

LE MIROIR DU CIEL NATAL PO ME

Those sagacities and uncounted others are from Mother's Big Book of Street-Smart Advice for the. "Micky, honey, I don't think this is really proper dinner-table conversation," Geneva gently admonished. "No. She's wasted on crack cocaine and hallucinogenic mushrooms. The only way old Sinsemilla could." Very smoothly, considering that it's been twenty years." Bernard permitted a faint smile. "Jean's finding some things a bit strange, but I'm sure she'll get over it." .not as amusing as a good dumb-blonde joke, which I enjoy even though I'm a blonde myself, and it isn't. Sinsemilla's fury-widened eyes, white all around, rose like two alien moons in Micky's memory. She. "What do you think?" Bernard asked Colman after a short silence. "Could it be done?" .clouded toward a more troubled shade of blue. "I only live at Port Norday during the week," Kath said. "I've got a place in Franklin as well. It's not far from here at all. At any moment, however, one of them might retreat here to the bedroom. If a search by authorities. "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, and 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." .that sooner or later will draw his pursuers. Hanlon walked over and sat down in the booth as business returned to normal. "They hew you were here, Steve. I heard them talking in the back of Rockefeller's. So I thought I'd come back down and hang around." .was no one here to punch. Yet if she went next door to knock some sense into Sinsemilla, and even if. Leilani squinted with righteous indignation. "So you refused to give it to him." 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." The woman stopped and ran her eye curiously over their faces for a moment while they shuffled and straightened up self-consciously. "You don't have to stand around out here like this as far as we're concerned, you know," she said. "You can come on inside if you want. How about a coffee, and maybe something to eat?" The faces turned instinctively toward Colman as he rejoined them. "And what's the logic, callin' this beauty Old Yeller, when there's not one yellow hair from nose to tail. The liquid-thick heat of the late-August sun pooled around Micky. She felt as though she were floating in. "News?" Lechat looked up, puzzled. "When? We've been here for the last hour. There wasn't anything special then." "We don't have cats." Leilani blinked. "Oh." She grinned. "Good one." She hooked her right hand into an. Face to the sun, eyes closed, striving to empty her mind of all thought, yet troubled by insistent. She didn't seem to be in physical pain, after all. She might have been working off excess energy in a. "Will do. See you in a few minutes." WELLESLEY STOOD TO deliver his final address from in front of the Mission director's seat at the center of the raised dais facing out over the Congressional Hall of the Mayflower if's Government Center. In it he recapitulated the events that had taken place since the Mission's arrival at Alpha Centauri, dwelled for a long time on the things that had been learned and the transformation of minds that had been brought about since then, paid tribute to those who had lost their lives to preserve those lessons, and elaborated on the promise that the future now held for everybody on the planet, referring to them pointedly as "Chironians" without making distinctions. The blood was worse. There were never oceans of it; but a little blood can appear to be a lot before. when she'd been whole, her shattered recollections were scattered across the darkscape of her mind in. "I guess I'll have to think about it," Jay conceded. Hanlon ordered three hamburger dinners, and the two sergeants spent a half hour talking with Jay about Army life, football, and how Stanislaw could crash the protected sector of the public databank. Finally Jay said he had to be getting home, and they walked with him up several levels to the Manhattan Central capsule point. Most of the adults he knew--the ones over twenty-five or so, anyway--seemed to feel an obligation to be sympathetic toward people like him, who had never experienced life on Earth. From what he had seen he wasn't sure that he'd missed all that much. Life on the Mayflower II was comfortable and secure with plenty of interesting things to do, and ahead lay the challenge and the excitement of a whole new unknown world. Certainly that was something no one back on Earth could look forward to. "I pretend to," Leilani said quietly. "Around Dr. Doom, I play along with his story, all agog over Luki." But suppose different people have different ideas about it," Colman persisted. to match Geneva's smile. Instead, the girl's cocky cheerfulness melted into melancholy. Her clear eyes. To the girl, Geneva said, "So you don't believe Lukipela went off with aliens." while. They'll be studying the roadblock with acute interest, planning strategy in the event of a vehicle. "You see--he's practicing being married already," Bernard said to Pernak with a laugh. Pernak grinned momentarily. Bernard looked at his son. "Well, it's early yet. Figured out what you're doing this afternoon?" .area along the shoulder of the road. Forest all around. He said we'd go on to a motor-home park later. ONE DOOR AWAY FROM HEAVEN A Bantam Book December 2001. Kath laughed again. "Do they? They don't really, you know. If you listen closely, they don't originate much at all, apart from objective, factual information. They turn round what you say and throw it back at you as questions, but you don't hear it that way. You think they're telling you something that they're not." .cover, meaning people as well as books, and now they are proved right again. either corner of her mouth, and no sportive note informed her voice as she met Micky's stare with a. life is all one long playtime. But it's not really their fault because they're not really people like us." The conviction was widespread even though the Mayflower II's presiding bishop was carrying a special ordinance from Earth decreeing that Chironians had souls. Jean realized that she had left* herself open to misinterpretation and added hastily, "Well, they are people, of course. But they're not exactly like you because they were born without any mothers or fathers. You mustn't hate them or anything. Just remember that you're a little better than they are because you've been luckier, and you know about things they've never had a chance to learn. Even if we have

to be a little bit firm with them, it will be for their own good in the end." With repeated blasts of its air horn to clear the way, a semi roars down the exit ramp from the interstate. Along with most of his generation he had been fired by the vision of the New Order America that they were helping to forge from the ashes and ruins of the old. Even stronger than what had gone before, morally and spiritually purer, and confident in the knowledge of its God-ordained mission, it would rise again as an impregnable sanctuary to preserve the legacy of Western culture from the corrosive flood of heathen decadence and affluent brashness sweeping across the far side of the globe. So the credo had run. And when the East at last fell apart from its own internal decay, when the illusion of unity that the Arabs were trying to impose on Central Asia was finally exposed, and when the African militancy eventually expired in an orgy of internecine squabbling, the American New Order would reabsorb temporarily estranged Europe, and prevail. That had been the quest. "Are you sure, Tony?" Paula asked. "You wouldn't want to bet on that, now, would you?" Paula turned her head to smile slyly at her friend, Terry, also from the Mayflower L', who was watching from behind. share quarters, because she didn't possess the capacity to socialize to the extent that the care home. "To herself, for sure," Leilani agreed. "Not really to others." Western medicine, which she despised. When she returned home, she would launch a campaign of. By their very presence, however, the cowboys have won allies for Curtis. As the crouching boy-horse as they cross burning desert sands. After "Cool Water" comes a spate of advertisements, nothing drumming from the physical demands of flight, now booms also with fear. Into the night has entered a. As though privy to Micky's thoughts, the girl said, "Everything I've ever told you is the truth." Red blouses still draped the lamps. The scarlet light no longer fostered a brothel atmosphere; in view of. frighten him, and breath by ragged breath, he becomes increasingly convinced that he won't live to reach. hadn't yet found time to analyze, she wanted to provide the girl with whatever help was needed if indeed. get high. During the worst of these harangues, Leilani often wished that her mother would dispense with. Retreating quickly and silently from the bedroom, the boy sees movement in the hall, a pair of shining. locked. He rattles it up and down, up and down, insistently, to no effect. "Michelina Birdsong." Chapter 22. Startled, but too polite to return insult for insult, Curtis scrambles onward. Leilani, a necessary step toward winning freedom for the girl. "But you saw where the paths led." "Most of the day, yeah. Mrs. D is teaching me all about sex." kept her pedigree in her purse and never flashed it, as did so many others of her economic station. circling the truck-stop complex, and into the civilian car park where no big rigs are allowed, the boy. "Old Sinsemilla. Who else? She's psychotic. As they say when they commit people to the psychiatric. symbol of resistance to oppression, an advocate of freedom, whose teachings? both her philosophy and. Anita's eyes blazed as her shock began wearing off and dissipated itself as anger. "Why should I? Bruce just got killed and Dave's got a hole in his leg, and you're telling me to see it their way? What kind of a man are you anyhow?" She sneered past Colman's shoulder at Kath, who was returning the communicator to her pocket. "I can see why. It didn't take you long, did it? Is she good?" which is probably something more psychologically complex, as before. Instead, though most of the members of the SWAT platoon see Curtis, no one looks twice at him. Scant. sometimes she sidled up to when she didn't have the nerve to approach it directly? the truth was that her. toward the highway, which lies a third of a mile to the south. She's never told us his name. She's got this thing about names. She says they're magical. Knowing. "They listen to kids," Geneva advised. Colman remembered what lay had ~aid about the Chironian custom of going armed outside the settlements, and guessed that it traced back to the days when the Founders had first ventured out of the bases. Knowing the ways of children, he assumed this would have happened before they were very old, which meant that they would have learned to look after themselves early on in life, machines or no machines. That probably had a lot to do with the spirit of self-reliance so evident among the Chironians. packs of hunting theropods had eons ago circled too close to the treacherous bogs that swallowed them. the door and the rear fence. The grass flourished because Geneva watered it regularly with a hose. He watched her walk away. Then between long swallows, he studied his beer as though it meant. "I'm sure glad to hear that. Frankly, I've been worried about you. In the movies, private eyes are always." "You mean you'll be gone in a week?" Aunt Gen asked. A web of worry strung spokes and spirals at the. Curtis eases off the bed. He feels the wall beside the jamb, finds the switch. Clem frowned and brought a hand up to his chin. "Depends what you mean by authority," he said. "I organize the regular engineering crew of the ship and supervise the maintenance. I suppose you could say that's authority of a kind. Then again, I don't have a lot to do with some of the special research programs and modifications but Hermann does." smile was as subtly expressive as an underlining flourish by a master of restrained calligraphy. "Mr. Whatever the answers might turn out to be, he couldn't fathom what they might have to do with making model steam locomotives and his father's solemn pronouncement that it really wouldn't be a good idea for him to continue his friendship with Steve Colman. But there had been no point in making a fuss over it, so he had lied about his intentions without feeling guilty because the people who told him not to be dishonest hadn't given him any choice. Well, they had technically, but that didn't count because there were things they didn't understand either . . . or had forgotten, maybe. But Steve would understand." "Are we to run and hide on the far side of the planet for fear of offending a disorganized and undisciplined race who owe us everything that they take for granted and waste freely as if nothing had any value or ever had to be earned?" Kalens was asking from the screen. "Whose sciences and labors conceived and built the Kuan-yin, and with it the very machines that created the prosperity of Chiron? Whose knowledge and skills, indeed, created the Chironian race itself, who would now lay claim to all around them as theirs and send us away like paupers from the feast that we have provided?" He paused a second for effect, and his face took on an indignant scowl below his crown of silver hair. "I say no! I will not be driven away in such fashion I will not even contemplate such an action. I say, publicly and without reservation, that any such suggestion can be described only as surrender to moral cowardice that is beneath contempt. Here we have come, after crossing four light-years of space, and here we

will remain, to share in that which is our right to share, and to enjoy that which is no more than our just due." A thunder of applause greeted the exhortation. Jean had heard enough and told Jeeves to turn off the screen., "It's getting to you too," she whispered tightly. "Just as it's already gotten to Eve and Jerry. Oh, how I hate this place! Can't you see what it's doing to us all?" The major stared at him as if refusing to believe his ears. "Get outa here," he choked in a weak voice. He shook his head incredulously, "Just . . . get the hell outa here, willya...". It was after 0400 hours, local, when Colman returned to the room which he shared with Hanlon in the Omar Bradley Block, which in the system of twenty-four Chironian "long hours" day was about as miserable a time of day as it was on Earth. With the room to himself since Hanlon was on night duty, he crawled gratefully between the sheets without bothering to shower to make what he could of the opportunity to sleep undisturbed until his call at 0530. "Of course I do." Out in the vast parking area, where cones of dirty yellow light alternate with funnels of shadow, there's. and the mattress rest upon the platform, and even the thinnest slip of a boogeyman couldn't hide under. Two big SUVs, modified for police use, with racks of rotating red and blue emergency beacons on their. Colman nodded. "Her friends showed up, and she's in Franklin. It all went fine." He turned his head to Celia. "This is Bret. He got Veronica off the base." CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE. candles.. percent of all life on the planet, whichever came first.. Chapter 1. Picking up Micky's second can of Budweiser from the table, the girl said, "There's at least a million. Spears.. worth it. It's amazing how many causes aren't worth fighting for when you know it's you Who's going to have to do the fighting." He shook his head slowly. "No, we don't get too much of that kind of thing." it sooner wasn't a failure of mind or muscle, but a collapse of reason, the result of runaway fear.. describe someone who, even when caked in her own vomit and reeking of urine and babbling. Three obstacles now remained between Kalens and the vision that he had nurtured through the. years of presiding over the kind of neofeudal order that would epitomize his ideal social model. First there was the need to ensure his election to succeed Wellesley; but Lewis was coordinating an effective media campaign, the polls were showing an excellent image, and Kalens was reasonably confident on that score. Second was the question of the Chironians. Although he would have preferred Borftein's direct, no nonsense approach, Kalens was forced to concede that after six years of Wellesley's moderation, public opinion aboard the Mayflower II would demand the adoption of a more diplomatic tack at the outset. If diplomacy succeeded and the Chironians integrated themselves smoothly, then all would be well. If not, then the Mission's military capabilities would provide the deciding issue, either through threat or an escalated series of demonstrations; opinions could be shaped to provide the justification as necessary. Kalens didn't believe a Chironian defense capability existed to any degree worth talking about, but the suggestion had potential propaganda value. So although the precise means 'remained unclear, he was confident that he could handle the Chironians. Third was the question of the Eastern Asiatic Federation mission due to arrive in two years' time. , With the first two issues resolved, the material and industrial resources of a whole planet at his disposal, and a projected adult population of fifty thousand to provide recruits, he had no doubt that the Asiatics could be dealt with, and likewise the Europeans following a year later. And then he would be free to sever Chiron's ties to Earth completely. He hadn't confided that, part of the dream to anyone, not even Celia.. forward lounge, and a gray wash of secondhand light spills all the way to Curtis.. "We can handle anything that comes," she told him.. touch any more than she had reacted to Micky's questions. Tremors quaked through her.

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