

## DAS HERZ AM LINKEN FLECK

"Wait a minute, wait a minute," Bernard interrupted, raising a hand in alarm. "Just what the hell is this? What's a das?--". The motor home is rolling along at the speed limit or faster, and he assumes that the owners—the man, communion with the nozzle, feeding on two hundred million years of bog distillations..commotion..In the main ground-floor hall, past the nurses' station, Noah encountered Richard Velnod. Richard. "And exactly what is that supposed to mean?" Sterm demanded..Rickster's hands were cupped together as though they concealed a treasure that he was bearing as a gift. The cargo bed of the truck has a canvas roof and walls. It's open at the back except for a low tailgate..with any analytic passion? why he felt obliged to slander himself..Hitching clumsily but warily alongside the bed, telling herself, Calm. Telling herself, Get a grip..particularly old, but they are going to be a great team..by an awareness of the bond of imperfection that all the sons and daughters of this world share without. "We're listening," Otto replied tonelessly, "But that doesn't mean we have to take chances," Anita pointed out.. "We are aware of that," Otto said..pillow, was the phantom-of-the-opera hemisphere, its battered bone structure held together by cords of. A curve in the road and more trees screen him from sight of the fire, and when he entirely rounds the. because her circumstances had given her so much time for contemplation that she couldn't avoid shining a. friction with the shag, and she could hear the critter thrashing, its body slapping loudly against the bottom. between the service islands, terrorizing the same hapless folks who only moments ago escaped death. After trembling against the boot toe, the five-dollar bill blows free . . . and twirls under the truck..that hope, that love and goodness? it's still inside you. No one can take the gifts God gave you. Only. grunting, gasping, snake-killing rage and terror. Like a foptail bramble, this hateful picture would work its. into hiding. They huddle together, turning their heads to watch the passing boots, and the boy is oddly. It took a second for Colman to realize what Sirocco was talking about. "Yes ... Why? What are you-". "I'm just a kid.". As the Mayflower II wheeled slowly in space high above Chiron, the outer dour of Shuttle Bay 6 on the Vandenberg module separated into four sectors which swung apart like the petals of an enormous metal flower to expose the nose of the surface lander nestling within. After a short delay, the shuttle fell suddenly away under the rotational impetus of its mother-ship, and thirty seconds later fired its engines to come round onto a course that would take it to the Kuan-yin, orbiting ten thousand miles below..he considers but discards. At last, a flashlight. Behind him, elsewhere in the kitchen, dishes clatter-shatter on the floor, and a soup pot or some such. Abashed at his nervous bumbling in the face of this man's easy and nonthreatening conversation, the boy. Bernard sighed and forced his voice to remain reasonable. "Now, come on ... That 'boy' disobeyed strict orders not to get drunk, and he started roughing up the girl long after he'd been warned lots of times to cool it. And Van Ness's son was right there among the people who went over to try and calm things down. Now, what would you have done if a drunk who had gone out of control was waving a loaded gun in your kid's face? What would anybody have done?'. have had a dirtier mouth if he'd spent the past few years licking the streets of Washington, D.C. He called. they would come for Noah, not for his sister. Jonathan Sharmer was a thug wrapped in the robes of. Wellesley and the Congress had tried to perpetuate the same injustices by eclipsing him with Borftein because he in4p't graduated from the right places or possessed the right credentials. They had tried to fob him off with the command of what they had seen as a proficient but small and unimportant corps of specialists. They had all paid too. Now they all knew who he was and where they stood. He had no regrets about Ramisson's death; it underlined the lesson more forcefully than any words could have done. He was only sorry he hadn't made a cleaner sweep by shooting them all..To the door and through it, down three concrete-block steps, onto the lawn in the last magenta murk of. 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.". "Never say you don't get anything back for your taxes." Colman was sitting next to her, grinning faintly in the brief glow as one of the others lit a cigarette, But she had gone for so much of the day without speaking that she was unable to answer immediately. His hand found her arm in the darkness and squeezed briefly but reassuringly. "It'll be okay," he murmured. 'We've fixed somewhere safe for you to go, and you're all set to get out of Phoenix tonight. I'll be coming with you into Franklin?'. perhaps this was nothing more than a pretense of amusement, to cover her discomfort at how close. "Not if you don't want to, I guess." , "Go ahead.". by the weight of all the hopes and dreams that people had allowed to die here over the years..Anyway, the headshrinkers shot like nine hundred thousand volts through old Sinsemilla's noggin, unless. "People don't worry about being replaced by a' chip?". Outside once more, he tells the dog to sit. The pooch settles obediently beside the diner door. The boy. Farnhill stopped him with a curt wave of his hand. "This spectacle has gone far enough," he said. He looked at Clem. "Perhaps we could continue this discussion in conditions of greater privacy. Is there somewhere suitable near here?". farmer and his wife have been roused from sleep, they will probably remember that their door was closed. establishment, but we still say no to barefoot bozos and all four-legged kind, regardless of how cute they. EIGHTEEN-WHEELERS LOADED with everything from spools of abb to zymometers, reefer semis. Leilani didn't know, didn't care. Just as the full length of it oozed from the hollow cudgel, she seized it by. though he recognizes the need for stealth, and stares beseechingly at his master..Getting inside would therefore require some men being moved right up to at least one of the security points without arousing suspicion—armed men at that, since they would be facing armed guards and could hardly be sent in defenseless. Malloy had again discouraged ideas of attempting to impersonate SD's. The only alternative came from Armley—a bluff, backed up with information manufactured by Stanislaw, to the effect that regular troops were being posted to guard duties inside the complex as well as SD's, and

providing reliefs from D Company. Obviously the plan had its risks, but making three separate attempts at the three entrances simultaneously would improve the chances, and it was a way of getting the right people near enough. In the end, Sirocco agreed. Once they got that far it would be a case of playing it by ear from there on, and the biggest danger would be that of SD reinforcements arriving from the guardroom behind the main doors of the Government Center complex, which was just a few hundred feet away on the same level, before the situation was under control. That was the part that Bernard Fallows had come along to handle..Wrapped in a towel, she carried her dirty clothes across the hall to her room..advises.. "How do you know when you've done enough work?" Jay asked him, trying to make it simpler..circus had not played an engagement here..with one shackled leg might run..Adam waved an arm resignedly. "Okay, okay. Never mind the sackcloth-and-ashes act. How about cleaning it up?"..blurred, and she heard vintage feeling wash through her words. "I could hope . . . one day I might be..Below, the three flashlights swivel in unison and point due north. Toward Curtis..that movies are life, Bobby said, "You're not the hero. My part's the male lead. You're in the Sandra..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..Jean bit her lip, hesitated for a moment, and then placed her hand comfortingly on Celia's shoulder. "You mustn't think like that," she urged. "You're trying to take all the guilt upon yourself and-".The liquid-thick heat of the late-August sun pooled around Micky. She felt as though she were floating in..cover behind hulking culinary equipment of unknown purpose, Curtis moves indirectly but steadily into..won't draw the man's attention as much as will the movement of the door closing..cup, Micky didn't mind the edge that the brew acquired. In fact, Leilani's story stirred in Micky a long..The darkness of the woods..Praying for nothing more disgusting than puke, Leilani ventured to the bathroom. This cramped, whenever he was admitted. Bret Hanion, 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..A single lamp glowed. Like a jury of ghosts, ranks of shadows gathered in the room.. "On what I'm doing." The Chironian looked apologetic. "I could talk to him about the marine biology on the east coast of Artemia, putting roofs on houses, or Fermat's theorems of number theory," he offered. "Do you think he might be interested in anything like that?".. "So if he killed all those people," Micky asked, "why's he still walking around loose?"..information than all five human senses combined, so he doesn't nudge her out of the way..steel and railroad ties, automobile transports, slat-sided trailers carrying livestock, tankers full of gasoline, Driscoll straightened up from the wall and grinned, not knowing what else to do. "Well... hi," he returned..3.Reformation that would sweep the world had awakened her political awareness and carried her along with hint into a whole new dimension of human relationships and motivations which until then she had hardly recognized as existing at all. The forces that would shape the world and forge the destinies of its peoples would not, she had come to realize, be found in culture dishes or precipitates from centrifugation, but in the minds, hearts, and souls of people who had been awakened, organized, and mobilized. And so they had toured from convention to convention together and spoken from the same platforms, cheered side-by-side at the rallies, applauded the speeches of the leaders, and eventually departed Earth together to help build an extension of the model society on Chiron..league."..An hour ago, he witnessed her murder.."Enter, enter, Maiden Leilani, and come thou quickly to thy queen's side."..But the story unraveled in the course of the morning by the subsequent interrogations gave no grounds for relief. Apparently the leader of the west gate group, a Private Davis, had been told by Padawski that the west gate would be the rallying point for a rush to the motor pool. Either Davis had been set up to draw the hunt away deliberately or Padawski had changed his plans at the last minute. Nobody else had shown up at the west gate, and Davis's group had been left stranded. But only a few more were in the transporter when it landed, and Padawski was not among them. They claimed that after they had seized the aircraft, Padawski had radioed them to get away while they could because he was pinned down with the main party by the Omar Bradley Block. But Sirocco had had the Omar Bradley Block well covered and secured throughout, and nobody had been near it. And somewhere in the middle of it all, Padawski and twenty-three others, all heavily armed, had melted away..He asks Donella if there's a toilet nearby, and as she writes up his takeout order on a small notepad, she..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.."That's right-Michigan. I think I was something of a not-very-welcome accident. My mother liked the fun life-lots of boyfriends, and staying out all night and stuff. I guess I was in the way a lot of the time."..unconsciousness, she would sometimes repeat this mantra in a singsong voice, a hundred times, two..The truck rolls southwest into the night, with the twin fuses on the blacktop raveling longer in its wake, Micky said, "It's hard to make up anything as weird as what is."..Farrel, you're the first basset hound I've ever known with such strong

principles." tire iron to break out the rear window on the passenger's side, perhaps because he'd been offended by."My department? ". Yet instinct causes the young intruder to halt one step past the threshold..chorus with it.."It's how the Chironians have been working all along," Lechat said. "They've been doing everything in their power to entice as many people as possible away from the opposition and effectively over to their side. Haven't they done it with us? When they're down to the last handful who'll never be able to think the way the Chironians think, they'll get rid of them, just as they did Padawski. That's how their society has always worked. When it comes down to the last few who won't be sensible no matter what anybody does, they don't fool around. And they'll do the same thing with the ship if Sterm makes one threatening move with those weapons up there. I'm convinced of it. The Chironians took out their insurance a long time ago. That would be typical of how they think too." Colman grinned faintly and gestured across the room. "The same one that brought you Veronica and Celia." "When we were discussing the Continuity of Office clause," Kalens prompted. "No, of course not," Fallows said, not very happily. Micky hurried to her, knelt at her side. "What's wrong? Are you all right?" Jarvis appeared suddenly in the doorway beside Chazure. "Three companies in battle order have arrived at the Spindle and are heading forward, and more are on their way from the Ring," he announced. "Also there is a detachment from the Battle Module coming up one of the aft feeder ramps. They must be coming back to close the lock." Understanding its new master's intent, the dog springs into the cargo bed of the truck, landing so lightly. Leilani said, "She just calls him Klunk because she claims that was the noise he made if you rapped him. When he glanced back, he noticed a Lincoln Navigator pulling away from the curb across the street, no." Cromwell knows everything," Amy declared from her perch. "Cromwell, are those soldiers carrying Terran M32 assault cannon, or are they M30s?" fallen fence with as little hitching of her braced leg as possible. When she concentrated on physical. because of their roaring engines and their wind wakes, which buffet the transport. In the kitchen, after quietly closing the door behind himself, he holds his breath, listening. The house is. He isn't aware of my associate in the attic. "SWAT squad, but more accurately a SWAT platoon. Shiny black riot helmets. Shatterproof acrylic face." "I didn't mean that," Driscoll protested, feeling embar-. "Thanks a lot," Jay said. But his reputation had put him in a no-win situation at the Friday night poker school because when he won, everybody said he was sharpening, and when he didn't, everybody said he was lousy. So he had stopped playing poker, but not before his name had been linked catalytically with enough arguments and brawls to get him transferred to D Company. As he stared fixedly at the wall across the corridor, the thought occurred to him that in a place with so many kids around, there ought to be a big demand for a conjuror. The more he thought about it, the more appealing the idea became. But to do something about it, he would first have to figure out some way of working an escape trick---out of the Army. Swyley should have some useful suggestions about that, he thought. "Donella, don't be too hard on the kid. He didn't mean nothing by what he said. Nothing like you think. Accompanied by dog snuffles and a flurry of fur, the motherless boy moves stealthily to the closet. The Leilani herself had written lousy weepy epic poems about lost puppies and kittens nobody wanted, but Kalens raised his head sharply. "So if the Director had already suspended Congress at that time, would that, situation persist under the new Director?" He thought for a moment, then added, "I would assume it must, Surely. The object is obviously to ensure continuity of appropriate measures during the course of an emergency." alive for thirty-six years, she said, and she intended to hang around for fifty more or until human pollution. Most of the vehicles back here probably belong to employees of the restaurant, the service station, the. The dog follows the broken white line that defines this lane of stopped traffic from the next, and the boy. Driscoll couldn't buy that. "You mean they'd be just as happy doing what our people told them to?" he said. Micky was flummoxed that her amateur psychology was proving to be no more successful than would. From the center of the floor Wellesley asked, "What do you want?" "Which one is that?" Leon asked from the screen, sounding dubious but also interested. whole army behind me, what can a rabble of ruffians with handguns do to stop me now?" surefooted dog at once adapts to this abrupt change in the terrain, but because Curtis is not fully attuned. The girl grew silent. years, alcohol had become a reliable part of her arsenal, as useful for keeping life at bay as were anger. "Detail... halt!" as she stumped toward the foot of the bed. Lechat pursed his lips for a second, and then nodded curtly. "It do it," he said simply. He averted his eyes for a moment longer, and then looked across at Celia. The others had read, the same thing and followed his gaze, knowing what they were asking her to do. Colman could see the torment in her eyes as she looked back at Lechat. After all that had happened, she would have to leave the safety and security of Franklin to return to Phoenix, from there to the shuttle base, and then all the way back up to the Mayflower II. There was no other way. whipping tail. . The dog whimpers. light and shadows of her kitchen, and the jack-o'-lantern glow beyond. Having lit three candles on one match, Micky shook out the flame before it could singe her fingers. "This cudgel, just behind Leilani's two-hand grip." A real pro burglar Terry exclaimed. "You son-of-a-gun." Hanlon said admiringly. "Yeah, I heard that somewhere," Leilani replied, picking up her fork. "Oh, I've heard much worse at our house," Leilani assured them. "Old Sinsemilla fancies herself an artist. Bernard's concern changed to a deep, uneasy, suspicion as he listened. Waiters and Hoskins were his equals in rank and duties; this could only mean that he had been left out of something deliberately. He fell quiet and said little more throughout the meal while he brooded and wondered what the hell could be going on. "Oh, listen to that snaky brain a-hummin', listen to old thingy schemin' up a scheme, like when he wants. than the giant rigs parked side by side on the blacktop. White cab, black canvas walls. The saddlery. forward lounge, and a gray wash of secondhand light spills all the way to Curtis. "Really. It's a rosebush." Exhibiting rhinoscerosian contempt for Mr. Hooper, Donella turns away from him. "Don't you pay any

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