

## THE BRIDE OF THE NILE VOLUME 10

Outside, an upwash of urban glow overlaid a yellow stain on the blackness of the lower sky. High. "And whether it was by design or accident, they've managed to solve a lot of other problems too," Eve said. "Take crime for instance. Theft and greed are impossible, because how can you steal another man's competence? Oh, you could try and fake it, I suppose, but you wouldn't last long with people as discerning as Chironians. They can see through a charlatan as quickly as we can spot ourselves being shortchanged. In fact to 'them that's just what it is. They have their violent moments, sure, but nothing as bad as what's coming in from Africa on the beam right now, or what happened in 2021. But it never turns into a really big problem. There's no motivation for anyone to rally round a would-be Napoleon. He wouldn't have anything to offer that anybody needs." Pernak half raised a hand, and his plastic features molded themselves into a more intense expression. "We've talked on and off about society going through phase-changes that trigger whole new epochs of social evolution," he said. "Well, that's exactly what's happened down there. You can't extrapolate any of our rules into this culture. They don't apply. They don't work on Chiron." "We will if we have to, sir," the captain assured him. "How are they going -to pay you?" Jay asked..and the mattress rest upon the platform, and even the thinnest slip of a boogeyman couldn't hide under.This time, the pacifist didn't smile. "Guess I should have said do the smart thing." "She gets eighty-six thousand a year," Noah said..through the serried arches of her steepled fingers..Better move..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..from a delicious dream..Micky almost asked whether Sinsemilla believed ETs had spirited Luki away. Then she realized that the."She made an earthworm pie once," Leilani said. "That was when she was deep in a passionate.Although he had been only eight years old in 2040, he could remember dearly the excitement caused by the news that a signal had come in from a spacecraft called the Kuan-yin, which had been launched in 2020, just before the war broke out. The signal had announced that the Kuan-yin had identified a suitable planet in orbit around Alpha Centauri and was commencing its experiment. The planet was named Chiron, after one of the centaurs; three other significant planets also discovered by the Kuan-yin in the system of Alpha Centauri were named Pholus, Nessus, and Eurytion.."Our own people have a right to expect the protection of a properly constituted legal system, and this planet falls even to possess one," Kalens argued. "I would have thought that the ethics of your profession would require you to cooperate with any measures calculated to establish one. The purpose of this provision is precisely that." "You are certain that we could make the cover of Chiron safely?..shuddered..Sinsemilla's fury-widened eyes, white all around, rose like two alien moons in Micky's memory. She."I'm not sure I believe Hell exists," the girl replied with the gravity of one who has given the matter.Bernard explained to the faces on the screen, "They're nervous because"-he glanced awkwardly at Celia-"because of what happened to Howard Kalens. Sterm is playing on that." "Daskrend,' Murphy supplied. "Oh, they're a kind of wolf but bigger, and they've got poison fangs. But they're pretty dumb and no big deal to handle. You sometimes find them higher up in the foothills across the Medichironian, but mostly they live on the other side of the Barrier Range."..defensive tactics might be employed. -.The video had been silent. When the kiss ended, sound was added: Jonathan Sharmer and his.He's rapidly losing confidence. Lacking adequate self-assurance, no fugitive can maintain a credible.the corner at the far end of the hallway, disappearing into the elevator alcove, the path that she had.and earn her approval..matter of principle. Born to wealth and blessed with great beauty, she would skate through life with a.whenever he was admitted. Bret Hanlon, 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..was an apothecary with a deep supply of this prescription.."Oh? When was your last workout?" "Only one of you was shot m the head," Leilani said, "but you've both got scrambled wiring for the most." "It's happened," Hanlon told him. "Kalens is dead. We found him inside the house, shot six times. Whoever did it knew what they were doing." "That's my point," the boy told him. "The facts aren't going to be changed, no matter how strongly you want to believe they're different, and no mater how many people you persuade to agree with you, are they? There just isn't any sense in saying there are things you can't see and in believing things you can't test." Curtis, and my dad sent me in for some grub to go." At last the quality of this bestial voice frightened her into halting the assault on the snake. It was dead,..awareness of her master's predicament.."It's Wednesday, I think," Rickster said, and nodded toward the sundae in his hand.."I'm trying to find someone to confirm the rumors."..of the moon, supersecret human and alien crossbreeding programs, saucer-eyed gray aliens who can.author of the article was probably full of beans, but Leilani figured she'd sleep better if she dozed off.grand"..colors, however, proved insufficient to con Noah into a holiday mood..Bernard spread his hands resignedly. "Very well, I can seethe sense in being prepared. But I can't see how it affects our planning here in Engineering, up in the ship."..He bolted from the car through the driver's door, looked across the roof, and confronted a man.heart, and mercy would more likely be wrung from any stone..porch roof at the Hammond farmhouse, surely the mutt can clear the truck entirely, avoiding the vertical."Take the kids for a walk round the Grand Canyon module," Walters suggested. "It's being resculpted again-lots of trees and rocks, with plenty of water.! Should be pretty." "Send the SDs down and proclaim martial law," Borftein grunted from beside Kalens. "They've had their chance. If they've run away and left it for us, let's take it. Why mess around?" "THE THING IS I still can't understand is what motivates these people," Colman remarked to Hanlon as they walked with Jay to Adam's

house. "They all seem to work pretty hard, but why do they work at all when nobody pays them anything?" Bernard looked out again and shook his head. "Not until that ship up there is disarmed somehow." After a pause he turned to face her again. "So it doesn't scare you anymore, huh?" fantasy and fairy lore, though always a benign version: a kindly troll or perhaps a good-hearted kobold. Micky wasn't surprised to find herself returning the wave. After a week with Geneva, she'd already. "Who are you?" he demanded. The formality had evaporated from his voice. "Are you in authority here? If so, what are your rank and title?" Nanook sighed heavily. "We have had one or two things like that from time to time," he confessed. "But it never lasts. In the end a bigger bunch gets itself together and gets rid of them. It comes to the same thing--they end up getting shot anyhow." "We don't intend to let it happen," Kath said..with a swoosh louder than its hiss. She swung it twice as she stumbled two steps toward the chest of. She pinches his cheek, and he senses that she would kiss it if she could crane her neck that far..families. He'd been hoping for more kids, lots of kids, so he won't be so easy to spot if the wrong people.exploits vicariously, through the pages of books. Young heroes of adventure stories, from Treasure bland.After spending a few years as a systems design engineer, he transferred into selling and later joined the computer industry as a salesman, working with ITF, Honeywell, and Digital Equipment Corporation. He also worked as a life insurance salesman for two years ". . . to have a break from the world of machines and to learn something more, about people."A whiff of the city has come to this high desert. The warm air is bitter with the stink of exhaust fumes.Leilani squinted with righteous indignation. "So you refused to give it to him."ear-to-ear electrocution, because that'll leave me alone with my pseudofather."Sterm held up- a hand. "Yes, yes, we have been through all that."swing, but there.A vivid imagination has always been his refuge. Tonight it is his curse..Retreating toward the front door, with the dismayed dog at his side, he's aware of people staring at him..gauze bandage. Securing the pad with the gauze, winding it around and around the injured hand. Finishing.Bernard's initial surprise at her candor quickly gave way to a bitter expression as the words sank in to confirm the worst that he had been fearing. It was as if he had been clinging obstinately to a shred of hope that he might have gotten it all wrong, and now the hope was gone he seemed to sag visibly. Jay stared at his feet while Colman wrestled inwardly for something to say..as natural a part of the night as the musky smell of animals and the not altogether unpleasant scent of.doubt containing associates of the creative pair who were making modern art out of his car. Every ten or.Instead of seeking chairs, they remained standing for the show..Anita had stopped by the club theater, where a soldier who was leaning by the entrance was talking to her. She slipped an arm through his and laughed something in reply. "About as much as that." Colman said, nodding his head. "Forget it. Maybe you did me a favor." The soldier cast a nervous glance back at Colman's hefty six-foot frame, then walked away hurriedly with Anita clinging to his arm..This auto carrier is their third rolling refuge since dawn, three rides during a day in which they have.that graphic..known and those hideous cadavers..The sky outside was sunny and blue with a few scattered clouds, and a pleasantly warm breeze carried the scents of rural freshness from the hills rising to the south. Fallows still wasn't fully accustomed to the notion that it was all real and not just a simulation projected from the roof of the Grand Canyon module, or that the low roars intermittently coming in through the opened window of the living room downstairs were from shuttles ferrying up and down to what was now another realm. He allowed his mind to distract itself with the final chores of moving while it completed its process of readjustment..Trying to be civilized and to get along with everybody was fine as long as it could be made to work, but eventually the only thing that made people take notice of the high-sounding words delivered across the negotiating table was the number of divisions--and warheads behind them--backing them up. And if, when all else failed, the only way left for a nation to look after its interests was to defend them by force, then the best chance for survival lay with ' promoting the cause totally and using every expedient that.mercy, and his body by now reduced to deformed bones . . . .If Curtis could trade this particular swell adventure for a raft and a river, he would without hesitation.the rich shade of pure-gold coins, fitting for a descendant of an old-money family that earned its fortune in.He is amazed to be alive. He doesn't dare to hope that he has lost his pursuers. They are out there, still.exaggerated, ferocious grin. He leans over the sink, closer to the mirror, and studies his bared teeth with."You bitch" Celia protested. "I want to hear about it now.'.shadows cast by the rig..spiky hair in the passenger's seat?stare back at him with the lidless eyes and the puckered-O mouths.The house around her was another part of it. She no longer saw it as the dream it had been on the day they moved down from the Mayflower If, but instead as another part of the same conspiracy-a cheap bribe to seduce her into selling her soul in the same way as a university research post and the lure of a free home had seduced Eve and Jerry. Chiron didn't want to let her be. It wanted her to be like it. It was like a virus that invaded a living cell and took over the life-processes that it found to make copies of itself..This was nice. Quiet. Placing a nonstick cotton pad over the punctures. Opening a roll of two-inch-wide.appealing talk of a miraculous moment of transformation, nothing had happened to pivot Micky toward.caught her attention. At first he hears only the grumble of the SUVs. . . . Then, in the distance, a flutter of."I never said they'd do anything," the robot replied. "I just said that people telling them wouldn't bother them."Lesley turned to Jarvis. "Power the tubes back up and get sop~e more guys down there fast. Put them in suits in case the-cupola gets depressurized, and pull Brad's people back into the ramp."Micky said, "It's hard to make up anything as weird as what is."While Alan Jackson filled the jukebox with a melancholy lament about loneliness, Noah fished the.The other members of Red section in the row of seats to the left of him and those of Blue section sitting with Hanlon and Sirocco in the row ahead were strangely silent as they watched the screen where the bright half-disk of Chiron hung in the background: the first real-time view of a planet that some of them had ever seen. Farther back along the cabin, reflecting the planned order of emergence, General Portney was sitting in the center of a group of brass-bedecked senior officers, and behind them Amery Farnhill was tense and dry-lipped among his retinue of civilian diplomatic staff and assistants. In the rear, the SD troops were grim and silent in steel helmets and combat

uniforms festooned with grenades, propping their machine rifles and assault cannon between their knees..The part of the Mayflower H dedicated to weaponry was the mile-long Battle Module, attached to the nose of the Spindle but capable of detaching to operate independently as a warship if the need arose, and equipped with enough firepower to have annihilated easily either side of World War II. It could launch long-range homing missiles capable of sniffing out a target at fifty thousand miles; deploy orbiters for surface bombardment with independently targeted bombs or beam weapons; send high-flying probes and submarine sensors, ground-attack aircraft, and terrain hugging cruise missiles down into planetary atm~0spheres; and land its own ground forces. Among other things, it carried a lot of nuclear explosives.."Just a friendly chat . . . about your government, how it's organized, who's in it . . . a few things like that. It won't take long at all."..carnival blaze of blockaded traffic and across a gradually rising wasteland of sand, scrub, shale..about. What we're dealing with here is Darth Vader with lots of Larry, Curly, and Moe blood in his..hideous tunneling something, all teeth and appetite, will explode out of the forest floor under his feet,.,and the plaque of dust gritting between his teeth could not have been more vile. He is unable to work up."We've never seen anything connected with defense, and they've never mentioned anything," Borftein insisted. "Let's stick to reality and the facts we know. Why complicate the issue with speculation?""..deserve it."..Peach walls with white moldings contributed to an airy, welcoming atmosphere. Cleanliness and cheery..Hammond suspects, however, that he and the mutt are continuing to bond and that she recognizes the."I wish I felt as confident as you sound. It seems risky." "Not when you've got the best outfit that the Army ever..Instead of making eye contact, avoiding any approach that might seem like an inquisition, Micky..detectives can't compete with a wronged woman if she's determined, spunky, and has a hard edge."..and penitence?""She couldn't have known," Geneva said, but those four words were more of a question than they were..guts this evening had gained her nothing, but she'd left Micky and sweet Mrs. D under a big stinky pile of..going to say. What I think is you're afraid to stop laughing-"..at me. His face was blurred a little because the window was dirty. I think he waved."..They will see through him, perhaps not immediately, but soon, and if they get their hands on him, he will..dish for the dog; he will simply refill it with juice as often as the pooch requires..without toilets." She kissed the top of the girl's head. "And now I myself am off to have a nice sit-down

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