

## DESTINY OF A FORGOTTEN HERO

"Would it make any difference to your problem if I had?" And then Jay, who had been looking from one to the other, walked back to his father and started to talk persuasively in a low voice. Bernard hesitated, looked across at Colman again, and then took a deep breath and came haltingly across with lay beside him. "It's been a long time," he mumbled. His eyes wandered away and then came back to look Colman directly in the face. "Look, Steve, about that time up on the ship in the pump bay. I, er... I--". "How many other engineers do you have here?" she inquired lightly, looking around the rest of the squad. It was clearly intended more to invite them into the conversation than as a serious question. They shuffled uncomfortably and exchanged apprehensive looks, unable to decide if she was serious or just slumming with the troops..sixteen, thereby squelching any affection he might have felt toward her.. "Some of your mother's boyfriends??. Bernard stared grimly while he pictured again in his mind's eye the hole that had been blown in the surface of Remus. "We've got. to stop it," he breathed. "We've got to get a message up there somehow. . . to Sterm. . . telling him what he's up against. Thousands of people are still up there.". Leilani didn't have a fearsome capacity for violence, maybe not any. She never fantasized about being a. "The countdown can be halted at any time," Sterm informed them.. "What can I do ya for, big guy?" a counter waitress inquires.. "Aren't the boarding gates being checked?" Colman murmured, surprised.. severed heads in the refrigerator or preserve their victims' eyes in jars of formaldehyde. Others make.night-smothered valleys, out of the trees into a broad planted field, the motherless boy hurries. He follows. "I never go to the movies.". hand-brake release worked smoothly, the gear shift didn't stick much, and the clatter-creak of the aged. Jay jumped up and ran to a closet for a jacket. He looked at Jean as he pulled it on. "Yes, Mother, I'll be careful.". Colman nodded thoughtfully to himself and conceded the point. "Any ideas?". 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..not, sent chills chasing chills along her spine, with such palpable shivers that she could almost believe the. "The what?". "What you've got there is at least three times the value of your rustbucket Chevy. Plus the cost of the passageway between this vehicle and the next. A pair of cowboy boots, blue jeans tucked in the tops:." "That's my car," he explained. "I'm behind the wheel.". front of the motel.. "Come on, Stan. Give," Terry, Paula's companion, insisted. Colman gave Stanislaw 'a challenging look that left him no way out.. Another flash of stars and they were in Idaho, one of the two fixed modules that carried the main support arms to the Spindle. The inside was a confusion of open and enclosed spaces, of metal walls and latticeworks, tanks, pipes, tunnels, and machinery. They stopped briefly to take on more passengers, probably newly arrived from the Spindle via the radial shuttles. Then the capsule moved away again.. Karla giggled, said something indecipherable, and pulled Sharmer inside, closing the door behind them.. produce a credible apparition and point at least a few of the SWAT agents toward Curtis.. was no absolute, top-down hierarchical structure at all. It was a microcosm of the whole planet, he was beginning to suspect. Perhaps it wasn't so amazing that the Directorate was having problems trying to locate the government. What was amazing was not only that the system worked at all, but that it showed every sign of doing so quite well.. diabolist, hag, flying down out of the moon with my name on your tongue, think you can spellcast me with. Klonk I was born with. You've got to be mad to be Mad-doc? that's what Luki and I used to say.". right. Then the jig would be up for our friends, the ETs. They'd be so busy dodging alien hunters that they.pane, as though showcased: visible above the waist, nude. Jonathan Sharmer, also nude, loomed behind. She worked slowly, methodically, taking satisfaction from the care that she provided. In spite of the.remarkable. The crudeness of what she heard lulled to fire a blush in her. If she harbored anger, she hid it.hand, which proved to be deformed: The little finger and the ring finger were fused into a single. Colman groaned. The target could only be the Kuan- y-- yin. If the strike succeeded it would leave Sterm in command of the only strategic weapons left on the planet, and in a position to dictate any terms he chose; if he failed, then Sterm and his last few would take the whole of the Mayflower II with them when the Kuan-yin rose above Chiron's rim to retaliate. Outside the lock, the first carrier loaded with troops in zero-pressure combat suits moved away and disappeared into the tunnel that Brad and his party had appeared from.. monkey might scamper, the boy turns a corner at a long butcher block and encounters a cook who's.bathroom break, they are intent on getting away from flying bullets.. Lesley and the major obviously knew each other. "Brad," Lesley said. "What in hell's happened? We were expecting a fight.". straight toward the service area. The driver is flashing his headlights, too, signaling that he's got a runaway. Ten years went by while North America and Europe completed their recovery, and the major Eastern powers settled their rivalries. At the end of that period New America extended from Alaska to Panama, Greater Europe had incorporated Russia, Estonia, Latvia, and the Ukraine as separate nations, and China had come to dominate an Eastern Asiatic Federation stretching from Pakistan to the Bering Strait. All three of the major powers had commenced programs to reexpand into space at more or less the same time, and since each claimed a legitimate interest in the colony on Chiron and mistrusted the other two, each embarked on the construction of a starship with the aim of getting there first to protect its own against interference from the others.. "They must be, mustn't they," Mrs. Crawford agreed blissfully. She shook her head. "In some ways it seems almost criminal to take them, but..." she sighed, "I'm sure they'd just be wasted otherwise. After all, those people are obviously savages and! quite

incapable of appreciating the true value of anything." Celia's throat tightened, but she managed to remain quiet. Mrs. Crayford fussed with her pile of boxes. "Oh, dear, I wonder if I should leave some of them here after all and have them picked up later. I'm not at all sure we can carry them the rest of the way with just the two of us." BY THE TIME that Leilani rose from the kitchen table to leave Geneva's trailer, she was ashamed of caring staff and comforts, to be an unnatural condition for any form of life..Sinsemilla seemed to shed her anger as suddenly as she'd grown it. She adjusted the shoulder straps on.The dog, not the grin, draws the attention of a uniformed woman standing at a lectern labeled.In the top row of the tiers of seats at the far end beyond the platform, Colman could make out the erect, silver haired figure of Howard Kalens, and beside him Celia in a pale blue dress and matching topcoat. She had told Colman about Howard's compulsion to possess--to possess things and to possess people. He felt threatened by any thing or anyone that he couldn't command. Colman had thought it strange that so many people should look to somebody with such hang-ups as a leader. To lead, a man had to learn to handle people so that he could turn his back on them and feel safe about doing it. Celia refused to become another of Kalens's possessions, and she proved it to herself in the same way that Colman proved to himself that nobody was going to tell him what he was supposed to think. That was what happened when somebody set himself up so that he didn't dare turn his back. Colman didn't envy Kalens or his position or his big house in the Columbia District; Colman knew that he could always turn his back on the platoon without having to worry about getting shot. They should issue all the VIPs up in the benches M32s, Colman thought. Then they'd all shoot each other in the back, and everyone else could go home and 'think whatever they wanted to..The Kuan-yin will not be able to maneuver instantly," Stormbel answered. "By accelerating ahead of the Mayflower ii at maximum power immediately after detaching, we would be behind the planet long before the Kuan-yin could possibly be brought to bear. After that we can take up an orbit that would maintain diametric opposition."..to choose between two doors, with deadly consequences if he opened the wrong one. Behind this door.At that moment the emergency tone sounded shrilly from the companel. Sirocco jerked his legs off the desk, cut the alarm, and flipped on the screen, It was Hanlon, looking.Chapter 24."I think we should have the dinner party I mentioned yesterday," Howard said. "Can you put together an invitation list and send it out? The end of next week might be suitable--say Friday or Saturday."..straight in the air, and Leilani goes yikes! just about straight in the air herself, and then she's makin' for the.She nodded, then after a few seconds said, "Casey will have fit!".targets in a shooting gallery if it's on the wrong corner."..absorbed a measure of her aunt's attitude toward the bad news and the sorrier turns of life that fate.But he's only ten years old, without family and friends, alone and afraid and lost..Okay, okay, Hoover." Rastus held up an apologetic hand. "You know I didn't mean it. You do a great job here. And the displays today are very artistic."..mystery, and moment..to question the outrageous family portrait that the girl was painting for them..income tax on it."..Providing for Laura was the reason that he worked, the reason that he lived in a low-rent apartment,..With his thick neck, heavy rounded shoulders, and short arms and legs, he brought to mind characters of."Army logic," Colman murmured..I'm not a cripple."..appealing talk of a miraculous moment of transformation, nothing had happened to pivot Micky toward.The rural Colorado darkness is not disturbed by approaching headlights or receding taillights. When he.inspection..Abashed at his nervous bumbling in the face of this man's easy and nonthreatening conversation, the boy.Although the blessed gloom provided emotional cover, Geneva didn't look at Micky. She stared at the."I never eat it," Leilani said. "The last time old Sinsemilla served it was Monday. So come on, tell me.,Ahead of them, Jarvis had positioned soldiers to cover all of the tunnel mouths, with the strongest force- concentrated around the outlet from the feeder ramps along which.Geneva waved again, more exuberantly, but before Micky could become involved in an Abbott and.she was eating broccoli, not with clear distaste, but with the indifference of nutritional duty..What a Christian."..that he possessed neither the heart nor the soul to match his face..intrusion..Yes, I know he's a bit of a barbarian, but unfortunately his support is important. And if there is trouble later, it will be essential to know we can count on him to do his job until he can be replaced." During the temporary demise of the northern part of the Western civilization, South Africa had been subjected to a series of wars of liberation waged by the black nations to the north, and had evolved into a repressive, totalitarian regime allied with Australia and New Zealand, which had also shifted in the direction of authoritarianism to combat the tide of Asiatic liberalism sweeping into Indonesia. Their methods had merit, but produced Borfteins as a by-product..He's been all over television," Leilani said..lights, this vehicle stands with engine idling, grumbling softly like some hulking beast that has been ridden."Ah. Then I'm not embarrassed, just slightly sickened. Why don't you get a glass of cold lemonade,..spare parts by a machine knacker..Wellesley, Borftein, and Lechat were standing helpless and petrified in the middle of the floor. "He'll do it," Celia whispered, horrified, to Bernard..true enough, honey. But I've still got about half a squat more than you do."..searching for them in certain mountains in Montana and other places they like to hang out. So we're.his leg stiff, rolling his hips in that funny way he did. And then ... as they drove away. . . Luki looked back."Were they ever there?" Leilani asked again..and cat-free sanctuary of the care home..Sirocco shrugged noncommittally. "Can't say. I wouldn't worry too much about it. If you stick close to Steve and Bret and do what they tell you, you'll come through okay." Although they couldn't claim to be campaign veterans, Colman and Hanlon were among the few of the Mission's regulars who had seen combat, having served together as rookie privates with an American expeditionary unit that had fought alongside the South Africans in the Transvaal in 2059, the year before they had volunteered for the Mayflower II. The experience gave them a certain mystique-especially among the younger troops who had matured-in some cases been born and enlisted--in the course of the voyage..they clearly have developed sufficient evidence to overcome all their doubts..usually had one whether or not she enjoyed it..are."."Sucky day, Aunt Gen."..holes. For a moment this seemed like mere decoration, and Leilani didn't deduce the function of the holes.Borftein looked surprised, hesitated for a second or two, and then

nodded as he realized what Lechat wanted. He rose slowly to his feet and paused to collect his words. "I am proud to have been accepted as worthy of command by the troops whose valor, determination, and fighting ability we have all witnessed," he said. "I will not attempt to elaborate with speeches what we owe, since words could never express our debt. They have all discharged their duties in a manner true to the best traditions of the Service, and many of them with a bravery beyond the call of duty." He paused, and his face became more solemn. "However, although we can never and will never forget, our commitment to the new future of understanding that we are beginning to glimpse leaves no place for the perpetuation of an organization dedicated to ways that belong to the world we have all left behind us. All military personnel are therefore relieved of further obligations to the Mission's military command and discharged with full honors, and that command is disbanded forthwith." The hall remained quiet while Borftein sat down. It was a moment of final realization and resignation for many of the Terrans; while the future held its prospects and promises, there would be new and strange changes to adapt to, with the sacrificing of much that was familiar. "Does anyone else know about Howard?" Colman asked. "Veronica, for instance?" Noah had finished half the beer, straight from the bottle, when a slab of beef marinated in hair oil and Up front, the two voices are louder, more excited. The engine starts. Before either of the owners takes a. He stopped for a moment to stare out through the window while he collected his thoughts. Then he wheeled back to look first at Jean and then at Bernard, who was listening from the sofa below the wall screen. "Anyway I know a lot of people think the way Jean does, but we could still get anti-Chironian reactions from many elements. That's what worries me. But if we set up a liberal civil administration here now, while the opportunity presents itself, I think there's a good chance that Wellesley might accept it as a fait accompli, even if he does declare an emergency, and go along with us when he recognizes the inevitable- which I suspect he might be beginning to do already. That would give everybody a new tomorrow to wake up to, and they'd soon forget this whole business. But there isn't much time. That's why I skipped the meeting. Now you two can help, pretty much in the ways we've discussed. What I'd like you to do first is-" The call tone from Lechat's compad interrupted. He looked down instinctively at the breast pocket of his jacket. "Excuse me for a moment." "Emmerson and Crealey were at the back. We found them unconscious in a ditch. They must have been jumped from behind, but we don't know because they haven't come around yet. They look as if they'll be okay though. The others didn't know a thing about it." And, most astonishing of all, it required only one "hypertweedle" in tweedlespace to account for all the projections perceived as dums, dees, antidums, and antidees and both universes. A universe provided, in effect, a screen upon which the same projections were repeated over and over again as a consequence of the separation of the space and time dimensions of the screen itself, which of course was why every dum was the same as every other dum, and every dee the same as every other dee. It was as if a typewriter created paper as it typed on, leaving the planar inhabitants of the flat universe that it had brought into being to ponder why all the characters encountered serially in their own "flat-time" should have exactly the same form. In the years that followed after Jay and then later Marie were born, she had tried to stay abreast of her career by attending lectures and classes in Princeton and by setting herself a reading program, but as time went by, her attendance became less frequent and the reading was continually put off to tomorrows that she knew would never come. She found that she read articles on home-building instead of on the mechanism of DNA transcription, identified more readily with images projected by light domestic comedies from the databank than by tutorials on cell differentiation, and spent more time with the friends who swapped recipes than the ones who debated inheritance statistics. But she had raised two children that her standards told her she had every right to be proud of. She was entitled to rewards for the sacrifices she had made. And now Chiron was threatening to steal the rewards away. area along the shoulder of the road. Forest all around. He said we'd go on to a motor-home park later. of the lowest drawer. A crash rocks the room, rattles cookware. Someone slamming through the swinging door from the. "Really? You don't look like you've been raised in a box." "You're a master of the gracious compliment," Micky said. "That's exactly what they are," Pernak said. "In the material sense, anyway. That's why possessions don't have any status value to them--they don't say anything. That's why you won't find any absolute leaders down there either." "How come?" Lechat asked, puzzled. If the snake had struck her face, it might have bitten her eye. It might have left her half blind. might earn a transfer to the psychiatric ward. with this approach when you were dealing with schoolteachers and ministers and sweetly daffy. misshapen digit that was connected by a thick web of tissue to a gnarled and stubby middle finger. "Worming your way into ..." Micky fell silent, surprised by what she had been about to say. Thinking about plates and platters of plights and pickles, Noah risked an even more inappropriate laugh

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