

PREDATOR PRIEST

Jay looked worried, and Bernard appalled. "You can't let people take the law into their own hands like that," Bernard insisted. "Unchecked violence-mob rule--God alone~ knows what else. It's plain uncivilized--barbaric. You're going to have to change the system sooner or later."..out there until the Beagle Boys have hammered themselves into exhaustion."..applied hydrogen peroxide, too, which churned up a bloody foam. Then she worked sulfacetamide..thought that Burt Hooper was simply rude. "I'd help you if I could."..Bleeding, of course, is a quiet process..providing us with all we need and for giving us the grace to be satisfied with what we have."..For that was how they fought. They had watched while their opponents grew weaker by ones and twos, and they had waited for the remnants to turn upon one another and wear themselves down. Then the Chironians had moved..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..The anguished screams are to the boy's blood as vinegar to milk, and although a thunderous fusillade..area along the shoulder of the road. Forest all around. He said we'd go on to a motor-home park later..Re turned back, shaking his head despairingly, and looked at Kath again. Now that Swley had moved from the bar, her party manner had given way to something more intimate. Colman held her gaze as her gray-green eyes flickered over his face, calmly but searching, as if she were probing the thoughts within. He became acutely aware of the firm, rounded body beneath her clinging pink dress, of the hint of fragrance in her soft, tumbling hair, and the smoothness of the skin on her tanned, shapely arms. Deep down he had seen this coming all through the evening, but only now was he prepared to accept it consciously. All the reassurance he needed shone from her eyes, but the conditioning of a lifetime had erected a barrier that he was unable to break down. For a few seconds that seemed to last forever he felt as if he was in one of those dreams where he knew what he wanted to say and do, but his mouth and body were paralyzed. He knew it was a reflex triggered by ingrained habits of thought, but at the same time he was powerless to overcome it..Colman found himself facing a big man wielding a baseball bat, his face twisted and ugly, mirroring the mindlessness that had taken possession of the rioters. The man swung the bat viciously but clumsily. Colman rode the blow easily with his shield and jabbed with the tip of his baton at the kidney area exposed below the ribcage. His assailant staggered back with a scream of pain. Shouts, profanities, and the sounds of bodies clashing rose all around Colman. Something hard bounced off his helmet. Two youths rushed him from different directions, one waving a stick, the other a chain. Colman jumped to the side to bring the two in line for a split second's cover, feinted with his baton, then sent the first cannoning into the second with a shove from his shield with the full weight of his shoulder behind it, and both rioters went down into a heap. Colman glimpsed something hitting Young in the side of the face, but two grappling figures momentarily obscured his view, and then Young was lying on the ground. As a fat youth swung his foot for a kick, Colman dropped him with a blow to the head. When bloodcurdling yells and the sound of running feet heralded the arrival of the SDs, the mob raggedly fled around the corner, and it was all over..The video had been silent. When the kiss ended, sound was added: Jonathan Sharmer and his."Of course it is.", Jay sighed wearily. "I wouldn't just walk in with it like this if I'd stolen it or something, would I?".hectoring recriminations that would last hours, days, until you prayed to go deaf and considered cutting..She wasn't sure that she could speak, but after a hesitation, she found her voice: "They'd have come for..Reaching the steps on which Sinsemilla perched after the moon dance, Leilani felt tempted to glance..offering, then crunched the salty delicacy with exaggerated movements of his jaws. The hound likewise..To Leilani, Geneva said, "I miss him so much, even after all these years, but I can't cry over him..responded, never appeared to comprehend a sentence of his monologue. And yet he held forth until..faces?that's scarier than sleeping with a nuclear bomb under your bed. You have to figure people like..straining the dry sea of the desert for the sole survivor of the massacre in Colorado..Not far from Borftein, Wellesley and Lechat were talking via a large screen to the Chironians Otto and Chester. Behind them at one of the center's monitor consoles, Bernard, Celia, and a communications operator were staring at two smaller screens, one showing Kath's face, and the other a view of the confusion inside what was left of a feeder ramp cupola..Speed 300 miles per second; distance to destination, 493 million miles. Course-correction effected to bring the ship round onto its final approach..shoes and up into the mother ship.' ". "I don't how." Amy screwed her face up and rubbed the bridge of her nose with a finger. "I suppose I'd have to be crazy."..The dog's Hanks shudder, striking sympathetic shivers in the boy. Punctuating its panting are pitiful..toward a new point on the compass..door. The faithful dog stays at his side..and what you think maybe he really does is have his sweaty, greasy, drooling, lustful way with me."..When we return, it will be a different story," Sterm told his entourage on the Bridge as the module's main drives fired and they felt it surge forward and away from the Mayflower II's nose. "But first, we have, to deal with our Chironian - . . friends. What is the report on the Kuan-yin?". "If a chip can do the job, a man's life is probably better spent doing something else anyway."..But how can you be so sure?".Drawing upon the messy experience of giving the dog a drink

from a bottle of water in the Explorer, he."Ye-es," Bernard said slowly, nodding to himself. "He'd know the situation, and he'd probably know a safe way through the border even if some trouble breaks out." He began nodding more strongly. "And we certainly know we can trust him." The boy watches through the glass door and the windows as the hostess greets the trucker and escorts. Her short-cropped hair glows supernaturally white. Chang threw his cards down and leveled two black fingers across the table. "A Smith and Wesson beats five aces." He grinned and stood up. "Everybody set for another drink?" A chorus of assent rose around the table, and Chang moved away to the bar on the far side of the room..agitated fans at a soccer match or like music-mad celebrity-besotted attendees at a rock concert, but. Behind him, elsewhere in the kitchen, dishes clatter-shatter on the floor, and a soup pot or some such. while positively thinking herself into a C-cup instead of brooding about all the many problems in her life., The SD corporal at the rear-lobby security point was surprised when a captain of one of the regular units arrived with the relief detail and requested the duty log. "I didn't know they were posting regulars in here," the corporal said, sounding more puzzled than suspicious.. "What's the latest from the surface?" Chaurez inquired.. "Aunt Gen always cheats," Micky confirmed.. What troubled Fulmire was the specter of Kalens's emerging from the midst of it all as a virtual dictator, with Borftein supporting him and straining to be let off the leash. Every faction would see such a concentration of power as a potential battering ram to be harnessed exclusively for the advancement of its own cause, and even more as an instrument to be denied at all costs to its rivals. In an explosive situation like that anything could happen, and Fulmire had visions of the whole Mission tearing itself apart in internecine squabbling with a strong possibility of bloodshed at the end of it all when frustrations boiled over. The only force that he could see with any potential for exerting a stabilizing influence was the more moderate consensus as represented by the Mayflower I/s population as a whole; and Lechat, possibly, could provide a means of mobilizing it before things got out of hand.. cockroaches, they would probably be small enough that Noah might just be able to wrestle them into. barbecue anytime soon?". The girl grew silent.. of it. We weren't born into this universe to doubt. We were born to hope, to love, to live, to learn, to. Micky had drawn herself to the unpleasant conclusion that her life to date had been wasted and that she. Klunk I was born with. You've got to be mad to be Mad-doc? that's what Luki and I used to say.. "What have we achieved?" Borftein asked contemptuously.. He ordered a beer from a waitress who had evidently sewn herself into her faded, peg-legged blue jeans. "I had to scrap one set." lay sighed. "I guess it's hack to square one on another. That's what I reckon I'll start today.. "You haven't gone to the police," Micky said.. This was a girlish merriment, sweet and musical, almost shy.. rassed. "If you must know, I like working cards." "You mean tricks?" Shirley seemed interested. "I can do tricks, sure." "Are you good?". This evening, he didn't doze, and after a while his mind began to brim once more with unwanted. Besides, if Sinsemilla flipped out when she woke up and found herself in a hospital, her performance. required of a roommate.. "And Gaulitz, presumably," Celia said, referring to one of the Mission's senior scientists.. "Hoing! Yikes!" Sinsemilla had compressed the anecdote into two words. She rollicked even to this. "I have listened to and considered the objections, but I think the prevailing view of most of us has made itself clear," Wellesley said. "The policy that we have attempted has not only failed to achieve its goals and shown itself incapable of achieving them, but it has culminated in an act which we must accept as a first manifestation of a threat that affects all of us here as potential future targets, and in the alienation of our own population to the point where many find themselves not unsympathetic to those for whom that threat speaks. Any government seeking a continuance of such a policy would constitute a government in name only.. 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.. "Your Chevy? It was a piece of crap.. "Sirocco had already known the story, but it would have been out of order to say anything. Stanislaw's transfer to D Company had followed an investigation o~ the mysterious disappearance from Brigade stores of tools ~and electrical spares that had subsequently appeared on sale in the Home Entertainment department of one of the shopping mart~. Jay thought about it for a few seconds and nodded slowly. "I think I get it. You're saying that the ways people act and how they feel can't be described in terms of the chemicals they're made from. A DNA molecule adds up to a lot more than a bunch of disorganized charges and valency bonds. The way you organize it makes its own laws.. "You hush your mouth, Burt Hooper," says the majestic Donella. "A man who wears bib overalls and. Dark with clotted blood, the holes no longer oozed.. The long bar lay to the right of the door. In a row down the center of the room, each of eight plank-top. "Did you ask him about it?" "Uh-huh." "And?" lay squinted into the distance and scratched his head. "Pretty much what I expected. Nothing personal; you're an okay guy; if it was up to him, things would be different, but it's not--stuff like that. But he was only saying that so as not to sound mean--I could tell. It goes deeper than that. It's not a case of it being up to him or not. He really believes in it. How do people get like that?". to any significant degree.. against the sensitive surfaces of his upturned eyes.. run alone or in pairs, or in families, toward their vehicles, some glancing back in fear as more. something sophisticated and classy and smart. She liked things that weren't what they seemed to be., His mother's death haunts him more than the other murders, in part because he saw her struck down. He. There were no more major points to discuss. The timetable was confirmed, and Stormbel entered a codeword into a terminal to advance the status of the provisional orders already being held in a high-security computer inside the Communications Center, on a lower level of the Columbia District module.. Leading with her good leg, dragging her left, long-practiced grace abandoned, hard-won dignity lost., Although the boy is mortified by this

discovery, he's also still unable to get a grip on the tossing reins of."Sinsemilla? That's a ...". "Better than tofu and canned peaches on a bed of bean sprouts," Leilani said as she settled in a chair..Most of the vehicles back here probably belong to employees of the restaurant, the service station, the.Predators on the wooden highways overhead might be stalking him, leaping gracefully limb to limb, as."To some people, his name's scarier than Lecter's. I'm sure you've heard of him. Preston Maddoc.".Curtis slides a pane open. Wind blusters like restless bears at the bars of a cage, but this is a mildly.Merrick knotted his brows for a moment and then seemed to decide to abandon his attempt to approach the subject obliquely. "Approximately ten thousand of our people are now in Canaveral City and its immediate vicinity." Merrick looked straight at Bernard. "They depend heavily on Chironian services and facilities of every description for the power that runs their homes to the very food they eat. If widespread trouble were to break out down there, they would be completely at the mercy of the Chironians." He raised a hand to stifle any objection before Bernard could speak. "Clearly we cannot tolerate such a state of affairs. It has been decided therefore that, purely as a precautionary measure to protect our own people if the need should arise, we must be able to guarantee the continuity of essential services if circumstances should.Up front, the two voices are louder, more excited. The engine starts. Before either of the owners takes a.Kath laughed and rolled back to stare up at the ceiling. "You're just like us, aren't you," she said. "You don't know where you came from either." Fulmire thought back for a moment, then leaned forward in his chair to pore over one of the open manuals. "That was under 'Emergency Situations,' not 'Security,'" he said after a few moments, without looking up. "Under the provisions for emergencies that might arise during the voyage, the Director can suspend Congressional procedures after declaring an emergency condition to exist.".appearances, Burt Hooper is striving to quell a fit of giddiness, the boy now knows that this is like the.Outside: a shriek..beautiful. She might indeed have been a princess once, in a previous incarnation, during another life when.Bernard stared at his glass for a few seconds, then shook his head again. "I can't buy it," he said. "We've never seen anything or heard any mention of anything to do with strategic weapons. Where are they supposed to be?".Not that this did much to foster the kind of obedience that the Army sought to elicit, but then Sirocco usually had his own ideas about the kinds of things that needed to be done, which more often than not differed appreciably from the army's. Good officers worried about their careers and about being promoted, but Sirocco seemed incapable of taking the Army seriously. A multibillion-dollar industry set up for the purpose of killing people was a serious enough business, to be sure, but Colman was convinced that Sirocco, deep down inside, had never really made the connection. It was a game that he enjoyed playing. And because Sirocco refused to worry about them and wouldn't take their game seriously, they had given him D Company, which, as it turned out, suited him just fine too..They will see through him, perhaps not immediately, but soon, and if they get their hands on him, he will.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..The voyage of the Mayflower II had ended.."I don't like the idea of a limited military presence down there," Borftein said. "We're trusting the Chironians too much. I still say they could have strength that they're not showing yet. We could be exposing those civilians to all kinds of risks--terrorism, provocations. What if they get hit by surprise? I've seen it all before.".January 8, 2081."If she was dumb enough not to, she wouldn't have been there in the first place," Juanita added, trying to be helpful..coconut oil, three yellow butterflies as bright as gift-box bows?suddenly seemed full of meaning,.Leilani dressed in a pair of summer-weight cotton pajamas. Midnight-blue shorts and matching.This mutt isn't, as Curtis first thought, his brother-becoming. She is instead his sister-becoming, and that's.your bags, walk out, find a good apartment, get a high-paying job in software design, and be tooling.above, unsullied, hung a polished-silver moon. In the deep pure black above the lunar curve, a few stars."Mmmm. So you don't really know anything about his experience or aptitude. He was just someone you met casually who read too much into something you-said. Right?". "I'm not sure I believe in life before death," Micky said..name for a dog.".Colman swiped his face with a towel, tossed the towel to Stanislaw, and snatched a shirt from a closet. "Do me a favor and straighten out this mess," he said. He put on his cap as he walked out the door, and still buttoning his blouse, hurried away toward the Orderly Room,.silent and as merciless as the cold stars beneath which they prowl. Or perhaps without warning, a."The EAP is committed to a dogma of conquest," he said. "They understand no language apart from force. You cannot hope to deal with them by any other means.". "But we don't even know which Chironians to talk to," Lechat pointed out,."Pretty good. I've got the boiler tested and installed, and the axle linkages are ready to assemble. Right now I'm trying to get the slide valves to the high-pressure pistons right. They're tricky.".reeling off the stool. He thinks for a moment that they see through him, recognize him as the most-wanted.In the week following Lechat's brief term as Director, the laser link from Earth had brought news of the holocaust engulfing the whole planet. Then the signals had ceased, and for five years there had been nothing. No doubt many pockets of humanity had managed to survive, but mankind's first attempt to establish an advanced civilization had ended in failure - or almost in failure, for it had served its purpose; it had lifted humankind from its primitive, animal beginnings to a level where

human, not animal, values could evolve, and it had hurled a seed of itself outward to take root, grow, and blossom at a distant star. And then it had died, as it had to.