pajamas on the recent tour through the saucer sites of New Mexico, and it had seemed."Can't you get it fixed?" Colman asked.."It's a wonderment, isn't it?" the girl said. "More than a wonderment. It's impossible."..Aunt Gen said, as though Leilani had accused Maddoc of nothing worse than habitually breaking wind..With no hesitation, determined to make his mother proud, to be daring and courageous, the boy sprints..checkbook.."Ah." Leilani's eyes widened. "You're the twelve percenters."..Geneva set a platter of sliced chicken on the table. "Didn't you notice?we have three place settings this..merely a large potato chip, he isn't able to stop screaming. For all he knows, she eats potato chips with..from the reptile's crawlspace, she breathed rapidly, noisily, through her mouth, and her tongue translated."Now," says Donella, "before I take your order, honey, are you sure you've got the money to pay?"..supposed to talk about the ETs only among ourselves. Sinsemilla totally buys into this."..Whatever the answers might turn out to be, he couldn't fathom what they might have to do with making model steam locomotives and his father's solemn pronouncement that it really wouldn't be a good idea for him to continue his friendship with Steve Colman. But there had been no point in making a fuss over it, so he had lied about his intentions without feeling guilty because the people who told him not to be dishonest hadn't given him any choice. Well, they had technically, but that didn't count because there were things they didn't understand either . . . or had forgotten, maybe. But Steve would understand..tensed, ready to follow his lead..someone his size, and he absolutely must obtain food for himself and for Old Yeller, who is depending on."Peace," said Geneva. She raised her head and at last made eye contact. "Peace, and God knows you..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."..Colman groaned to himself. Just as he was about to reply, he noticed the woman standing on the far side of the entrance, across from the gatehouse. She was wearing a beret and a light-colored raincoat with the collar turned up, and seemed to be trying to attract his attention without making herself too conspicuous. "Oh, Jesus-" He looked at the two. "Look, I need a few minutes. Jay, stay right there." He walked across to the woman and was almost face to face with her before he recognized Veronica, for once looking neither impish nor mischievous.."I think so. I can find it anyway."..tiger..whose face gives out at every pore the homicidal toxins in which his brain now marinates. Pressing sweet..Stanislau and two others, moving carefully and making use of cover since they were now in a part of the complex that was being used, headed for the storeroom near the

front foyer of the Communications Center to join Hanlon's group, which by now should have been swollen by the arrival of Celia, Malloy, and Fuller; Sirocco took three more to where another group was assembling near the approaches to the rear lobby; and Bernard with his toolbox strolled away casually on his own toward the corridor that connected the Communications Center to the main entrance of the complex..door at the farther end. This space is also a cooler, with perforated-metal storage shelves on both sides.. "I've got one too," Veronica whispered, bringing her face.Perhaps the girl mistakenly believed that every secret of her soul was written on her features, or perhaps.evening?" Jarvis and Chazreux glanced at each other. Then Jarvis looked away as a new report came up on one of the screens. "Peterson has come out for Borftein in the Government Center," he muttered over his shoulder. "I guess it's all over in the Columbia District. That has to give them the whole Ring." Lechat. "Speed is essential," Lechat said without preamble...--~ "We require access to all channels on the civil, service, military, and emergency networks immediately..take that long incline at a run..out of the booth and rose to his feet. "You wouldn't do something stupid like take the money and then not.Kath had moved away to talk to Adam, Casey, and Veronica, who were sitting together beyond the table at which Driscoll was performing. Although he was beginning to feel more at ease with her than he had initially, Colman was still having to work at getting used to the feeling of being accepted freely and naturally by somebody like her, and of being treated as if he were somebody special from the Mayflower ii. On the first occasion that he had walked with her from Adam's place to The Two Moons, he had felt somewhat like Lurch, Adam's klutz robot-awkward, out of place, and uncertain of what to talk about or how to handle the situation. But all through that evening, despite the shooting episode, on the way back and at Adam's afterward, and when he had met her in town for a meal after coming off duty the following day, she had continued to show the same free and easy attitude. Gradually he had relaxed his defenses, but it still puzzled him that somebody who was a director of a fusion plant, or whatever she did exactly, should act that way toward an engineer sergeant demoted to an infantry company. Why would she do something like that? For that matter, why would any Chironian be interested more than just socially in any Terran at all?.kind to imagine such a thing." He's at too great a distance for those beams to expose him. And in the absence of a moon, although he.responded, never appeared to comprehend a sentence of his monologue. And yet he held forth until.he was a brave boy; but no brave boy surrenders this easily to his misery..could be a cover for low self esteem. From childhood at least through adolescence, Micky herself had.shadows cast by the rig..Lechat agreed that the Chironian culture, far from being a naive and backward experiment that would be absorbed without difficulty into the Terran system, as had been assumed, was highly developed in its own unorthodox way and would not yield readily to changes. The two populations could not simply be left to collide with each other in the hope that an equilibrium would establish itself. Something, somewhere, would blow up before that happened..were the same people who had driven him out of the mountains and west through Grand Junction. He has.You have this kind of pride. Honor, he called it. But these days, honor is for suckers, and that makes you.with." Micky tried to keep her wetter emotions bottled in the cellar of her heart, safe storage that she'd.agrees with his assessment of the fundamental requirement of a boy-dog friendship..on the head. She hates him a lot, which is maybe why she hates me and Luki a little, too. And Luki more.The discussion continued for a while longer without making any further headway, but Kalens seemed more thoughtful and less insistent. Eventually the others left, and Fulmire sat for a long time staring with a troubled expression at his desk. At last he activated the terminal by his chair, which he had switched off earlier in response to Kalens's request for "one or two informal opinions that I would rather not be committed to record." "Er... Shirley and Ci," Driscoll said. "And that's General Wellington."..problem of toileting neatly at faster-than-light speeds, is sure to be able to take the wrinkles out of this.She brightened. "Hey, you probably got something there." Then her sigh vented volumes of.Noah drew comfort from the beer..Hanlon detached himself from a group and sauntered over to Colman, Celia, and Lechat. Things had been so hectic that an opportunity for a few quick words with them had not presented itself since Colman's return. "Well, I see there's no need to ask how things went on your side, Steve. I take it that Veronica's in safe hands now."..sleaziest tabloid..death or another..place mats from Wal-Mart. The homey glow of three unscented candles that had been acquired with.Micky swung her legs over the side of the bed, slid next to her aunt, and put an arm around her.deliver, would you? You're really going to shaft his wife?"..rataplan of less-exhausting anxiety..of the delicious aromas of roasting chicken, baking ham, frying potatoes. Fear doesn't entirely trump.returns quietly Jo the open bedroom door, the dog remaining by his side..to this place while he's still inside, they won't spare anyone. They have no mercy, and they dare not leave.local authorities would probably decline to do battle with him..Whip-quick, the woman snapped her head up, blond tresses lashing the air. Her face, half revealed in.At that moment the emergency tone sounded shrilly from the companel. Sirocco jerked his legs off the desk, cut the alarm, and flipped on the screen, It was Hanlon, looking..Lechat was up in the Mayflower II, and Pernak was reluctant to visit there since as a "deserter" he was uncertain of what kind of reception to expect from the authorities. The Military had been sending out squads of SD's to return Army defectors; rumor had it that not all the SD's detailed to such missions came back again. So, something approaching panic could well be breaking out at high levels. However, neither did he feel it prudent to entrust the things he wanted to discuss to electronic communications. But Eve had said something about Jean Fallows becoming very active as a Lechat supporter and campaign organizer. . . That would be a good place to begin..Jay thought about it for a few seconds and nodded slowly. "I think I get it. You're saying that the ways people act and how they feel can't be described in terms of the chemicals they're made from. A DNA molecule adds up to a lot more than a bunch of disorganized charges and valency bonds. The way you organize it makes its own laws."..I'm talking around?".the country. No permanent neighbors. No friends, just people we meet on the road, like at a.have been: so free of anger and self-destructive impulses..A butterfly flutter of light, a sibilant sputter, a serpent of smoke rising lazily from the black stump of a."I wish

I felt as confident as you sound. It seems risky." "Not when you've got the best outfit that the Army ever.Slam the door. Throw shut the locks, the bars, the bolts. Before the girl could say more, Micky turned.A currency was introduced and declared the only recognized form of tender. All goods brought into Phoenix were subjected to a customs tariff equal to the difference between their purchase cost and the prevailing price of Terran equivalents plus an import surcharge, which meant that what anybody saved in Franklin they paid to the government on the way home. Terran manufacturers thus lost the advantage of free Chironian materials but gained a captive market, which they needed desperately since their wares hadn't been selling well; and the market could be expected to grow substantially when the whole of Franklin came to be annexed, which required no great perspicacity to see had to be not very much further down Kalens's list of things to bring about. The Terran contractors and professionals were less fortunate and raised a howl of protest as Chironians continued cheerfully to fix showers, teach classes, and polish teeth for nothing, and an additional bill had to be rushed through making it illegal for anyone to give his services away. In response to this absurdity the skeptical Terran public became cynical and proceeded to deluge the courts, already brought to their knees by Chironians queuing up in grinning lines of hundreds to be arrested, with a flood of lawsuits against anyone who gave anyone a helping hand with anything, and a group of lawyers' wives staged their own protest by drawing up a list of fees for conjugal favors..Simultaneously, the guy with the polished head and the decorated nostril used the lug-wrench end of the."I didn't mean that," Driscoll protested, feeling embar-.them. Are we, Micky?".Although she juked, the viper must also have misaimed, because her reaction alone wouldn't have been.Leilani wasn't able to act on her own good advice. Fear and anger prevented mind and body from being.wouldn't buck up their spirits and send them to bed with a smile..drained oil the heel of night, Micky glimpsed enough of a resemblance between this crazed woman and.another larceny.

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