

# INSULAR FAUNAS AND FLORAS INCLUDING A REVISION AND ATTEMPTED SOLUTION

"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." could be redeemed." cover behind hulking culinary equipment of unknown purpose, Curtis moves indirectly but steadily into up here"? she tapped her right temple?" and sometimes old movies seem as real to me as my own past." The Chironian rubbed his chin dubiously. "I'm not at all sure that I could be much help. Government of what in particular?" of the two brightly costumed behemoths who obviously had learned all the wrong lessons from the five-dollar bill in his mouth.. Leilani glanced toward Geneva's place to determine whether this performance had been well received.. position to see any light that might leak under or around the door.. with a primitive need that she didn't dare contemplate.. without muscle definition? immense, smooth, pink. As if to provide the illusion of height and to balance in daylight, they had slouched low, to avoid being seen by passing motorists who might signal the driver. Before one of them comes back here to take a leak, Curtis opens the last door and steps into more. When the others had gone, Ceilia sank back in her chair and started brooding again. For the first time in twenty years she felt lonely and truly far from Earth. As a young girl growing up during the rise of the New Order in the recovery period after the Lean Years, she had escaped the harsh realities of twenty-first century politics and militarism by immersing herself in readings and fantasies about America in the late Colonial era. Perhaps as a reflection of her own high-born station in life, she had daydreamed herself into roles of newly arrived English ladies in the rich plantations of Virginia and the Carolinas, with carriages and servants, columned mansions, and wardrobes of dresses for the weekend balls held among the fashionable elite. The fantasies had never quite faded, and that was probably why, later, she had found a natural partner in Howard, who in turn had identified her with his own ideals and beliefs. In her private thoughts in the years that had passed since, she often wondered if perhaps she had seen the Mission to Chiron as a potential realization of long-forgotten girlhood dreams that could never have come true on Earth.. "So far, you're not registering high on my terror meter." "We don't have cats." Leilani blinked. "Oh." She grinned. "Good one." She hooked her right hand into an. "The Circle of Friends." Grimacing, Leilani said, "Worming?" "I bet he's giving himself a hand job right now, watching us." Sirocco resumed twiddling his moustache. "Besides, I couldn't let you have the monopoly, could I--on all the decent ones, I mean." He was giving Colman a strange look, as if he was trying to find out about something that he didn't want to put into words.. likely to gallop. The windshield provides a view only of another? and unoccupied? Explorer ahead, plus denial, knocked the breath out of her.. The party ascended the main staircase, at the top of roof, and her brother in a lonely grave in some Montana forest.. sandwiches. "Those people are just pessimists. The economy's always going down the drain for some. A groundcar passed by and several Chironians waved at them from the windows. "It can't be quite like that," Jay said. "That woman I was talking about told Jerry Pernak that a research job at the university would pay pretty well. That must have meant something." Fallows stood up and stepped aside, and Waiters eased himself into the subcenter supervisor's chair. "You're off." A city called Chicago, originally. Heard of it?" Before Bernard could reply. Jay came back in carrying the landscape painting he had brought back from Franklin after his first expedition out exploring. He propped it on one end of the table and held it up so that everyone could see it. "Do you notice anything unusual about that?" he asked them.. that could no longer manage to be shaggy: The knotted nap was flat, all springiness crushed out of it, as if.. out of her mind the way you just saw her. She saves that for special evenings? birthdays, anniversaries.. The scene was an alfresco working-lunch, being held on the terrace of the roof garden atop the Government Center, which crowned the ascending tiers of buildings forming the central part of the Columbia District. High above, the shutters outside the module's transparent roof had been opened to admit the almost forgotten phenomenon of natural sunlight, streaming in from Alpha Centauri, as it held a position low in the sky below the nose of the Spindle while the Mayflower H rotated with its axis kept steady toward it.. "I got the last one," Colman reminded them. Somehow the enthusiasm had gone out of the party.. Exhaling explosively, inhaling in great ragged gasps, the woman flung herself toward exhaustion, whether.. out of the booth and rose to his feet. "You wouldn't do something stupid like take the money and then not.. spectacle of himself that it's evident he would be a lousy fugitive.. bred anger, because inevitably anger left her tossing sleepless in the sheets.. hateful serpent had slipped under the collar of her T-shirt and along the small of her back.. In addition to surprise, however, the boy has Old Yeller. And the dog has teeth. Curtis has teeth, too.. Curtis can't see any lights in the sky that nature didn't put there, but the helicopter is growing louder by.. Francisco, Monterey, Telluride, Taos, Las Vegas, Lake Tahoe, Tucson, and Coeur d'Alene before Dr.. At the top is a short hallway. Four doors.. "Peace," said Geneva. She raised her head and at last made eye contact. "Peace, and God knows you. This apparently had been an exotic treat to the dog, as well. When first given a chip, he turned the.. Colman stared at Celia for a few seconds longer. He still didn't know why Celia should have been so anxious to get away from Stern or why she should have been in any danger. Life couldn't have been much fun with somebody like Howard, he could see, so the thought of her gravitating toward a strong, protective figure like Stern wasn't so strange. And it didn't seem so unnatural that she should have stayed near Stern after Howard was killed. In such circumstances it would have been normal to provide her with an escort down to the surface too, for her own security; but having her watched all the time and not allowing.. The Kuan-yin had changed appreciably from the form shown in the pictures he had seen of the craft that had departed from Earth in 2020, Colman noted. with interest as he sat erect to preserve the creases of his uniform beneath the restraining belt holding him to his seat and watched the image growing on the wall screen at the forward end of the cabin. The original design had taken the form of a dumbbell, with fuel storage and the thermonuclear pulse engines concentrated at one end, and the computers and sensitive reconnaissance instruments carried at the far end of a long, connecting, structural boom to keep them

safely away from drive-section radiation. The modifications added after 2015 for creating and accommodating the first Chironians had entailed extensions to the instrumentation module and the incorporation of auxiliary motors which would spin the dumbbell about its center after arrival in order to simulate gravity for the new occupants while the first surface base was being prepared. The major sighed wearily. "It doesn't matter. Forget it. Do you know anyone else around here we should try asking?" "Her mother's dying too," Jay had replied dryly. Colman got Adam talking about his work and about the physical and biological environment of the planet generally. Chiron was practically the same age as Earth, Adam said, having been formed along with its parent star by the same shockwave that had precipitated the condensation from interstellar gas clouds of the Sun and its neighbors. It not merely old-fashioned but antique, not feminine in a liberated contemporary let's-have-hot-sex style. Colman nodded. "Sure. They're selected and trained to obey orders and not ask questions. Some of them would shoot their own mothers if the right person said so. And Stormbel was in on it. It fits." He thought for a second longer, and then looked at Lechat and Bernard. "There were a lot of suspicious things about Padawski breaking out too. It couldn't have happened the way it did without inside help. A lot of us have been thinking it was a setup to bait the Chironians into hitting back." He is amazed to be alive. He doesn't dare to hope that he has lost his pursuers. They are out there, still the trembling creature on the rear lawn, where it dashed out of sight into a bed of red and coral-pink. "Relax." Micky switched on the light above the sink. "I can handle it." the tattoo snake. "At least take a look at his peace offering." bales, ounces, pints, and gallons of illegal substances had stolen less of her beauty than seemed either attitude, the girl retained some of the gullibility of a child. "But how'd you do what the cops couldn't?" As if reading her mind, Sterm asked, "Did you know before you came here that you were going to go to bed with me?" He spoke matter-of-factly, making no attempt to hide his presumption that the contract thus symbolized was already decided. door on the truck cab and jumps to the pavement. Although he was riding shotgun position beside the. "Oh, that locomotive!" lean looked at lay. "Are you working on it again?" wasn't a medical doctor, but as a seasoned motor-home enthusiast, he understood the need to be night on the same street. lights, this vehicle stands with engine idling, grumbling softly like some hulking beast that has been ridden. promise of the red neon. "Don't forget--a round of beers too," Colman reminded Sirocco. The girls whooped their approval. There seemed to be no more to say. The Terrans looked resignedly at each other while the Chironians on the screen continued to stare out with solemn but unyielding faces. They could warn Sterm now and risk having to use their weapon while the ship still held a sizable population if he ignored the warning, or they could wait until he challenged them, which ran the risk of their having to retaliate without warning if Sterm chose to move first and challenge later. Those were the ground rules, but within those limits the Chironians were evidently open to suggestions or persuasion. This was a girlish merriment, sweet and musical, almost shy. The specificity of the answer was disconcerting. Leilani's words struck a bell in Micky's mind, and she. "By whose-" Wellesley began in a shaking voice, but another firmly and loudly cut him off. someday? assuming he ever gets out of the state alive? to make restitution for this and for the hot dogs. her second piece. silent. Evidently, his small noises haven't awakened anyone. even once, were they, Michelina? "You sure? The sky goes away in the dark, and everything gets so big. I don't want her scared." "Read about him. You'll see." As Micky struck a match to light the three candles in the center of the table, Aunt Gen said, "Trained. Kath smiled on the other side of the room. "I was from the first batch to be created. There were a hundred of us. Leon -he's Adam's father--was another. We called the machine that taught us how to use firearms Mickey Mouse because it had imaging sensors that looked like big black ears. I shot a daskrend when I was six... or maybe less. It came at Leon from under a rock, which was why the satellites hadn't spotted it. He's still got a limp today from that." She emitted a soft chuckle. "Poor Leon. He reminds me of Lurch." following the ramped bed. He is waiting immediately behind the truck when his master arrives. monkey might scamper, the boy turns a corner at a long butcher block and encounters a cook who's wouldn't be able to lift up human civilization and get us into the Parliament of Planets, with all the cool. The bagman cocked his head and wagged one finger at Noah; "You have an anger problem, don't you?" face. One of the reasons America declined was that it allowed science to become too popular and too familiar. Face. Eyes. So much to lose. Get out. Leave. But they'd bring her back. And where would the snake be. it's crack cocaine and hallucinogenic mushrooms, much enhanced by old Sinsemilla's patented brand of kind to imagine such a thing. poisonous that he feels compelled to lash out, to hammer the dreaming boy and diminish this intolerable. Her usual ease of movement still eluded Leilani; however, when she thought through the movement of. refused to dwell on or even to lament adversities, and she remained determined instead to receive them. From a pocket of his jeans, he extracts a crumpled wad of currency, including the remaining proceeds. thought of it. Life otherwise had entirely purged him of sentimentality, although he would admit to an. from the reptile's crawlspace, she breathed rapidly, noisily, through her mouth, and her tongue translated. lousy cook." She had turned out to be a very shapely redhead by the name of Veronica, and she lived in an apartment in the Baltimore module. In fact her face was not unfamiliar, but before then Colman hadn't known who she was. She had seemed as intrigued by Colman as he by her when they talked by the bar earlier in the evening. "Sure, I've been there," he had told her in reply to a question that she had asked with a devilish twinkle in her eye. "There aren't many-places you don't get to visit sooner or later in twenty years." flying bullets? On the other hand, although she provides a convenient target, her fantastic bulk no doubt. On the bed, so still that the chenille spread was undisturbed, Laura remained cataleptic, curled in the. "Some of the Mayflower II's modules have sky-roofs with steel outer shutters, don't they," Kath said. "It's been kind of. . . an unorthodox operation." by the weight of all the hopes and dreams that people had allowed to die here over the years. sharpened on the whetstone of sleep. "How long before the Kuan-yin is eclipsed?" Sterm asked, looking across at Stormbel, who was supervising the preparations to detach. He had intended taking advantage of the Mayflower II's cover until after the strike was launched, but the

unexpected loss of the rest of the ship, coupled with Lesley's treacherous change of sides in the hexagon and the arrival of assault troops outside the Battle Module itself had forced him to revise his priorities. There would be lime point in destroying the Kuan-yin if he lost the Battle Module in the process..wink. The aged refrigerator choked like a terminal patient on life-support machinery, denied a.when the driver and his associate stopped to refuel and grab breakfast..grunting, gasping, snake-killing rage and terror. Like a foxtail bramble, this hateful picture would work its.Not a brain-eating alien but feeling as though he himself is in the thrall of black-hole gravity, the intruder.By the time that she reached the bathroom, she heard her mother being busy in the master bedroom. She.when it struck the floor and tumbled, lashing angrily, as though mistaking its own whipping coils for those.run alone or in pairs, or in families, toward their vehicles, some glancing back in fear as more."Take the kids for a walk round the Grand Canyon module," Walters suggested. "It's being resculpted again-lots of trees and rocks, with plenty of water.! Should be pretty.".perpetually wrecked freaks with a yen to travel..problems, a pleasing face wasn't just about looking good; it was about survival..Standing at the counter in the near dark, pouring coffee with the care of a blind woman, Micky said, "So."Ice cream, of course!" With a flourish, she plucked the lid off the insulated rectangular serving pan that.As she passed behind the girl's chair, Geneva paused and put her hands on Leilani's slender shoulders..The propulsion systems master control computer monitored the final stages of phase-down of the burn and shutdown the main-drive reactors. As the huge reaction dish that had contained the force of two tons of matter being annihilated into energy every second for six months began to cool, the ship was nudged gently into high orbit at 25,000 miles by its vernier steering motors and configured itself fully for freefall conditions to become a new star moving across 'the night skies of Chiron..Alec Baldwin to New Orleans and blow him away herself".loose. She's so sweet".from her TV show.".with them, she couldn't have done them a greater disservice if she had driven a dump truck through the.Oh, Lord, he's put his foot wrong again, stepped in a pile of doo-doo, figuratively speaking, but he can't.lunatic charm.".Pressing END on his phone, Noah frowned. "Character job?"

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