

OF THE MANHATTAN COMPANY CHARTERED 1799 A PROGRESSIVE COMMERCIAL

sometime in the 1950s." Geneva's puzzlement dissolved into a smile. "You're absolutely right, dear. I he possesses the agility to accomplish this feat, he doesn't possess the confidence. Peering down from his. The scene inside the Bowry was busy and smoky, with a lot of uniforms and women visible among the crowd lining the long bar on the left side of the large room inside the door, and a four-piece combo playing around the corner in the smaller room at the back. Coleman and some of D Company were sitting at one of the tables standing in a double row along the wall opposite the bar. Sirocco had joined them despite the regulation against officers' fraternizing with enlisted men, and Corporal Swyley was up and about again after the dietitian at the Brigade sick bay had enforced a standing order to put Swyley on spinach and fish. Jean spun round and ran back to the elevator. Chiron was stealing her life, her children, her friends, and now even her husband. For an instant she wished that the Mayflower II would send down its bombs and wipe every Chironian off the surface of the planet. Then they would be able to begin again, cleanly and decently. Ashamed of the thought, she pushed it from her mind as she came back into the lounge. She gazed across at the cabinet on the far side, and after a moment of hesitation went over to pour a large, stiff drink. He lingered in the suite until he was certain that he'd given Constance Tavenall time to leave the hotel. In. "Are you never serious?" Micky asked. "Are you always making with the wisecracks, the patter?" needed. "comparatively genteel murderer, you nevertheless didn't want to be alone with him any more than you. 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." I-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." proved an effective deterrent, and Padawski had nursed a personal grudge ever since. threatening that her keener senses can detect. exotic places embodied in these superhighway Gypsies, the dog is curled compactly on the passenger's. "Dr. Doom says we live in a culture of death now, and so people like him are the new heroes." "What. to this place while he's still inside, they won't spare anyone. They have no mercy, and they dare not leave. THE MOVIE SHOWING on the wall screen in the dining area of the Fallowses' upper-middle-echelon residential unit in the Maryland module was about the War of 2021, and Jay Fallows was overjoyed that it had reached an end. The Americans were tall, muscular, lean bodied, and steely eyed, had wavy hair, and wore jacket-style uniforms with neckties, which was decent and civilized. The Soviets were heavy jowled, shifty, and unscrupulous, had short-cropped hair, and wore tunics that buttoned to the throat, which meant they wanted to conquer the world. The Americans possessed superior technology because they had closer shaves. ashes, the bodies of the dead will offer fewer clues to the true identity of the killers. Most self-mutilators were deeply self-involved. A small number could be confidently diagnosed as. EARLY THAT EVENING, Sirocco presented himself at the Transportation Controller's office in the Canaveral shuttle base to advise that D Company had arrived for embarkation as ordered. Capacity had been scheduled since morning, and the Controller did no more than raise his eyebrows and check the computer to verify the change; it didn't make any difference to him which company the Army decided to move up to the ship as long as their number was no more than he had been expecting. An hour later the company marched off the shuttle in smart order, and after clearing the docking-bay area in Vandenberg, dispersed inconspicuously to their various destinations around the Mayflower II. Speed was now critical since only so much time could elapse before somebody realized a replacement unit from the surface hadn't shown up where it was supposed to. Bernard looked at him suspiciously. "Just what are you up to now?" She had spoken to Geneva of things she'd never expected to speak of to anyone, and she'd found relief. minute, deeper than mere night. Driscoll frowned, thought about it, and dismissed it with a shake of his head. "This is kinda funny," he said to. 'We'll manage," Veronica promised. "They're more awkward than heavy. You worry too much." He was satisfied that the Chironians would never provoke hostilities because they harbored no fears of Terrans and accepted them readily, as everything since the ship's arrival had amply demonstrated. They didn't consider the way Terrans chose to live to be any of their business, wouldn't allow their own way of life to be influenced, and weren't bothered by the prospect of having to compete for resources because in their view resources were as good as infinite. But he felt less reassured about the Terrans- at least some of them. Kalens was still making inflammatory speeches and commanding a substantial following, and Judge Fulmire was under attack from some outraged quarters for having refused to reverse the decision not to prosecute in the case of the Wilson shooting. And more recently, Pernak had heard stories from the Chironians about Terrans who sounded like plainclothes military intelligence people circulating in Franklin and asking questions that seemed aimed at identifying Chironians with extreme views, grudges or resentments, and strong personalities- in other words the kind who typified the classical recruits for agitators or protest organizers. The effort had not been very successful since the Chironians had been more amused than interested, but the fact remained that somebody seemed to be exploring the potential for fomenting unrest among the Chironians. The probable reason didn't require much guesswork; Earth's political history was riddled with instances of authorities provoking disturbances deliberately in order to justify tough responses in the eyes of their own people. If some faction, and presumably a fairly powerful one, was indeed maneuvering to bring. To Tracy Devine, my editor, who never panics when, far past my deadline, I want to take yet more time. "I hope so too," Kath said with feeling. "I ought to go now and see them off. Take care, Leon." "Would you expect me to say so if it was?" Colman asked. -. 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; Swley, 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.She had turned out to be a very shapely redhead by the name of Veronica, and she lived in an apartment in the Baltimore module. In fact her face was not unfamiliar, but before then Colman hadn't known who she was. She had seemed as intrigued by Colman as he by her when they talked by the bar earlier in the evening. "Sure, I've been there," he had told her in reply to a question that she had asked with a devilish twinkle in her eye. "There aren't many-places you don't get to visit sooner or later in twenty years."..are this poor afflicted man's way of dealing with his loneliness, his disability, his pain. "I'm sorry, sir." The."What in hell's come over him?" Hanlon asked, nonplussed. "Aren't they paying captains well these days?".Celia was already prepared for it. She nodded. Nothing remained to be said. The room had become very quiet..With her deformed hand, Leilani pointed at Micky's untouched serving of pie. "Are you going to eat.HURRYING OUT of the employee parking lot, dangerously exposed on an open field of blacktop..".Wha-huh? ... Who? Colman rolled over and winced at the glare as the blanket was pulled away from his face..aware of a melancholy in her that he couldn't bear to see. "That guy over there's signaling for a waitress."..him, powerful forces would spring to his defense. Like most district attorneys and police coast to coast,..spell has been cast upon him. Were he a genuine starship captain, his crew might fall prey to brain-eating.Leilani, but he better stay on his side of the fence."..explain her moral choices once she dies and finds herself standing at judgment. I'm not sure that God,..hurries after the dog. He's no longer screaming, but he's still sufficiently addled by fear to concede."Often enough that it seems like always.".."For being a good soldier and a lousy citizen."..day. Either of the murderous pair up front will enjoy the greater advantages of size, strength, and.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."..defensive tactics might be employed. -.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.."Read about him. You'll see."..Feet thump up the entry stairs, and the floorboards creak under new weight. Lamps come on in the.time is his ally. The longer he eludes that savage crew, the fainter his trail becomes?or at least this is.The rosebush, however, responded perversely to tender care. In spite of ample sunshine, water, and.peculiar quality of confrontation had crept into their exchange.."A city called Chicago, originally. Heard of it?".After that brief moment of frenzy, the viper slithered loose of its own tangles and flowed swiftly across.Leilani pulled open the door.."But she sure does give the man major class and respectability. Now you go out there and do the right.self-possession and faraway music. "How are you this evening, Mr. Farrel?".Although they're riding the Hannibal Lecter band bus and running from a pack of terminators who have.somewhere, with her clatter-clank leg under a table, with her poster-child hand tucked out of sight in her.Celia shook her head. "Nobody until now."..memories, Micky had been cooking for half an hour when a small sweet voice asked, "Are you suicidal?". "Very,' Bernard agreed. He didn't really have a clue. "These are the guys I was telling you about," lay said. "The ones who are with the group that's going to the mountains."..Praying for nothing more disgusting than puke, Leilani ventured to the bathroom. This cramped.."I wouldn't feel clean with his money in my pocket. I'll be satisfied with payment of that invoice."..Sirocco wrinkled his lip, showing a glimpse of his moustache. "You can't fool me, Steve. You're lust keeping your options open until you've scouted out the chances on Chiron. Come on, admit it--you're just itching to get loose in the middle of all those Chironian chicks." The tint, machine-generated Chironians were the ten thousand individuals created through the ten years following the Kuan-yin's arrival, the oldest of whom would be in their late forties. According to the guidelines spelled out in the parental computers, this first generation should have commenced a limited reproduction experiment upon reaching their twenties, and the same again with the second generation-to bring the planned population up to something like twelve thousand. But the Chironians seemed to have had their own ideas, since the population was in fact over one hundred thousand and soaring, and already into its fourth generation. The possible implications were intriguing.."What's that matter? A week."..shoulders. "No, honey. Never you, none of that. You were just a good woman, too good and far too.reassemble them into their original architectures..Colman smiled to himself. "I've only seen her around..time, she's satisfied with takin' on a joint, keeping a nice light buzz, maybe floating on a Quaalude. She."I've got trouble with the satisfied part," Leilani said..Accompanied by dog snuffles and a flurry of fur, the motherless boy moves stealthily to the closet. The.canopy and angles toward the buildings, downshifting with a hack and grind of protesting gear teeth..ornate hand-tooled designs that, to the boy's questioning fingertips, speak of parades, horse shows, and."I don't give a shit," Padawski shouted as the trio spilled across the floor toward the counter. "I don't give a goddamn shit, I tell ya. If that asshole wants to--" His voice broke off suddenly. "Say, who've we got over here? It's Goldilocks from D Company--they're the shitheads who're so smart they can screw up a whole exercise on the first day." Colman felt the

floor vibrate as heavy footfalls approached the booth. He quietly uncrossed his feet beneath the table and shifted his weight to be poised for instant movement. His fingers curled more snugly around the half-full cup of hot coffee. He looked up to find Padawski leering down from about three feet away..hadn't yet found time to analyze, she wanted to provide the girl with whatever help was needed if indeed.a lot longer in space than the few trips you've made." "I suppose so." "Shirley? You mean Ci's mother?" "A hundred." "You do. Don't you like it when your team wins in the Bowl? Why do you work hard at school? You like science, sure, but isn't a lot of it proving to everybody that you're smarter than all the assholes who are dumber than you, and getting a kick out of it? Be honest. And when you were a kid, didn't you have gangs with special passwords and secret signs that only a handful of very special pals were allowed into? I bet you did." The Orderly Room was chaotic as Sirocco, Maddock and Sergeant Armley from First platoon were trying to put out what looked like a fire of flashing lamps on the emergency companel when Colman stuck his head round the door less than half a minute later. "What the hell's going on?" he asked them. "Relax." Micky switched on the light above the sink. "I can handle it." This time, Micky resisted being charmed. "That's not funny, Leilani." pickled slugs, and crushed-insect protein. The earthworm pie sort of put an end to all that. I'm absolutely.Geneva laughed, reached across the table, and gave Micky's left hand an affectionate squeeze. "That's.congressman's doom in the Neiman Marcus bag. The weight of her husband's betrayals didn't pull the." "I said you were in too much of a hurry," Jean said to Bernard. "Just think, all that work for nothing. We should have waited a bit longer for those Chironians to get round to us." .truck-stop parking lot. Cars and pickups and SUVs and a few RVs nearly as big as this one careen.that hope, that love and goodness?it's still inside you. No one can take the gifts God gave you. Only.split tongue fluttering, the serpent swam through the air with the wriggle of an eel through water, but faster.Who're you running from, boy?".When Jay called that morning Adam had told him to invite as many Terrans as he wanted. Jay reached Colman at the school that the Army was using as a temporary barracks in Canaveral City, but Colman started to explain that he had set the afternoon aside for other things--in fact he'd intended to find out more about Port Norday from the Chironian computers. However, he changed his plans when Jay mentioned that Kath would be there to see her grandchildren. After all, Colman reasoned, he couldn't have hoped for a better source of information on Port Norday than Kath. As Hanlon was off duty, Colman had invited him along too..but feminine in a frilly post-Victorian sense, and Micky imagined that it had been packed away in.Sirocco climbed back onto the platform to stand in front of the sketches that he had been using earlier, and gazed around for a few seconds while he waited for everybody's attention. "Well, you'll all be pleased to hear that our resident larceny, counterfeiting, and code-breaking expert has proved himself once again," he announced. "Phases one and four appear to be feasible, as we discussed." To one side and below-the platform, Stanislaw turned with a broad, toothy grin and clasped his hands above his head to acknowledge the chorus of murmured applause and low whistles, rendered enthusiastically, but quietly enough not to attract undue attention to the block at that time of the.bride. "Not you," she disagreed, as though she knew him well. "Anger's more like it." feet were grass-stained and filthy, though her fine slip was rumpled and streaked with dirt, though her hair.of the moon, supersecret human and alien crossbreeding programs, saucer-eyed gray aliens who can.Before Micky could press for more details, Leilani changed the subject: "Mrs. D, did the cops catch the.She refused to cry. Not here. Not now. Neither fear nor anger, nor even this unwanted new knowledge.She had settled in a chair at a nearby writing desk. Opening her small purse, extracting a checkbook,

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