

## THE BIBLE DOUAY RHEIMS BOOK 19 ESTHER THE CHALLONER REVISION

He isn't aware of my associate in the attic." "Do I what?" rubbing soot from a window, might facilitate the passage of a thin but precious light into the darkness. "Oh, Jay," Jean groaned. "They were probably taking you for a ride to get you laugh out of it. At your age, you should know better." searching for them in certain mountains in Montana and other places they like to hang out. So we're. At a table stacked with clean plates, Curtis stops and, though still crouching, dares to raise his head. He. Disinterested in the bustle, not stirred? as the boy is? by the romance of travel and the mystery of. and clumped toward the closet, which regrettably put the bed between her and the snake. She was. The drone of traffic now seemed like the muffled buzzing of insects, as though the interior of the earth. Colman shrugged. "Strange things happen at sea, they say, and I guess even stranger things in space." "They're all such selfless do-gooders." Constance Tavenall's voice was crisp with sarcasm but. beyond the horizon. "Mama likes bad boys." burning eternal. The motion of the Windchaser makes the moon appear to roll like a wheel. under the wheels of the runaway SWAT transport. Micky finished her coffee in long swallows, as though she had forgotten it wasn't spiked, and though she. A short silence fell while the meeting digested the observation. Kalens thought about the fusion complex that Farnhill had learned about in his largely unproductive talks with an assortment of Chironians in Franklin. Kalens had sent Farnhill off to learn what he could through more casual contact and conversation, after Borftein's sarcastic remark to the effect that the Army's company of misfits seemed to be making better progress with the natives than the diplomats were managing. "Yes. . . I know what you mean," Kalens said, acknowledging Stern with a motion of his head. "As a matter of fact, we have already begun inquiries along those lines." He turned toward Farnhill. "Amery, tell us again about that place along the coast." "Relax." Micky switched on the light above the sink. "I can handle it." On the roof of the SUV, a searchlight suddenly blazes, so powerful and so tightly focused that it appears. Carson frowned and thought about the implications, then shook his head. "It's impossible," he said. "No system could work like that." remorse, even though she'd been motivated by genuine concern. Micky wasn't Sinsemilla, after all. Micky. Walters grunted, scanned quickly over the displays, and called the log for the last four hours onto an empty screen. "Looks like we're in for another strip down on that goddamn pump," he murmured without turning his head. "Looks like it," Fallows agreed with a sigh. she had rudely presumed to monitor and restrict Micky's use of alcohol. Such meddling required. "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." Kath's pocket communicator buzzed, and she took it out to answer. It was Adam, who had heard the news and was checking to make sure that she and Colman were all right. Colman left her talking and moved over to where Anita was standing near the door on the fringe of the party assembling to depart. "Why'd you ever get mixed up with that bunch?" he murmured. "Wise up when it's all over. Get out of it." "Are you telling us we're prisoners?" the Chironian man asked. . . consisting of the words "Bantam Books" and the portrayal of a rooster, is Registered in U.S. Patent and. A single lamp glowed. Like a jury of ghosts, ranks of shadows gathered in the room. "So does vitamin D deficiency." society whose natures would keep them hanging on to the end regardless. Above all there remained Borftein, who had nowhere else? to attach a loyalty that his life had made compulsive. Borftein headed a force still formidable, its backbone virtually all of Stormbel's SD's. Because these elements needed to believe, they allowed Kalens to convince them that the presence of Chironians inside Phoenix was the cause of everything that had gone wrong. If the Chironians were ejected from the organism, health would be restored, the absented Terrans would return, normality would reign and prosper, and the road to perfecting the dream would be free and unobstructed. Micky said, "Some of your brother's problems ... It sounds like surgery could have helped at least a." "And he shot you anyway?" .of Planets, and Leilani waving goodbye with an American flag in one hand and a Fourth of July sparkler. only a trinity of candle flames held back the insistent sinuous shadows, with the sudden sound of a toilet. shields feature built-in microphones to allow continuous strategic coordination of every man in the force. .we're proud of them." "Who're you running from, boy?" blood flowed now, but much of the surrounding soft tissue was blue-black. Probably just bruises. .Vernon isn't already roasting in Hell, he will be soon." .the deeper regions of your mind. Until now, she hadn't been aware that she herself provided a nest for. This is the largest truck stop the boy has seen, complete with a sprawling motel, motor-home park. Driscoll had to think about the response, and a couple of seconds of silence went by. "It's not the same," he said. .guts this evening had gained her nothing, but she'd left Micky and sweet Mrs. D under a big stinky pile of. "No, sir. Why would I?" .has been his companion for the past hour, as he's traveled twisting trails through exotic underbrush. .At that moment the emergency tone sounded simultaneously from both their communicators, and warning--bleeps and wails went up from places in the labyrinth all around. They looked at each other for a second. The noise died away as Colman fished his unit from his breast. Bernard couldn't see why Pernak had changed his mind. "I thought you and Eve had things all figured out before you took off," he said as they continued talking over after dinner drinks around the sunken area of floor on one side of the lounge. "Look what's happening-you've left, other people are leaving all over. You were right. Just leave the situation alone and let it straighten itself out." .lost. So any nine-year-old smartass who was judgmental enough to tell Michelina Bellsong that she'd had. searching, cunning and indefatigable. "It's nothing personal, Paul. We think you're a great guy ... ' Pernak frowned and sighed apologetically. "I just can't see that Separatism is going to answer anything in the long run. In fact, to be honest, I can't see Congress's being around all that much longer. On that planet down there, it's a dodo already." "Ah." Leilani's eyes widened. "You're the twelve percenters." .rehabilitated by the Circle of

Friends. I expected to be spotted and warned off, but I thought the. Setting the orange juice and the frankfurters on the floor, he whispers, "Good pup." He hopes that Old. "Yes, dear, who did he whack?" Aunt Gen asked with bright-eyed interest. Perhaps her occasional. thug. And one of the few rules by which the criminal class lived? not counting the more psychotic street. financial arrangements with the owner. It's item number seven on your final bill." . windows, until the pie-powered trucker returned and they ventured out upon the road again. Even then, . reassemble them into their original architectures. . Recognizing the sudden hardness in Noah's demeanor, she said, "What did you think I was going to. He and the dog had abandoned that wheeled sanctuary shortly after dawn, west of Grand Junction, . psychology and self-esteem." . The preacher seemed taken aback for a split second, but recovered quickly. "The world around us," he bellowed, throwing his arms wide. "Is it not there? Do I not see it? Who created it? Tell us. Is that not evidence enough?" . Micky looked to the open window, where the last murky glow of the drowning twilight radiated weak. Rickster shuffled along, smiling dreamily, as if the sandman had blown the dust of sleepiness in his eyes. . morning cartoon programs that had been the Sole source of moral education during their formative years. . "So does that mean you've got it figured?" Jay Eked. . "No. She's wasted on crack cocaine and hallucinogenic mushrooms. The only way old Sinsemilla could. powerfully intriguing but also nearly as scary as any of the snarling, carnivorous antagonists of the horror. "Think of it like the phase-changes that describe transitions between solids, liquids, and gases," Pernak said. "The gas laws are only valid over a certain limited range. If you try to extrapolate them too far, you get crazy results, such as the volume reducing to zero or something like that. In reality it doesn't happen because the gas turns into a liquid before you get there, and a qualitatively different kind of behavior sets in with its own, new rules." . The property was wider than it was deep, to allow the full length of the house trailer to face the street. . down. In this girl, Micky saw the hope of a good, clean life full of purpose? which she couldn't quite yet. "Nice job you're doing," Hanlon remarked at last. "Glad you think so." The painter carried on. . "Mmmm. So you don't really know anything about his experience or aptitude. He was just someone you met casually who read too much into something you-said. Right?" . Were her misgivings now the early-warning signals from a part of herself that had already seen the cracks appearing in dreams that were destined to crumble, and which she consciously was still unable to admit? If she was honest with herself, was she deep down somewhere beginning to despise Howard for allowing it to happen? In the bargain that she had always assumed to be implicit, she had entrusted him with twenty years of her life, and now he was betraying that trust by allowing all that he had professed to stand for to be threatened by the very things that he had tacitly contracted to remove her from. Everywhere Terrans were rushing headlong to throw off 'everything that they had fought and struggled to preserve and carry with them across four light-years 'of space, and hurl themselves into Chironian ways. The Directorate, which in her mind meant Howard, was doing nothing to stop it. She had once read a quotation by a British visitor, Janet Shaw, to the Thirteen Colonies in 1763, who had remarked with some disapproval on the "most disgusting equality" that she had observed prevailing on all sides. It suited the present situation well. . him nervous, and when he's nervous, he's less likely to be clever or cunning, or bold; and they will find. He's sincere in his intention to pay for what he takes, but nevertheless he feels like a criminal. . Most Terrans had no doubts that the Chironians would take no notice whatsoever, but they couldn't see Kalens enforcing the threat. It had to be a bluff-a final, desperate gamble by a clique who thought they could sleep forever, trying to hold together the last few fragments of a dream that was dissolving in the light of the new dawn. "He should have learned about evolution," Jerry Pernak commented to Eve as they listened to the news over breakfast. "The mammals are here, and he thinks he can legislate them back to dinosaurs." . Merrick regarded him coolly for a few seconds and still didn't seem very satisfied. "Well, an I can say is that not everyone shares your enviable faith in human nature- myself included, I might add. The official policy conveyed to me from the Directorate, which it is your duty as well as mine to support irrespective of our own personal views, . are in the middle of Godzilla." . Brow dripping, face slick, body clammy: Leilani reeked of sour sweat, no heavenly flower now. On her. every particle of toxic substances and then woke up one morning to discover that she wasn't Leilani. "Though I wouldn't trust him around an open cash register," said Geneva, rising from her chair. "Alec." "There must be a master panel or something somewhere," Jean said, looking around. "How about that?" She tripped down the two shallow steps into the sunken section of the floor, sat down at one end of the sofa, end lifted a portable flat screen display/touchpanel from a side-pedestal. After experimenting for perhaps ten seconds and watching the responses, she said, "That might do it. Try again." . "A hundred." . When Noah leaned close to have a look, Rickster's hands parted hesitantly; a wary oyster, jealous of its. Merrick's pained expression deepened into a frown, "Tch tch, that's inexcusable. How unfortunate. Let me see now-I can't remember exactly when it was but you were on duty. That was why I couldn't include you at the time." That was an outright lie; Bernard had been there on his day off, with Jay. "But anyway, we can soon put that straight. You'll find the place fascinating. A woman runs most of the primary process- a remarkable lady- I can promise you some interesting company as well as interesting surroundings. What I'd like you to do is arrange something with Hoskins for as soon as possible. I'm afraid I'll be tied up for the next couple of days." . whatever it's called." . Laughing softly, shaking her head, Micky said, "Kiddo, you've pushed this Addams Family routine one. because he's known that eventually, when he bonds better with the animal, he'll arrive at not just any. "It's been kind of. . . an unorthodox operation." . "Bad enough," he admitted. . That morning Paul Lechat, whom she had never thought of as especially noteworthy on any issue, had announced himself as a late candidate in the elections and called for the establishment of a separate Terran colony in Iberia, somewhere up in Selene. He wanted to allow the people from Earth to pursue their own pattern of living without disruptive influences for the immediate future, and possibly to make such an institution permanent if it suited enough people to do so. To Jean the announcement had come as a godsend, and to many others as well, if the amount of popular support that had

materialized from all sides within a matter of hours was anything to go by. Why couldn't everybody see it that way? she wondered. It was so obvious. Why were there always some who were obstinate and valued political interests before what common sense said would be for the common good, such as Kalens, who even now was reacting to Lechat as a threat and rallying his own followers to action? "Get away from being caged in at home, be your real.while positively thinking herself into a C-cup instead of brooding about all the many problems in her life.,He nodded. "It's all in the Neiman Marcus bag." He hesitated, but then decided that this woman's."I'm not shooting this. My associate is at an attic window of the place across the street. We made."I'm not in fourth grade," Leilani said, pouring the warm beer into the sink. "We're twenty-first-century.Amy watched curiously over the top of Cromwell's head as they disappeared from sight. "I wonder why they walk like that when they shout at each other," she mused absently. "Do you know why, Cromwell?""As long as you don't make it your business to go bothering people, you'll be okay," Nanook pointed out. "So it never affects most people. And when it happens . . . it happens.".without permission in writing from the publisher. For information address: Bantam Books..His dark-adapted eyes sting briefly from the glare..BY THE TIME that Leilani rose from the kitchen table to leave Geneva's trailer, she was ashamed of.Yeller will understand this to be an admonition against eating the sausages.."Then you'd have all the justification you need to crack down hard, wouldn't you," Kalens answered..rapped on the jamb.."Probably not much of anything," Leilani said, without a pause. "Except in having fun and getting through.Considering that this had just now become incontestably clear to Constance, her composure was.flourish..brunette with the pink complexion and the twinkling blue eyes of a Nordic blonde. In her crisp.he stood, came around the table, and moved her chair back for her to rise. She experienced again the fleeting sensation that she was a puppet dancing to Sterm's choreography. She watched herself as he ushered her to an armchair and handed her a glass. Then Sterm settled himself comfortably at one end of the couch, picked up his own drink, and held it close to his face to savor the bouquet..But no Borftein was present to save the situation at the side entrance. "I don't know anything about it," the SD Officer of the Day said from the screen in reply to the call the guard there had put through. "Those orders are incorrect. Detain those men." The guard on duty at the desk produced a pistol and trained it on Maddock, who was standing where he had been stopped ten feet back with Harding and Merringer. In the same instant the two SD's standing farther back covered them with automatic rifles..reach, but more likely than not, he's plunging deeper into a vast wilderness.."I can remember the one that first taught me to talk," Abdul said. "It's still operating today, up there on the Kuan-yin. But the ones you see today have changed a lot.".December 31, 2080.The dog seems reluctant to move, as though trouble lurks in every direction. His tail lowers further,.the snake.."I had to scrap one set." lay sighed. "I guess it's hack to square one on another. That's what I reckon I'll start today.". "Who else would he keep on the payroll?".Through darkness he flees, all but blind, not without fear but purged of doubt, across sandstone but also."Primed and ready for immediate launch," Stormbel replied in a monotone. "Programmed for air-burst at two thousand feet, impacting after thirteen minutes. Warhead twenty megatons equivalent, non-recallable and nondefusible after firing.".He turned right and, within another block and a half, arrived at a tavern. Here he might not be able to.to flush the wounds with antiseptics. Then, Sinsemilla might feel differently about seeing a

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