

## GENEALOGICAL FAMILY REGISTER WITH BIOGRAPHIES OF THEIR DESCENDANTS

All rights reserved. Copyright 2001 by Dean Koontz. you can roll with that one." "I've got a friend whose mother works most of her time there. Her name's Kathy. connected scars, as intricate as lacework, decorated or disfigured her forearm, depending on your taste. It seemed that his head had hardly touched the pillow when a concussion shook the room and a booming noise in his ears had him on his feet~ before he even realized that he was awake. More explosions came in rapid succession from outside the building, followed by the sounds of shooting, shouting voices, and running feet. Seconds later a siren began wailing, and the speaker in the room called, "General Alert! General Alert! A breakout is being attempted from the Detention Wing. All officers and men report to General Alert stations." .spread would allow, just as she'd left it. Her few personal items hadn't been disturbed. The Sinsemilla. three victims were savagely assaulted, perhaps tortured, all dead before the fire was set, then the names. was no one here to punch. Yet if she went next door to knock some sense into Sinsemilla, and even if. Bernard fell silent for a few seconds. "Kath has to know something about it, or at least she must know people who do," he said. "After all, there aren't billions of people on Chiron. And Jerry said that she has. a lot to do with the people working on the antimatter project at the university. Let's start with her." "That's true," Bernard agreed. "But the risk of Sterm trying anything with those weapons has to be greater if he thinks he can blackmail a defenseless planet, If he knew what he was up against-you don't have to give him every detail-it might be enough to persuade him to give it up. That's all we're asking. For the sake of those people up there, you owe it to spell out a warning, clearly and unambiguously." .guard, as well..abandoned. He needed to believe that God existed, that He cherished Laura, that He would not allow. "A boy of twenty-three," Kalens had said a few minutes previously. "Who was entrusted to us as a child to be given a chance to live a life of opportunity on a new world free of chains and fetters . . . to live his life with pride and dignity as God intended-cut down when he had barely glimpsed that world or breathed its air. Bruce Wilson did not die yesterday. His life ended when he was three years old." -.wide and shining with fear. The posture of a fright-buckled child: tensed body, hunched shoulders, head. that she consumed, when she was balancing just so on the tightrope between hyperactivity and drooling. psychology and self-esteem." Lechat had digested the implications by now and appeared worried. "Maybe the Chironians have given a warning, but nobody realized it. They might already have said that they're almost down to their last option." "Never let him adopt you," Micky said. "Even Leilani Klonk is preferable to Leilani Doom." .so incorruptible, they'd rather have their teeth kicked out than betray a client." "What's this?" she asked. Leilani, but he better stay on his side of the fence." In spite of a free-spirited tendency to be unrestrained in all things, Sinsemilla had thus far restricted her. Nanook looked mildly surprised. "Sure. I thought you'd know about it. There are some people here from your department to see Kath and a few Others." "It wouldn't worry me if you burst into flames." The robot chuckled raspily. .safer in the dark." .nonetheless rude, distracting Curtis and Donella from their mutual apologies.. "That's Jay. Jay, this is Bret--Bret Hanlon. He runs one of the other platoons and teaches unarmed combat. Don't mess with him." .which is probably something more psychologically complex, as before..flash again, as though a vehicle this enormous could not be located at night without identifying. "I hope you're not expecting an answer," Hanlon said. "It makes about as much sense to me as Greek .... "He slowed then and inclined his head to indicate the direction across the street. "Now, there's the fella you should be asking," he suggested..step too far. I don't buy the alien abduction for a second." Merrick's eyebrows shot up in an expression of surprise. Noah grimaced. "You're disgusting." In the gloom, the boy loses track of the money. He's focused intently on the cowboy boots..hands were cold and moist from the condensation on the glass. She blotted her palms against the sheets..From the center of the floor Wellesley asked, "What do you want?" .the trembling creature on the rear lawn, where it dashed out of sight into a bed of red and coral-pink. perhaps this was nothing more than a pretense of amusement, to cover her discomfort at how close. At the windows of the two-story motel, most of the drapes have been flung back. Curious, worried. Even as the last of the cracked plastic and the shattered glass from the headlamp rang and rattled against. "Who," Jean asked.. "You do now." Merrick arched his fingers in front of his face. "Would you say that delinquency and criminal tendencies do, or do not, reflect the image we ought to be trying to maintain of the Service?" "This is private," he murmured in a voice that was low but menacing. "Beat it." "I still don't understand the politics behind it all though," he said to the two Chironians who were accompanying him and Jay toward the cafeteria in the Administration Building in front of the main reactor site, where they were due to have lunch. One of them was a young Polynesian named Nanook, who worked with control instrumentation; the other was a slightly younger, pale-faced blonde called Juanita, who dealt with statistics and forecasts and seemed to be more involved with the economic side of the business. Kath herself had taken her leave earlier, explaining that she was expecting another party of visitors. Bernard spread his hands in an imploring gesture. "I mean... who owns the place? Who decides the policies for running it?" He remembers his mother's counsel that in order to pass for someone you're not, you must have. Laura was safe.. "What's the name of this bar? Firewater and Philosophy?" "After you listen to country music all day.. "I've got good credit." "So, is this fine young fella the Jay you were telling me about?" Hanlon asked..The scale of these events and the rapidity with which they are unfolding allow for no measurable effect of. When brittle wood cracked and she felt a picket underfoot, she knew that she'd found the passage in the. exception, and by gratitude that the worst of his own imperfections were within his ability to make right if. "Photographs," Micky said. "Pictures of you and Luki. That would be proof he wasn't just your. 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 11. 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. Behind Bernard and Celia, Lechat told Otto, "All of the strategic weapons are in that module. The remainder of this ship represents no threat whatsoever." Her puzzlement passed to pained compassion, and Noah knew that she had read the text and subtext of blue eyes. "Now don't you wish you could see me as a mutant?" In its natural condition a society was like an iceberg, eight-ninths submerged in crude ignorance and serving no useful purpose other than to elevate and support the worthy minority whose distillation and embodiment of all that was excellent of the race conferred privilege as a fight and authority as a duty. The calamity of 2021 had been the capsizing of an iceberg that had become top-heavy when too much of the stabilizing mass that belonged at its base had tried to climb above its center of gravity. The war had been the price of allowing shopkeepers to posture as statesmen, factory foremen as industrialists, and diploma-waving bohemians as thinkers, of equating rudimentary literacy with education and simpleminded daydreaming with proof of spiritual worth. But while the doctrines of the New Order were curing the disease in the West, a new epidemic had broken out on the other side of the world in the wake of the unopposed mushrooming of Asian prosperity that had come after the war. Mankind as a whole, it seemed, would never learn. "Why should you be nice to people who are acting like they're trying to take over your ship? You want to talk about anything instead of just around it, I'm here." used the restroom only a short while ago. Geneva left the door half open behind her. She sat on the edge of the bed, sideways to her niece, stocked with strange fish. The fish? actually a man with a buzz cut behind the wheel, a brunette with. "Let's do that," Pernak agreed. "I'll take the things." "They can go on the maglev on their own," Murphy informed them. "The handler at the village terminal will route them through. You pick them up by the elevator in your basement. What's your number there?" He feels for the light switch and clicks it on and immediately off, just to get a glimpse of his surroundings. objection and their cold-eyed persistence is too intimidating to resist. You see guys like this on the TV. Christmas, and underlying the stale-beer smell was a faint scent of disinfectant. If the place had Leilani's mother, half mesmerized by her bizarre performance. The advantage of surprise will belong to Curtis, but he's not confident that surprise alone will carry the. "Relax." Micky switched on the light above the sink. "I can handle it." of the painful past on which her life was built. She slid her guarded dessert, untouched, in front of Leilani. Even in the darkest moments, light exists if you have the faith to see it. Fear is a poison produced by the. and the embarrassment of chronic dandruff, they don't want a bunch of ignorant rubes poking around. The capsule arrived, and Jay fell silent while he digested what Pernak had said. As they climbed inside, Jay entered a code into the panel by the door to specify their destination in the Jersey module, and they sat down on an empty pair of facing seats as the capsule began to move. After a short run up to speed, it entered a tube to exit from Maryland and passed through one of the spherical intermodule housings that supported the Ring and contained the bearings and pivoting mechanisms for adjusting the module orientations to the ship's state of motion. For a brief period they were looking out through a transparent outer shell at the immensity of the Spindle, seemingly supported by a web of structural booms and tie-bars three miles above their heads, with the vastness of space extending away on either side, and then they entered the Kansas module where the scene outside changed to animal grazing enclosures, level upon level of agricultural traits, fish farms, and hydroponics tanks. Soldiers were already coming round the corner and bearing down on them fast, two sergeants in the lead, when the guards turned back again. The SD's reached instinctively for their sidearms, but their holsters were empty. For three vital seconds they were too confused to go for the alarm button on the wall-panel behind them. Three seconds were all Hanlon and Colman needed to cover the remaining distance. He lingered in the suite until he was certain that he'd given Constance Tavenall time to leave the hotel. In Curtis successfully resists the urge to water the pavement, too, but he counts himself fortunate to have. "Definitely not. But then--" Fallows faltered as he tried to backtrack to where he had lost the thread. "That would be the murderer," Micky interrupted without a wink or a smirk, as though she'd never think. Leave the house. Sleep in the yard. Let Dr. Doom deal with the mess if there is one. "All set, except for springing Borftein and Wellesley," Colman said. "Now that we've got Malloy, those two would make the whole thing cast-iron." He turned his head to Sirocco, who was half listening but looking away across the room with a thoughtful expression on his face. "Had any more thoughts about that?" Colman asked. Sirocco responded distantly, "Borftein and Wellesley." supposed to have them at night, only in high-demand hours. Maybe it's just an ordinary screw-up. start, and Micky had never in her memory been less focused on her own interests or needs or herself, and honest enough to admit to the shame, though dishonest enough to try to avoid facing up to. unpredictable neighbor. disguise, possibly the juice police, and maybe frankfurter-enforcement officers all descend on him at. "Just wondering how I ever took pleasure in this line of work." "He did. She's got a place in the city--just across from the base." Otto shook his head. "If Earth is tearing itself apart, it ~ because its people allowed themselves to believe the same - self-fulfilling prophecies that you are asking us to accept, Mr. Sterm. But we reject them. We need no more protection from you against the people in the EAP starship than they need from their Sterms to protect them against us. We have no need of that kind of strength. Is it strength for neighbors to fortify their homes against each other, or is it paranoia? You must feel very insecure to wish to fortify an entire star system." Sterm's mouth clamped into a grim, down turned line. "Seriously?" Leilani's eyes widened. Her hand paused with a forkful of pasta halfway between plate and. As now, however, she sometimes showered without removing the brace. Afterward, she'd have to towel her own need or desire, but as though she were eating it on behalf of he who could not share this table. honey in the comb." "No." Colman turned his head and

waved Hanlon over. "Bret, this is Veronica. Never mind why, but she's going to need help getting out of the shuttle base later tonight. What do you think?" No. Even if the man drops to one knee, instead of simply bending down, his head will be well above the. "I'm not sure... maybe fifty. We've left most of them back down the ramp covering the lock out of the cupola." They stopped by a small open square, enclosed on three sides by buildings with striped canopies over their many balconies and flowery windows. A preacher from the Mayflower II, evidently anxious to make up for twenty years of lost time, was belaboring a mixed audience of Chironians from the corner of a raised wall surrounding a bank of shrubbery. He seemed especially incensed by the evidence of adolescent parenthood around him, existing and visibly imminent. The Chironians appeared curious but skeptical. Certainly there were no signs of any violent evangelical revivals about to take place, or of dramatic instant conversions among the listeners.. "Sweetie, you're a victim, you've nothing to be ashamed about." neighborhood, eating stray cats." way and places a hand on his chest. "Whoa there, son, what's the matter, where you going?" slowly in place, and then sidestepped in a circle. Soon she began to dance light-footedly, in a graceful. thee with a work of art fair suitable for the galleries of Eden." Finally, the congressman went to the door of the two-story craftsman-style house and rang the bell.. "I'm not in fourth grade," Leilani said, pouring the warm beer into the sink. "We're twenty-first-century. has been his companion for the past hour, as he's traveled twisting trails through exotic underbrush,. Leading with her good leg, dragging her left, long-practiced grace abandoned, hard-won dignity lost, "I've talked to shrinks. They're all crazy. How do they know whether I know me or not? Do you know how your head works inside?" Anita shook it in a way that said she didn't care all that much either. Colman's scowl deepened, more from frustration at a promise that was beginning to evaporate than from disapproval of something that wasn't his business. "Then how do you expect a pill to figure it out?" peach juice from a handful of dried pits would be easier than squeezing one drop of pity from this hunter's. after the dog. Being Curtis Hammond, he isn't designed for speed as well as Old Yeller is, but she. He also had rules that he lived by, standards that he wouldn't compromise, and procedures that must be. they race past. They leave him untouched, and still in possession of his dangerous jug of orange juice and. Micky cocked her head and frowned skeptically. "I'm not sure I should believe anything you tell me." hair tossing like the deadly locks of an enraged Medusa. In her furious ascension, she stirred up an acrid. produced on your side," he told her.. "I don't know. It depends on the situation. Maybe. That's something else we'll have to leave to Sirocco to decide." "Go away," Chang told it. "We're just looking today." The cart shut up, turned itself around, and returned dejectedly to the line to await another victim.. "I've only got until my next birthday, and then all bets are off." The girl moved along the swooning fence. The communicator at his belt signaled a call from Sirocco, who, with Hanlon and a couple of the others, was taking a break inside the Chironian transporter that had flown from Canaveral. "How's it going?" Sirocco inquired when Colman answered. "Are the troops mutinying yet?" "I don't even know what a paramecium is." "What does a Chironian computer print when you attempt illegal access?" one of them asked Colman when they had got into their joke repertoires.. '~Who can say?' Sirocco answered, picking up the more serious tone. "After what we saw today, I wouldn't be surprised if either side ends up going for him." The mention of antimatter reminded Colman of something. He sat back on the sofa and cast his mind back as he tried to pinpoint what. It reminded him of something Kath had said. The others stopped talking and looked at him curiously. And then it came to him. He cocked his head to one side and looked at Bernard. "Did you know that Chironians were modifying the Kuan-yin into an antimatter ship?" he asked.. CHAPTER THIRTY FIVE. "So you aren't just bonus points, Mrs. D. You're like this terrific prize that turned up in a box of rancid." "I haven't had dessert yet," the girl said, and she retreated out of sight.

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