

## THIRD REPORT OF THE FACTORY INVESTIGATING COMMISSION 1914

him better than he knew himself. This suspicion didn't inspire contemplation, and he busied himself. open land. The rotors aren't turning, but evidently the engines are running, since the interior is softly. "We have to do something," Marcia Quatrey insisted. "Even if it means putting the whole town under martial law, some form of official recognition is imperative. This has gone on far too long as it is." "This looks like what we want, chief," Stanislaw said to Sirocco, and pointed to one of the entries. Sirocco leaned closer to peer at the screen. other, in pieces, to the mutt. Although everybody had been expecting the announcement, a tension had been building as the room waited for the words that would confirm the expectations. Now that the words had been said, the tension released itself in a ripple of murmurs accompanied by the rustle of papers, and the creaks of chain as bodies unfolded into easier postures. The capacity of the complex itself took account of long-range-demand forecasts and more than outstripped the current requirements of the industries scattered around the general area. Its primary power source was a one-thousand gigawatt, magnetically confined fusion system which combined various features of the tokamak, mirror, and "bumpy toms" configurations pioneered toward the end of the previous century, producing electricity very efficiently by blasting high-velocity, high-temperature, ionized plasma through a series of immense magnetohydrodynamic coils. In addition, the fast neutrons produced in copious mounts from this process were harnessed to breed more tritium fuel from lithium, to breed fissionable isotopes of uranium and plutonium from fertile elements obtained elsewhere in the same complex, and to "burn up" via nuclear transmutation the small mounts of radioactive wastes left over from the economy's fission component, the fuel cycle of which was fully closed and included complete reprocessing and recycling of reactor products. what that is? The paired punctures, like a vampire bite, were in this case the mark of a vampire bitten. spiky hair in the passenger's seat? stare back at him with the lidless eyes and the puckered-O mouths. "But you haven't. You haven't let it go at all." The discussion continued through the meal, and in the end it was agreed: Clearance would be given for the civilians and a token military unit to begin moving down to Franklin. "Is this what the cities back on Earth were like?" heat withered common sense and wilted reason, Micky decided that they were setting a new standard for. "Bad news," Colman hissed through his teeth. "Just keep talking. Don't look round." After studying his impassive expression for a few seconds, Veronica had said in a low voice, "It is you, isn't it?" And for such a system the universal law was not death, but life. This scheme at last explained a number of things which previously had been noted merely as empirically observed curious coincidences. It explained why quarks came in three colors: Each one-plus-two combination of dums and dees. couldn't be ignored any more than you could ignore an asteroid the size of Texas hurtling at Earth with. "So where do you go?" Jay asked again. Colman was becoming irritated again. No one on the ship had met a Chironian yet, but everyone was already an expert. All anybody had seen were edited transmissions from the planet, accompanied by the commentators' canned interpretations. Why couldn't people realize when they were being told what to think? He remembered the stories he'd heard in Cape Town about how the blacks in the Bush raped white women and then hacked them to pieces with axes. The black guy that their patrol had interrogated in the village near Zeerust hadn't seemed the kind of person to do things like that. He was just a guy who wanted to be left alone to run his farm, except by that time there hadn't been much left of it. He'd begged the Americans not to nail his kids to the wall--because that was what his own people had told him Americans did. He said that was why he had fired at the patrol and wounded that skinny Texan five paces ahead of Hanlon. That was why the white South African lieutenant had blown his brains out. But the civilians in Cape Town knew it all because their TV's had told them what to think. front wall of their house and unloaded a few tons of fresh manure in their living room. Not only was it a. Veronica paused as she was about to turn toward the door. "I'm beginning to miss being thrown out in the middle of the night. How's your handsome sergeant these days? You haven't finished with him, have you?" first-aid kit from her dresser and returned to her mother's room. sudden halt when he spots two men standing out there at the lunch counter, talking to Burt Hooper. They. "Luck," Micky clarified. "The angle of the shot was severe. The slug literally ricocheted off her skull." Carson doesn't know what to do with it," Driscoll. Cautiously he looks forward along the driver's side of the truck, sees no one, and moves to the. puke-covered wino competition for the worst smell outside of a Calcutta sewer. She'd better get a fix on the creature while it was stunned. She backed away, dropped awkwardly to. Fulmire endorsed the idea and said he thought that a lot of other people were beginning to feel the same way, which started Lechat thinking about forming an official Separatist movement and seeking nomination as a last-minute candidate in the elections. Soon afterward he began to sound out sources of support, and since his interests had put him on close terms with most of the Mission's scientific professionals, they were near the top of his list of likely recruits. Among them was Jerry Pernak, whose researches Lechat had been following with interest for several years. Accordingly, Lechat invited Pernak and Eve Verity to dinner with him one evening in the Fran?oise, a restaurant in the Columbia District frequented mainly by political and media people, and explained his situation. half a mile ahead, at the top of a rise, traffic has come to a complete stop. "I find them a refreshingly honest and direct people. You know where you stand with them." Bernard gave a slight shrug. "In view of the short time we've been here, I think everything has gone surprisingly well. Certainly it could have been a lot worse." she now stands upon it, following Curtis's movements with curiosity, her tail wagging in expectation of. the scales. In a reek of scorched rubber, with one last attenuated grunt of protesting gears, it shudders to. Paula slapped down four aces gleefully. "You lose! Hey, how about that? I just cleaned him out. See, I knew he had to be bluffing." CHAPTER 9. It was after 0400 hours, local, when Colman returned to the room which he shared with Hanlon in the Omar Bradley Block, which in the system of twenty-four Chironian "long hours" day was about as miserable a time of day as it was on Earth. With

the room to himself since Hanlon was on night duty, he crawled gratefully between the sheets without bothering to shower to make what he could of the opportunity to sleep undisturbed until his call at 0530. "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." Leilani Klouk. well-meant if less than completely appropriate advice: "Maniac! Crazy boy!". "I've been thinking about that ..."

Sirocco continued to gaze across the room at Driscoll, who was recounting his experiences to Maddock and a group of others. "He's pretty good, isn't he," Sirocco said, still half to himself. "Hey, you. Stop." The major in command of the four SD troopers sent to scout out the center of Canaveral City --a residential and commercial suburb situated outside the base and merging into one side of Franklin--addressed the Chironian whom they had followed from the restaurant a few yards back around the corner. He was well-dressed, in his mid-thirties, and carrying an attaché case. The Chironian ignored them and kept walking. Whereupon the major marched ahead to plant himself firmly in the man's path. The Chironian walked round him and eventually halted when the troopers formed themselves into an impassable barrier on three sides. "You're coming to talk to the ambassador," the major informed him..self and taking in the two gifts as he drew to a halt. "Very cosy," Sirocco agreed.. "But what about the border guards?" Jean looked alarmed. "We don't know who we can trust. Fulmire didn't know which side how much of the Army is on. There could be fighting out there at any minute. You don't know what you'll be walking into." ..astonishingly clever tricks. When I saw what potential dogs possess, how smart they can be, I wondered.untouched. The hatred subsides as quickly as it flourished, and the grief that was briefly drowned by this. Corporal Swyley wasn't saying anything, which was significant because Swyley was usually a pretty good judge of what was what. His silence meant that he didn't agree with what was being said. When Swyley agreed with something, he said he didn't agree. When he really didn't agree, he said nothing. He never said he agreed with anything. When he had decided that he felt fine after the dietitian discovered the standing order for spinach and fish, the Medical Officer hadn't been able to accuse him of faking anything because Swyley had never agreed with anybody that he was sick; all he'd said was that he had stomach cramps. The M.O. had diagnosed that anybody with stomach cramps on his own time had to be sick. Swyley hadn't. In fact, Swyley had disagreed, which should have been obvious because he hadn't said anything.. "It's what he does. Like the postman delivers the mail. Like a baker makes bread." Leilani shrugged..a hot bath..Earth?.mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system.,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."..audience of one..This was true. Golden hair. Eyes as blue as gentian petals. The clarity of Leilani's features promised that..campground for an evening, and we never see them again. Sinsemilla long ago chopped loose her family..of the lowest drawer..The painter looked dubious while he inspected the windowsill that he was to tackle next. "That doesn't make much sense," he murmured after a while. "Why would somebody stay poor if he didn't have to? That'd be a strange. kind of way to carry on."..broom to the blacktop, sweeping along puffs of dust, spidery twists of dry desert grass, and scraps of.."Really--you just walk in and help yourself. That's how they do things here... for everything.".."What for?" The Chironian in the purple sweater and green shorts asked..hunger, and though the flood of saliva is bitter, it fails to diminish his appetite..A crash rocks the room, rattles cookware. Someone slamming through the swinging door from the.one of the scattered clumps of sagebrush that stipple the landscape. He puts one hand on the back of the..series of hard yelps issues from the abused tires, as the driver judiciously pumps the pedal instead of..January 10, 2081..He must always remember that every story of a boy and his dog is also a story of a dog and its boy. No.."He's had the whole unit standing by specifically for something like this," Colman replied. "He's waiting for news right now, that's why I'm here."..concern for the insect be addressed seriously..beneath the chest of drawers to Leilani's exposed back, where now it slowly extruded on the floor."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."..Merrick nodded gravely. "An officer who abets an act contrary to the best interests of the Service is being disloyal, and a citizen who acts against the interests of the..Doom. I remember some places, but I was too little to have memories of them all. A few months here, a.."Laughing at what?"..might be the man himself now," Hanlon's voice said from the grille by the screen. "Ah, yes., ,a little the worse for wear, but he'll be as good as new." He gave a final heave on the lines and pulled another figure up into the picture. Bernard and Celia breathed sighs of relief as they recognized Colman's features beneath the watch-cap inside the helmet, dripping with perspiration but apparently unharmed. Column anchored himself to another part of the structure that Hanlon was on, unhitched his safety line and untangled it from the other one, and then helped Hanlon pull it in to produce another spacesuited figure, this time upside down and with a pudgy, woebegone face that was somehow managing to keep a thick pair of glasses wedged crookedly across its nose..five-minute warning. They've obviously been tracking the hunters who have been tracking Curtis and his..cup, Micky didn't mind the edge that the brew acquired. In fact, Leilani's story stirred in Micky a long..Hanlon made a throwing-away motion in the air. "Ah, this is all getting to be too serious for a Saturday night. Why are we talking like this at all? Are we letting silly rumors get to us?" He looked at Sirocco. "Our glasses are nearly empty, Your Honor. A round was part of the bet.".."I put loose a lady like this once before, twice maybe, but those were daylight.".."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." ON THE DAY officially designated December 28, 2080, in the chronological system that would apply until the ship switched over to the Chironian calendar, the Mayflower 11 entered the planetary system of Alpha Centauri at a speed of 2837 miles per second, reducing, with its main drive still firing at maximum power. The propagation time for communications to and from Chiron had by that time fallen to well under four hours. A signal from the planet continued that accommodations for the ship's occupants had been prepared in the outskirts of Franklin as had been requested. "You'd be welcome to come too if you want," Rastus said. her practical survival advice? had been passed from believer to believer, much the way that folk tales. toward a new point on the compass. The hunter has a handsome, potentially genial face. If he were to smile instead of glower, put on a mask. in the constellation of Orion. He's here, like it or not, and if ever he has needed to draw strength from his. top drawer on the nearest nightstand. Inside, among articles of no use to him, are a pair of white plastic. Therefore, at the arrival of the disabled girl, Micky was surprised to feel the same buoying expectation. "If I were you, I wouldn't invite him to dinner. By the way, he doesn't know I'm here. He wouldn't allow." "Well, there's something to think about," Cromwell suggested. "I think I'd have done the same thing," Otto told him. too? will sooner or later learn his whereabouts. Eventually they will get to him no matter in what deep. The dog seems reluctant to move, as though trouble lurks in every direction. His tail lowers further, . Bullock role. "Who was that?" Jean gasped, her eyes wide with disbelief. "Oh, sure . . . I'm just saying there doesn't have to be anything to get scared about." Then her fingers fanned across her face. She hung her head. The new round of weeping was subdued, . for want of a better word. . . for a lot of things, anyhow." Nanook nodded. "Right. I do most of the time." . was an apothecary with a deep supply of this prescription. Kath turned back from the night table, sat up to sip some of the wine, then passed him the glass and snuggled back inside his arm. "I suppose we must seem very strange to you, Steve, being descended from machines and computers." She chuckled softly. "I bet there are lots of people on your ship who think we're really aliens. Do they think we walk like Lurch and talk in metallic, monotone voices?" . back. With food." The Chironians traded in respect, Colman was beginning to understand as he listened to the talk around him. They respected knowledge and expertise in every form, and they showed it. Perhaps, he thought to himself, that was how the first generation had sought to compete and to attain identity in their machine-managed environment, where such things as parental status, social standing, wealth, and heritage had had no meaning. And they had preserved that ever since in the way their culture had evolved. . Celia's face had drawn itself into a tight, bloodless mask as she stared at the image of Sterm. "We're getting a channel from the Battle Module," Bernard whispered to Kath, . thee with a work of art fair suitable for the galleries of Eden." While staring at Sterm, Borftein tapped Judge Fulmire's personal call code with his fingertips and moved the compad quietly beneath some loose papers lying against a folder in front of him on the table. "And I am on early duty tomorrow," Colman said. He grinned again, and she smiled back impishly, "So why are we still here?" they asked together. None of these people appears to be suspicious of him, and none seems likely to be one of the relentless. merriment, the mirth in her voice was unmistakable: "You think I'm making up stories about Dr. Doom. No sooner had Leilani's defenses cracked than they mended. Her eyes glazed with emotion at the

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