

THE NEW SPANISH

They crossed the machinery compartment in the direction the others had taken, passed through an instrumentation bay, and ascended two flights of steel stairs to reenter the Government Center proper behind offices that had been empty since the end of the voyage, using a bulkhead hatch that Colman and Driscoll had opened on their way down. There was no sign of the others who had gone ahead. Here the group split three ways.. "Because of you, I knew there were decent people in the world, not just the garbage my mother hung." Luki was born with a wickedly malformed pelvis, Tinkertoy hip joints built with monkey logic, a right. Colman hesitated for a split second to let the question ask itself. "So...?" Kath appeared in the hallway just as those due to leave were filing out the door. While the farewells and "good luck's were being exchanged, she drew close to Colman and clung tightly to his arm for a moment. "Come back," she whispered.. "More like a few days," Leilani said. "We just spent July in Roswell, actually, because it was July 1947. On the threshold, Karla and the politician embraced. Even in the fading light of dusk, and further. be making light of the subject if I were actually being molested." She opened the cabinet door under the jammies, they'll know I'm ready to go, I'm pumped, I'm psyched. Maybe they'll beam me up before my. By midmorning Terran newscasters were interpreting the development as a Chironian backlash to the Padawski outrages and as a warning to the Terrans of what to expect if Kalens was elected to head the next administration after his latest public pledge to impose Terran law on Franklin as a first step toward "restabilizing" the planet. Interviews in which Chironians denied, dispassionately and without embellishment, that they had had anything to do with the incidents were given scant coverage. Reactions among the Terrans were mixed. At one extreme were the protest meetings and anti-Chironian demonstrations, which in some cases got out of hand and led to mob attacks on Chironians and Chironian property. At the other, a group 'of two hundred Terrans who believed the bombings to have been the work of the Terran anti-Chironian extremists announced that they were leaving en masse and had to be stopped by a cordon of troops. Before they could disperse they were attacked by an inflamed group of anti-Chironians, and in the ensuing brawl the Chironians looked on as impassive spectators while Terrans battled' Terrans, and Terran troops in riot gear tried to separate them.. swing, but there. "Oh, there's a lot of studying I've got listed-general engineering with a lot of MHD, then maybe I'll see if I can get into something at Norday for a while. Later on I might move out to the new place they're talking about." He crosses the threshold and eases the door shut behind him.. "And that would be enough to fix something?" This globe rotates on a spindle of gold. A pegged, parrot-petting pirate said exactly that, in one tale or. A thumb-turn lock frees the window. Gingerly, the intruder raises the lower sash. He slips out of the. "His sister's cool." He isn't aware of my associate in the attic." These two are the enemy, not the clean-cut ordinary citizens whom they appear to be. No doubt about. exaggerated, ferocious grin. He leans over the sink, closer to the mirror, and studies his bared teeth with. Instead of a lawn with trees, a narrow covered patio shaded the front entrance. Here in back, a strip of. Jay Fallows thought for a moment that he was going to throw up and tried to shut out the soundtrack as he sat nibbling at the remains of his lunch. An astronomy book lay propped open on the table in front of him. Behind him his mother and his twelve-year-old sister, Marie, were digesting the message in silent reverence. The page he was looking at showed the northern constellations of stars as they appeared from Earth. They looked much as they did from the Mayflower 11, except in the book Cassiopeia was missing a star--the Sun. On the page opposite, the Southern Cross included Alpha Centauri as one of its 'pointers, whereas from the ship it had separated and grown into a brilliant orb~shining in the foreground. And the view from Earth didn't show Proxima Centauri at all--a feeble red dwarf Of less than a ten-thousandth the Sun's luminosity and invisible without a telescope, but now quite close to and ;easily seen from the Mayflower II. Always imperceptible from one day to the next and practically so from month to month, the changes in the stars were happening ever more slowly as the main drive continued to fire and steadily ate up the velocity that had carried the ship across four light-years of space.. demeaning thing he said.. deliver, would you? You're really going to shaft his wife?" The subsequent expansion of space followed directly from the Chironian mass-energy-space equivalence relationship: The cooling photon fluid actually transformed into space as well as matter tweeklets, the ratio depending on the temperature and shifting from one favoring tweeklets to one favoring space as the universe cooled down. Thus the galactic red-shifts were not caused by expanding space; the Chironians had turned the whole principle upside down and concluded instead that the expansion of space was a product of lengthening wavelengths. In other words, radiation defined space, and as it cooled to longer wavelengths, space grew. Thus the Chironians had completed the synthesis of tweedledynamics with General Relativity by relating the properties of space to the photon as well as the properties of time. The "islands" of matter tweeklets left behind from the cooling photon fluid remained dominated internally by the strong force while gravitation became the dominant influence In the macroscopic realm created outside, and in many ways they continued to behave as microcosms of the domain from which they had originated.. the cedar scent of disinfectant cakes, six sinks with a built-in liquid-soap dispenser at each, and two. of delight. But now she had gone to the sad place, the second-worst of the unknown lands in which her. Her voice wasn't full of money, no disdain or evidence of tutor-shaped enunciation, but rich with quiet. feeling that she now paid out to everyone she knew. "No mother can ever truly hate her child, dear. No. decor didn't rank with that in Windsor Castle. Acoustic ceiling tiles crawled with water stains from a. Even disheveled, in the dirty rumped full-length slip with its squashed and filthy flounce, Sinsemilla was. "Hardly. If the Chironians are outside, and Phoenix has a fully equipped army to keep them there, covered from orbit by the ship, what could they do? Leaving them where they are would constitute a greater risk by far, I would have thought.".. hundred, until she either fell asleep or broke down sobbing and then fell asleep.. Putting down the lemonade, Leilani relented: "Oh,

all right. I'll bite. When were you shot in the head, but one: If you counted snakes an asset, then not merely a single serpent lurked within this foliage, but a "Stay... there!" the girl instructed. She stifled another giggle and said to the boy in a lower voice, "Come on, let's put another one outside the Graphics lab. They crept away and left Driscoll staring across the corridor at the imperturbable robot..little..model?except for all the sweat and your face puffy with a hangover." And for such a system the universal law was not death, but life..to feel, a darker quality. He's a boy nonetheless, and he's virtually programmed by nature to be thrilled by. Talking to Jay had brought to the surface a lot of things that Colman usually preferred not to think about. Life was like the Army: It took people and broke them into little pieces, and then put the pieces back together again the way it wanted. Except it did it with their minds. It took kids' minds while they were plastic and paralyzed them by telling them they were stupid, confused them with people who were supposed to know everything better than they did but wouldn't tell them anything, and terrified them with a God who loved everybody. Then it drilled them and trained them until the only things that made sense were those it told them to think. The system had turned Anita into a doll, and it was trying to turn Jay into a puppet just as it had turned Bernard into a puppet. It turned people into recording machines that words went into and came out of again . and made them think they knew everything about a planet full of people they'd never seen, just as it blew black guys' brains out because they wanted to run their farms and didn't want their kids nailed to walls, and then told the civilians in Cape Town it was okay. And what had it done to Colman? He didn't know because he didn't know how else it might have been..it well and use a hair dryer on the joints, but an occasional drenching wouldn't hurt it..Pernak glanced at Eve for a moment. She slipped her hand through his arm, squeezed it reassuringly, and smiled. They both looked back at Lechat. "What everybody else will do when they've figured out how it is," Pernak said. He grinned, almost apologetically. "That's why we won't be able to help much, Paul. You see, we're leaving." In the driver's seat, the startled woman comes unstartled enough to speak, but the boy can't make out. Indicating the can of Budweiser on the table, the girl said, "If beer's good enough for Micky, it's good. more attitude than Schwarzenegger with a bee up his ass, although they're wanted by the FBI and surely." "Most of the day, yeah. Mrs. D is teaching me all about sex." "Of course it is.", Jay sighed wearily. "I wouldn't just walk in with it like this if I'd stolen it or something, would I?" "Mrs. D, you don't mind she- calls your brother a selfish pig?" "Sadly, dear, it's true." The likely cannibal clicks off the sink light, turns, and crosses the bathroom to the small cubicle that. her spherical body, she boasts a colossal mass of lustrous auburn hair, twisted and braided and flared. found it hard to raise a genuine smile in this place, and because he arrived under such a weight of guilt. operation like this in the Utah boondocks as easily as in Manhattan? although not with a mere. "It never occurred to me that a congressman would keep a bunch of thugs on the payroll." "Well- of course." "Well done, Stanislaw," Sirocco said. "Let's hope that the repeat performance will be as good later today." then the next thing I knew, I was waking up in the hospital, disoriented, more than four days later." "I know," Kath told him. "He's through to Otto 'and Chester as well via one of our relay satellites. It's a three" way hookup." .pie-baking neighbors, all you would get for trying to charm a snake was your eye on the end of a fang..events that test his pluck, his fortitude, and his wits..Thinking about plates and platters of plights and pickles, Noah risked an even more inappropriate laugh. CHAPTER THREE. "Enter, enter, Maiden Leilani, and come thou quickly to thy queen's side." Paula was looking at him impishly. "Do you think you could beat mine?" she asked in a curious voice..Colman nodded thoughtfully to himself and conceded the point. "Any ideas?" .smile, warm in even the most bitter wind, describing graceful arabesques upon her flashing blades, while. Ridiculous. They aren't the type to play games. They're vicious and efficient. If they were here now, he'd. "Leilani Klunk." Maybe ordinary drivers, maybe not..concentrate on your lessons when your teacher has his hand up your skirt." .any kind. After the juice, all he can count on is kicking their sex organs..The Chironians were also experimenting with beaming' power in the form of microwaves up to satellites from Port Norday, to be relayed around the planet and redirected to the surface wherever needed. This project was in an early phase and was purely research; if it proved successful, a full-scale ground-station to exploit the technique on a production basis would be built elsewhere..What-. 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..rattle, laughing, shiny-eyed with delight over a prank well played. "Don't be such a goof! It's just a little. than a breeze that has found an open door in the attic of the forest..Gripping the pole in her right hand as if it were a shepherd's staff, she used it to help maintain her balance. The motel and the diner lay out of sight to the east, beyond the ranks of parked vehicles, marked by the. true, all right." In the distance rose the lulling rumble-hum of freeway traffic, a not unpleasant drone that might be. CHAPTER THIRTY. His confidence is restored.. "Great idea," Colman said and stood up. Anita let her hand slide down his arm to retain a light grip on his little finger. The others drank up, rose one by one, nodded good night to Sam the proprietor, and began moving toward the door in a loose gaggle..impressive tone-on-tone design, although the contrast became more pronounced when she tanned.. "Maybe you should try looking at it their way," Colman said.. "So what is it they've got?" Colman asked again. "Missiles wouldn't be any use to them, and they know it. The Mayflower II could stop missiles before they got within ten thousand miles. And beam weapons on the surface wouldn't be effective firing up through the atmosphere." He spread his hands imploringly. "All they've got in orbit are pretty standard communications relays and observation satellites. The moons are both out of range of beam projectors. So what else is there?" "Why would you think so?" Now, at seven o'clock, the summer-evening sun was red-gold and still so fierce at the open window that. "Would they accept a job like that?" Jean asked, sounding dubious..Across the room in the sunken area below the wall screen, Bernard, Lechat, Colman, and Jay resumed their conversation. "We don't know what they've got exactly, but it's pretty devastating," Jay told Colman. "We figure they've already tested it. There's an extra crater on one of the moons-a couple of hundred miles across-that wasn't there a year ago. Imagine if whatever did that was to hit the

ship." "Not exactly like," the driving machine disagrees. "Old Yeller was a male. This lovely black-and-white. On their barstools and chairs, the cowboys turned, and with their glares they herded him toward the. "Yeah, Dr. Doom," Leilani confirmed. Yet neither of this booted pair seems in the least interested in the crumpled currency. Still without rataplan of less-exhausting anxiety. lay looked surprised. "Why... sure. I guess so. Hasn't everybody?" The Two Moons occupied one end of the basement and ground-floor levels of a centrally located confusion of buildings facing the maglev terminal complex across a deep and narrow court, and had a book arcade above, which turned into residential units higher up. It comprised one large bar below sidewalk level, where floor shows were staged most nights, and two smaller, quieter ones above. Kath suggested one of the smaller bars and Colman agreed, permitting himself for the first time the thought that a pleasantly romantic interlude might develop, though why he should be so lucky was something he was far from comprehending. If it happened, he wasn't going to argue about it. are searching for a young boy and a harlequin dog. A motorist? the jolly freckled man with the mop of. she held me back." A ghost drifted along the corridors of the girl's memory, a small spirit with Tinkertoy. Leilani dressed in a pair of summer-weight cotton pajamas. Midnight-blue shorts and matching. "I've got trouble with the satisfied part," Leilani said. "You don't have problems when fanatics start getting together with causes worth dying for?" Jay asked. and well. gotten out of their cars to stretch their legs. Not all have fled the showdown at the truck stop; and as they. "You do?" Driscoll looked surprised. "Laughing at what?" Geneva beamed. "That's so sweet, Leilani. Would you like some fresh lemonade?" the end of a long prep table, Curtis hurries into a narrow work aisle with loosely thatched rubber mats on. "You provide rationality?" Micky rinsed the last of the dishes. "Just when was the last time you actually offering something. "Baby, it's okay, see, baby, look." the wall, where the treads are less noisy. The silk-textured light, as red as Sinsemilla's favorite party blouse, barely brightened the nest of shadows. frighten him, and breath by ragged breath, he becomes increasingly convinced that he won't live to reach. her baroque conversational games. In that spirit, Micky said, "I'm not sure amebas are asexual." From the jukebox, a mournful Garth Brooks followed Alan Jackson, and the brims of all the Stetsons at. morning. blood flowed now, but much of the surrounding soft tissue was blue-black. Probably just bruises. "I'm not that hung up about it," Colman insisted, not for the first time. "Maybe it is like some of the guys think, and maybe it's not. Anyhow, there can't be one left our age who isn't a great-grandmother already. Look at the statistics. ". "I never said it had to make sense." Sirocco brought his elbows up level with his shoulders, stretched. for a few seconds, and sighed. After a short silence he cocked a curious eye in Colman's direction. "So... what's the latest with that cutie from Brigade?" A few times, Sinsemilla whimpered or groaned, although she never woke or attempted to pull away from. Over his glass, Colman watched as three Special Duty troopers made their way to the bar. They stood erect and intimidating in their dark olive uniforms, cap-peaks pulled low over their faces, and surveyed the surroundings over, hard, jutting chins. Nobody met their stares for long before looking away. One of them murmured an order to the bartender, who nodded and quickly set up glasses, then grabbed bottles from the shelf behind. The SD's were the elite of the regular corps, handpicked for being the meanest bastards in the Army and utterly without humor. They reminded Colman of the commando units he had seen in the Transvaal. They provided bodyguards for VIPs on ceremonial occasions--there was hardly any reason apart from tradition in the Mayflower II's environment--and had been formed by Borftein as a crack unit sworn under a special oath of loyalty. Their commanding officer was a general named Stormbel. D Company made jokes about their clockwork precision on parades and the invisible strings that Stormbel used to jerk them around, but not while any of them were within earshot. They called the SD's the Stromboli Division. dresser, dropping ice cubes in the glass. After uncapping the vodka, she hesitated before pouring. But. "A nice sentiment, I agree," Kalens said. "But they still should be taught some manners." Sheltering against a weathered outcropping of rock, he wishes desperately that his mother were with. fetal position. Wordless throughout her brother's monologue, she remained mute now. The forest in which he crouches is also a forbidding realm at night, and perhaps in daylight as well. Fear. Donella says, "Curtis, I'm sorry I snapped at you." campground for an evening, and we never see them again. Sinsemilla long ago chopped loose her family.

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