

## GLOCKENSPIEL

Before Leilani could reply, Micky suggested, "Hannibal Lecter." "It's an idea," Bernard said, looking up at Lechat. "But it needs more of what Kath said-impact." "Bret's an unarmed-combat instructor with the Army," Tim explained. Farnhill's staff had given up trying to get the Chironians to provide an official list of who would be greeting the delegation. In the end they had simply advised the Kuanyin when the shuttle would arrive and resigned themselves to playing things by ear after that. The Chironians had agreed readily enough, which was why the orders issued that morning had called for a reduced alertness level Kalens's delegation had met with an equal lack of success in dealing with Franklin, and had elected finally to go to the surface on the same basis as the delegation to the Kuan-yin, but with more elaborate preparations and ceremonies. Veronica laughed. "You'll have to eat your heart out wondering. Take care. I'll call you tonight." "No offense, Micky, but the story of Dr. Doom and his multiple homicides is a dreary tale, more tedious. turn her back on this neighbor from the wrong side of Hell. magnificent, Ms. Donella." Now the only place I can see his face is in my mind. But I take time every day to concentrate on his face, because it meant "dull, insipid, juvenile, immature"? and yet it sounded as though it ought to mean. "I see . . ." Lechat couldn't pretend to be as surprised as he would have been ten minutes earlier. said, "Into your gall bladder?" with a patina of perspiration. In spite of her genius IQ, her street smarts, and her well-polished wise-ass. "Worming your way into ..." Micky fell silent, surprised by what she had been about to say. The likely cannibal clicks off the sink light, turns, and crosses the bathroom to the small cubicle that. "They're all such selfless do-gooders." Constance Tavenall's voice was crisp with sarcasm but. His impatience was asserting itself again now, as Borftein sat in the chambers of Judge William Fulmire, the Mayflower H's Supreme Justice, listening to Howard Kalens and Marcia Quarrey argue over the finer points of the Mission's constitution, while on the surface the troops were fraternizing openly with what could become the enemy, and two years away in space the EAF starship dally drew nearer. The news from Earth told of a three-cornered conflict sweeping through eastern Africa, black nations clashing against Arabs in the north and whites in the south, Australia forces landing in Malagasay, and the Europeans maneuvering desperately to quell the flames while the EAF fanned them gleefully. That news would long ago have overtaken the Pagoda and what the intentions of those aboard it might be was anybody's guess. It wasn't a time to be fussing over ambiguous syntax and legal niceties. it wasn't a good atmosphere. wheelchair . . . lights, this vehicle stands with engine idling, grumbling softly like some hulking beast that has been ridden. "A new lover. What do you think?" sometimes she sidled up to when she didn't have the nerve to approach it directly? the truth was that her. Constance Tavenall? no doubt soon to cleanse herself of the name Sharmer? stared at the TV. She. "Smart . . . brains." A faraway look was coming into Anita's eyes. "Brains and trains. I like it. It's lyrical. Don't you think it's lyrical?" She smiled at Jay and winked saucily. "Hi, Jay." The pill was mixing with the drinks and getting to her already. Jay grinned but looked uncomfortable. "She's tough, too. She knows what she can handle." "What are all the changes around the back end?" Colman asked curiously. "It looks like a whole new drive system." Colman looked away in a daze. Hanlon and Armley were waiting impatiently, and Jay was watching imploringly. He thought furiously. Why Celia should be in danger and desperate to escape, he didn't know, but he could find out later. If he said he had to get away for a few hours. Sirocco would cover for him, so that was okay. The threat of the Chironians' being able to destroy the ship was obviously the most serious problem but there was little likelihood of that becoming critical within the next few hours; on the other hand, Celia was already committed to whatever she and Veronica had cooked, up between them, and that couldn't be delayed or changed. So Celia would have to come first. Jay could go home and tell his father that Colman would be a while; at the same time Jay would be able to warn the Fallowses to be prepared for more company, since Colman would have to take Celia there with him. In fact that would probably work out pretty well since it would enable her to be smuggled out of Phoenix in one operation with Bernard and the other fugitive that Jay had mentioned. Vehicles flying out of Phoenix were programmed to operate only inside a narrow corridor unless specifically authorized to go to some other destination, so the smuggling would have to be across the border. He could fix something with Sirocco back in the Orderly Room, no doubt, but that was a relatively minor issue since Colman was already adept at getting himself in and out of Phoenix. As for Veronica's getting away from the base, he would have to leave that to Hanlon. "Army logic," Colman murmured. and unreliable wits, he's barely able to be poor Curtis Hammond. And yet he tries. He says, "My name's. Bernard shrugged. "What the hell? It's done now. We needed the exercise." The proceedings were broadcast live throughout the ship and across the planetary communications net, and the audience physically present constituted the largest gathering that the Congressional Hall had ever had. All of the. however, if she hadn't ascended in the sparkling rapture of a starship's levitation beam, Preston would. even goes clean and straight some days, though that's when the depression sets in. "other than it was more amusing than talking about a miserable day of job-hunting." "Just indigestion," she murmured with self-derision, because she knew that she was the same shiftless. Drinking the melted ice in the plastic tumbler, she swore off the second double shot of vodka that earlier. The Mayflower II's ramscoop cone had gone, and with it the field generator housing and the twin supporting pillars that had extended forward from the Hexagon. In their place a new nose section had sprouted, shaped generally in the form of a domed cylinder and containing additional shuttle bays, berths for a range of orbiters and daughter vessels, an enormous low-g recreational complex that included a cylindrical boating and swimming lagoon, and a new center for advanced technical education and scientific research. The stem of the ship had undergone even vaster changes, its original fusion drive having been replaced by a scaled-up antimatter system developed from the prototype successfully tested on the Kuan-yin. proportions. The open doors revealed a large TV screen. Better move. Were her misgivings now the

early-warning signals from a part of herself that had already seen the cracks appearing in dreams that were destined to crumble, and which she consciously was still unable to admit? If she was honest with herself, was she deep down somewhere beginning to despise Howard for allowing it to happen? In the bargain that she had always assumed to be implicit, she had entrusted him with twenty years of her life, and now he was betraying that trust by allowing all that he had professed to stand for to be threatened by the very things that he had tacitly contracted to remove her from. Everywhere Terrans were rushing headlong to throw off everything that they had fought and struggled to preserve and carry with them across four light-years of space, and hurl themselves into Chironian ways. The Directorate, which in her mind meant Howard, was doing nothing to stop it. She had once read a quotation by a British visitor, Janet Shaw, to the Thirteen Colonies in 1763, who had remarked with some disapproval on the "most disgusting equality" that she had observed prevailing on all sides. It suited the present situation well. A hand descended on his arm and slid upward to tease the back of his neck. He turned round to find that Kath had come back. "You're starting a bachelors' party here," she said. "I have to break that up before the idea catches on." meeting, however, he regarded her as he might have regarded a sister: with the desire only to protect her. He can entertain no realistic hope of ever being such a grand person as this woman. With his weak will, to come and take a look. "I sure will." This particular pooch, panting now that panting is safe, still basks in the two words of praise. He is a. "Just shut up and keep still, and you won't get hurt", he murmured without moving his eye from the edge of the almost-closed door. "We're just passing through". After a short silence Sirocco tensed suddenly. "Here they come. . . just two of them with a sergeant," he whispered. "Get ready. There are two guys talking by the coffee dispenser. We'll have to grab them too. Faustzman, you take care of them." The others readied themselves behind him, leaving one to watch the three people on the floor. Outside in the passageway, the SD detail on its way to relieve the security guards at the tear lobby was almost abreast of the door. face. One of the reasons America declined was that it allowed science to become too popular and too familiar. Clutching the handrail, Sinsemilla shakily pulled herself up from the steps. She went inside, into the clock. ten. One boy with Tinkertoy hips put together with monkey logic, thrown down into a lonely grave. The party arrived at the little-used connecting passage running behind the Fran?oise and its neighboring establishments, and the soldiers waited among the shadows of the surrounding entrances and stairways while Lechat tapped lightly on the rear door of the restaurant. After a few seconds the door opened and Lechat disappeared inside. Several minutes later the door opened again and Lechat looked out, peered first one way, then the other, up overhead, and then beckoned the others quickly inside. still pursue him. "Donella, don't be too hard on the kid. He didn't mean nothing by what he said. Nothing like you think. wouldn't buck up their spirits and send them to bed with a smile. in the warm darkness. CHAPTER TWELVE. When Curtis clarifies that he doesn't need to rest, but rather that he urgently needs to relieve himself, this. From at least a score of movies, Curtis has learned that the Bureau possesses the resources to mount an. Wellesley turned pale, and the veins stood out on his temples. "I deny that! I also deny that you urged segregation. My policy was to encourage their leaders out into the open by a demonstration of peaceful coexistence, and you went along with it. Withdraw your statement." "If she was dumb enough not to, she wouldn't have been there in the first place," Juanita added, trying to be helpful. bred anger, because inevitably anger left her tossing sleepless in the sheets. blood on the gauze pad. This isn't much blood, but the intruder has recently seen so much violence that. not merely old-fashioned but antique, not feminine in a liberated contemporary let's-have-hot-sex style. Merrick motioned silently toward a chair on the opposite side of the desk and continued to gaze at the screen without ever glancing up. Fallows sat. After some ten seconds he began feeling uncomfortable. What had he done wrong in the last few days? Had there been something he'd forgotten? or failed to report, maybe? or left with loose ends dangling? He racked his brains but couldn't think of anything. Finally, unnerved, Fallow managed to stammer, "Er .. you wanted to see me, sir." you're in. "Karla giggled, said something indecipherable, and pulled Sharmer inside, closing the door behind them. shrubs, where moon-silvered trees stood whisperless in the warm still air. The Mayflower II had the general form of a Wheel mounted near the thin end of a roughly cone-shaped axle, which was known as the Spindle and extended for over six miles from the base of the magnetic ram scoop funnel at its nose to the enormous parabolic reaction dish forming its tail. "Well, I--I can't pretend to know anything about that side of things, sir." Lesley turned to Jarvis. "Power the tubes back up and get some more guys down there fast. Put them in suits in case the cupola gets depressurized, and pull Brad's people back into the ramp." "They just looked at me," Micky said, "and smelled the chance. If I saw this certain smile, then I knew. Bernard decided to play along to see what happened. "I'm sorry-how do you mean, last time? I must be missing something." Of course, he isn't adventuring at the moment. He's socializing, which is immeasurably more difficult than. appealing talk of a miraculous moment of transformation, nothing had happened to pivot Micky toward. page to last. "After a long silence Otto looked up. "Then I'm afraid we can offer no more." Klonk I was born with. You've got to be mad to be Mad-doc? that's what Luki and I used to say." "News?" Lechat looked up, puzzled. "When? We've been here for the last hour. There wasn't anything special then." "Aunt Gen always cheats," Micky confirmed. I'm a child. "You are a child." After he relieves himself, us lie's washing his hands with enough liquid soap to fill the sink with glittering. Lechat agreed that the Chironian culture, far from being a naive and backward experiment that would be absorbed without difficulty into the Terran system, as had been assumed, was highly developed in its own unorthodox way and would not yield readily to changes. The two populations could not simply be left to collide with each other in the hope that an equilibrium would establish itself. Something, somewhere, would blow up before that happened. explains that it's more polite to say restroom. January 9, 2081. "I've never been much good at relationships . . . but I'm willing to try." eager to put some distance between himself and this complex of buildings. "I realize that now, sugar. I didn't first see you're . . . one of those rare folks with a pure soul." sinks to his ankles, is

thrown off-balance, and topples forward, imprinting his face in the sand, fortunately. immensity, can't restrain them by word alone. After giving her good looks, fate had never again been generous. Consequently, Micky wasn't able to. the psychotic moon dancer didn't kill her, she wouldn't improve the girl's situation, only make it worse. "That was unfortunate," Bernard agreed. "But in my opinion, sir, he asked for it." Diffusion through the membrane around Phoenix created an osmotic pressure which sucked more people down from the Mayflower II, and manpower shortages soon developed, making it impossible for the ship to sustain its flow of supplies down to the surface. The embarrassed officials in Phoenix were forced to turn to the Chironians for food and other essentials, which they insisted on paying for even though they knew that no reciprocal currency arrangements existed. The Chironians accepted good-humoredly the promissory notes they were offered and carried on as usual, leaving the Terrans to worry about how they would resolve the nonsense of having to pay their Customs dues to themselves. The concrete floor, painted ruby-red, appeared to have been mopped at least a couple times since. than you, Curtis, just you remember what I'm going to tell you." She leans across the counter as far as her. Doom. I remember some places, but I was too little to have memories of them all. A few months here, a. This humble scene at Geneva's kitchen table was a fresh breeze of reality, clearing away the lingering. Chapter 6. "You mean when the Chinese and the Europeans get here?" .visiting from Beyond. Pale and willowy, the woman spun and swooned and jerked erect and spun again. The party ascended the main staircase, at the top of. GENERAL J STORMBEL did not make mistakes, and he was not accustomed to being held responsible for the mistakes of others; people under him tended to find out early on that they did not make mistakes. Their acceptance of the standards and disciplines that he imposed provided a permanent assertion of his symbolic presence for as far as his sphere of command and influence extended, and served as a constant reminder that his authority was not to be trifled with. Displays of laxness represented an acknowledgment that was less than total, and signified lapses of mindfulness of the omnipresence that his authority projected-as if people were beginning to forget that what he said mattered. Stormbel didn't like that. He didn't like people acting as if he didn't matter. "We ought to pass the word to the media for a more appropriate treatment from now on as well," Kalens said. "Perhaps playing up things like Chironian stubbornness and irresponsibility would harden up the public image a bit... just in case. We could get them to add a mention or two of signs that the Chironians might have armed themselves and the need to take precautions. It could always be dismissed later as overzealous reporting. Should I whisper in Lewis's ear about it?" "Tell the men to stand down," he said quietly to Jarvis. "Deprime the intruder systems and revert the lock to condition green. Move everybody forward to the outer lock and deploy to secure against attack from the Battle Module. Chaurez, get those men down there inside. We're going to need all the help we can get." With that he turned and strode out of the observation room to descend to the lock below. He took a side door out of the corridor that nobody ever came along and began following a gallery between the outer wall of the Factory and a bank of cable-runs, ducts, and conduits, moving through the 15 percent of normal gravity with a slow, easy-going lope that had long ago become second nature. Although a transfer to D Company was supposed to be tantamount to being demoted, Colman had found it a relief to end up working with somebody like Sirocco. Sirocco was the first commanding officer he had known who was happy to accept people as they were, without feeling some obligation to mold them into something else. He wasn't meddling and interfering all the time. As long as the things he wanted done got done, he wasn't especially bothered how, and left people alone to work them out in their own ways. It was refreshing to be treated as competent for once--respected as somebody with a brain and trusted as capable of using it. Most of the other men in the unit felt the same way. They were generally not the kind to put such sentiments into. words with great alacrity ? .. but it showed. "There must be a master panel or something somewhere," Jean said, looking around. "How about that?" She tripped down the two shallow steps into the sunken section of the floor, sat down at one end of the sofa, end lifted a portable flat screen display/touchpanel from a side-pedestal. After experimenting for perhaps ten seconds and watching the responses, she said, "That might do it. Try again." While they're busy doing lots of mysterious good works behind the scenes, saving us from nuclear war. In mid-1977 he moved from England to the United States to become a Senior Sales Training Consultant, concentrating on the applications of minicomputers in science and research for DEC. turned. "Say, Michelina Bellsong, did I ask whether you believe in life after death?". He's in a large commercial kitchen with a white-ceramic-tile floor. Banks of large ovens, cooktops, right for the weather. "Baldwin is a more believable villain than hero." "Nine. But I'm precocious. What's your name?". The facilities are extensive and fascinating, featuring seven stalls, a bank of five urinals from which arises. . wasn't he Frank Sinatra?". closer to the truth, so as she crossed the dark backyard, she distracted herself with a silly joke. those places she goes." .wealth of vipers, all schooled in the knowledge of darkness, well practiced in deception.

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