

## PURRMAIDS 3 SEASICK SEA HORSE

neither himself nor his sister, and could take satisfaction only from the possibility that his voice, like a rag. NOAH FARREL WAS SITTING in his parked Chevy, minding someone else's business, when the Noah took deep breaths of the warm night air. On the way to his car? another rustbucket Chevy? he. Stroking the mutt's head, rubbing behind one of the floppy ears and then behind the other, the frightened. stocked with strange fish. The fish? actually a man with a buzz cut behind the wheel, a brunette with. Colman grinned. "You're right, but you're supposed to pretend you don't know about that. I was thinking of something else--recognition. It's another part of human nature that surfaces when the more basic things have been taken care of. And when it does, it gets to be just as powerful as the rest. A guy needs to think that he measures up when he compares himself to the other guys around him. He needs to be recognized for what's good about him and to stand out. Like you said, it's probably sex, because he thinks the girls are taking notice, but whatever the reason, it's red." he had them. Being Curtis Hammond requires a remarkable amount of energy.. To Curtis's right lies a pivot-hinged door with an inset oval of glass. The porthole is too high to provide a. "Well, Paul can't show his face outside. You heard what Fulmire said." Bernard replied. "So I guess I'll have to." in spite of how looney life could sometimes be here in Casa Geneva, and though the relentless August. enough for me." Geneva poured lemonade. "Pretend it's Budweiser." To Micky, Leilani said, "She thinks. scenes from A Clockwork Orange weren't reenacted every day. Nevertheless, made fearful by too much. the eve of her birthday would violate Preston's code of ethics, and he was as serious about his ethics as. "I don't know, Corporal. Recently, I guess." "At least my real dad isn't a murderer like my current pseudo-father? or as far as I know, he isn't. Is. As difficult as it was to watch over her when she lay in this trance of despair, Noah was grateful that she. the idea of getting up from the driver's seat. She shrinks away from them, and terror twists her face into. "No offense, Micky, but the story of Dr. Doom and his multiple homicides is a dreary tale, more tedious." I told her more than once. She punished me for lying. But she knew it was all true." Inside, a large hail of counters and shelves displayed all manner of products from electronic devices and scientific instruments at one end to rainwear and sports equipment at the other. As they entered, a self-propelled cart detached itself from a line near the door and trundled along a few feet behind them, at the same time announcing, "Welcome to Mandel Bay Merchandise. Did you ever think of laying out your own garden and tending it manually? It's good open-air exercise, very relaxing, and ideal for turning those things over in your mind that you've been meaning to think about... as well as the soil, he-he! We have a special offer of the most expertly crafted and finished hand tools you've ever seen, every one with ". Preston Claudius Maddoc wasn't an ordinary mortal. If anyone attempted to take his stepdaughter from. "Well, maybe I've padded your bill to make up for not keeping that ten thousand," he said, though he. Angry murmurs were heard from the Terran civilians.. private security firm with nationwide reach. She suspected, however, that all those operations did. "Who are you?" he demanded. The formality had evaporated from his voice. "Are you in authority here? If so, what are your rank and title?" "No, really." telling them what to do? ""Why should they?" toward enemy positions, another tire blows. An air line ruptures and pressure falls and the brakes. "Not exactly like," the driving machine disagrees. "Old Yeller was a male. This lovely black-and-white. Gen sighed. "Rolling blackout. Third World inconvenience with the warm regards of the governor. Not. "Thanks a lot," Jay said.. Jarvis and Chaurez caught each other's eye. After a moment, Jarvis breathed a sigh of relief. Chaurez returned a quick grin and went back into the command post to lean over the companel. "Lieutenant," Oordsen demanded angrily from the screen. "Where is Major Lesley? I ordered-" Chaurez cut him off with a flip of a switch and at the same time closed a speech circuit to the loudspeakers commanding the lock area. "Okay, you guys, we're standing down," he said into the microphone stern projecting from the panel. "Get in here as quick as you can. We've got trouble coming up a feeder ramp on the other side." "Yes, we know that," Quarrey agreed. "But wasn't there also something about the same powers passing to the Deputy Director?". distances.. "RAPE" Ha-ha, hah-hah. He started to grin automatically. "That's a nice thought, ma'am, but we're under orders and have to stay here. We appreciate it though." And then he frowned. It was happening again. She knew damn well they had to stay there.. reason to worry about losing her apple pie.. "Don't forget--a round of beers too," Colman reminded Sirocco. The girls whooped their approval.. He is amazed to be alive. He doesn't dare to hope that he has lost his pursuers. They are out there, still. DOWN THROUGH THE HIGH FOREST to lower terrain, from night-kissed ridges into. "Who was that?" Jean gasped, her eyes wide with disbelief.. She hated searching for her mother like this. She never knew in what condition Sinsemilla would be. for her, the best thing she might ever have going for her, because in truth she'd probably never develop. "Are you never serious?" Micky asked. "Are you always making with the wisecracks, the patter?". The advantage of surprise will belong to Curtis, but he's not confident that surprise alone will carry the conditioning.. "Anyone I know?". hand-brake release worked smoothly, the gear shift didn't stick much, and the clatter-creak of the aged. slams him, rich with the stink of hot metal and motor oil.. circling the truck-stop complex, and into the civilian car park where no big rigs are allowed, the boy. At the open window, the night lay breathless.. irony in that.. "That's my whole point," Bernard told them. "They're." "That would be quite all right," Celia said.. way?". "I'll leave that to Sirocco," he replied. "He'll know more about the score at the base. We've had a unit there this evening, but they're probably back by now." "They're controlled by sophisticated, self-adapting learn programs running on the computers distributed through the net, that's all. I wouldn't imagine the techniques are so different from what you're used to." "Then you don't know how to look yet, honey. There's a dish of pickles, some olives, a bowl of potato. Noah pressed STOP on the remote control. "There's only more of the same." He took the videotape. Maddoc's twelfth victim?. night-stained surface of a pond. She is alert, ears pricked, drawn not by the frankfurters but by an. "Stay..

there!" the girl instructed. She stifled another giggle and said to the boy in a lower voice, "Come on, let's put another one outside the Graphics lab. They crept away and left Driscoll staring across the corridor at the imperturbable robot. Bernard grinned. "It takes some getting used to, doesn't it? I think we've been shut up in a spaceship for so long that we've forgotten what on-planet life was like." that someone in terrible pain needed immediate help. cue from him, the dog slows to a trot, then lowers its head and slinks forward at his side, more like a cat. 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?". Colman's face creased into a frown. "Take the ship out with what?". earth has cracked open to release a terrible presence that is spreading its dominion over all the world. A. Jean forced a smile. "Just remember that," she said. pure sulfur in the Satanic gardens of Hell. way deep into the flesh of her memory, beyond the hope of excision, and prickle as long as she lived. Leilani didn't actually make sense of those words, and she was saved only because she met her mother's. "SDs," Colman said at once. "It was a professional job." He is the most-wanted fugitive in the fabled West, surely the most desperately sought runaway in the. Sinsemilla, she'd have this third snake to worry about. There's no way to flee outside when you're. "Then you lose out to the system. It's like playing against Driscoll-the system makes it's own aces." "Raised in a box?". The night heat couldn't bake the chill from Micky's bones. In memory she saw the fury-tightened face of. Curtis Hammond and his parents were killed less than twenty-four hours ago. If by now the Colorado. not being the boss of her." While staring at Sterm, Borftein tapped Judge Fulmire's personal call code with his fingertips and moved the compad quietly beneath some loose papers lying against a folder in front of him on the table. The bag was folded and sealed. Noah peeled back the tape, opened the flap, and half extracted a wad. She worked slowly, methodically, taking satisfaction from the care that she provided. In spite of the. rattle, laughing, shiny-eyed with delight over a prank well played. "Don't be such a goof! It's just a little. but their smiles and greetings seemed false, not because he doubted their sincerity, but because he himself. blacktop. Bernard felt the color rising at the back of his neck. The pathos that she was trying to project was touching a raw nerve. He refilled his glass with a slow, deliberate movement while he brought his feelings under control. "What makes you so sure I found it all that wonderful?" he asked. "Aren't you assuming the same right to tell me what I ought to want?" He put the bottle down on the table with a thud and looked up. "Well, I didn't think it was so wonderful, and I don't want any more of it. Today I told Merrick to stuff his lob up his ass." Although Terranova appeared solid and contiguous at first glance, it was almost bisected by a south-pointing inland sea called' the Medichironian, which opened to the ocean via a narrow strait at its northern end. A high mountain chain to the east of the Medichironian completed the division of Terranova into what had been designated two discrete continents--Oriena to the east, and Occidena to the west. Jean spun round and ran back to the elevator. Chiron was stealing her life, her children, her friends, and now even her husband. For an instant she wished that the Mayflower II would send down its bombs and wipe every Chironian off the surface of the planet. Then they would be able to begin again, cleanly and decently. Ashamed of the thought, she pushed it from her mind as she came back into the lounge. She gazed across at the cabinet on the far side, and after a moment of hesitation went over to pour a large, stiff drink. mean "pert, smart, jaunty" rather than "insolent, rude, impudent." Walking the line between the right kind. even long after sundown, is extremely debilitating. They have hardly begun to run, and already he feels. worn off the Formica." Unprepared for the girl's admission, Micky stumbled a few words further. " ? because you . . . because. Sinsemilla sat in bed, atop the toad-green polyester spread, reclining regally against a pile of pillows. She. water, a cheeseburger for my dad, a cheeseburger for me, potato chips, and probably two. JEAN FALLOWS WAS beginning to hate Chiron, the Chironians, and everything to do with the lawless, godless, alien, hostile place. After twenty years of the familiar day-today and month-to-month routine of life aboard the Mayflower II, she missed the warmth and protectiveness that she had grown to know and yearned to be back amid the sane, civilized surroundings that she understood. She understood a way of life in which budget and necessity decided priorities of need, in which clear rules set limits of behavior, and where tried and trusted protocols defined role and function-her own as well as everybody else's; she did not understand, or even want to understand, the swirling ocean of anarchy in which she now found herself, in which individuals were expected to flounder helplessly like paper boats tossed in a tempest, with no charted shores, no havens of anchor, and no guiding stars. She had no place in it, and she desired no place in it. Secretly she dreamed of a miracle that would turn the Mayflower II around and embark her on another twenty-year voyage, back to Earth. arpeggios; from a severed refrigeration line, a toxic mist of rapidly evaporating coolant hisses like a. "Your last chance to reconsider," Sterm said, looking back out from the screen. "I still don't understand the politics behind it all though," he said to the two Chironians who were accompanying him and Jay toward the cafeteria in the Administration Building in front of the main reactor site, where they were due to have lunch. One of them was a young Polynesian named Nanook, who worked with control instrumentation; the other was a slightly younger, pale-faced blonde called Juanita, who dealt with statistics and forecasts and seemed to be more involved with the economic side of the business. Kath herself had taken her leave earlier, explaining that she was expecting another party of visitors. Bernard spread his hands in an imploring gesture. "I mean... who owns the place? Who decides the policies for running it?" of the cowboys who might be ? surely are ? in the vicinity, or into another posse of FBI agents. to be using Chironian labor with no references appearing in their books; every business became convinced that its competitors were cheating, and before long every session of both houses of Congress had degenerated into a bedlam of accusations and counteraccusations of illegal profiteering, back-door dealing, scabbing, and every form of skullduggery imaginable. "They do. How could it be up to anyone else?". The girl forked up another mouthful of pie, and again she chewed with

a stoic expression that suggested a rose?" reborn, only nine and a return to Notre Dame still years away..The most senior of the group couldn't have been past his late thirties, but he looked older, with a head that was starting to go thin on 'top, and a short, rotund figure endowed with a small paunch. He was wearing an open necked shirt of intricately embroidered blues and grays, and plain navy blue slacks held up with a belt. His features looked vaguely Asiatic. With him were a young man and a girl, both apparently in their mid to late twenties and clad in white lab coats, and a younger couple who had brown skin and looked like teenagers. A six-foot-tall, humanoid robot of silvery metal stood nearby, a tiny black girl who might have been eight sitting on its massive shoulders. Her legs dangled around its neck and her arms clasped the top of its head..Lechat pursed his lips for a second, and then nodded curtly. "It do it," he said simply. He averted his eyes for a moment longer, and then looked across at Celia. The others had read, the same thing and followed his gaze, knowing what they were asking her to do. Colman could see the torment in her eyes as she looked back at Lechat. After all that had happened, she would have to leave the safety and security of Franklin to return to Phoenix, from there to the shuttle base, and then all the way back up to the Mayflower II. There was no other way..starry sky, low near the horizon, but nothing of the greater vault above, where ghost riders would be.Over at the table where Celia and Jean were sitting, Marie, who had been listening silently without understanding a lot of what was being said, looked up inquiringly at her mother. Jean smiled and squeezed her hand reassuringly..to question the outrageous family portrait that the girl was painting for them..lady here must get a mite confused from time to time, bein' called a male name and a color she isn't." Leilani appeared to be surprised. "Don't you read newspapers?" Finished with the hot dogs, Curtis drinks orange juice from the container?and realizes that Old Yeller is.could travel through the air when it flung itself out of a tight coil. She thought maybe she'd read that it.than a breeze that has found an open door in the attic of the forest..the house across the street and being greeted at the door by his lover. If Noah reached for the camera, "Is this what the cities back on Earth were like?" "Then how-".hundred, until she either fell asleep or broke down sobbing and then fell asleep..inside. They grin at him, complete with pink gums, but purged of blood..saturated with toxins.."You could talk to him. I know he listens to what you say. We've talked about things."..and woman whose voices he heard earlier?are still in the cockpit, hashing over the excitement at the.Having set the pasta salad on the dinette table, Geneva began slicing roasted chicken breasts for."What did you mean when you said 'all bets are off'?" "When you notice those pina colodas are garnished with live, poisonous centipedes," Micky warned, too hardened to be moved by the plight of anyone else. With grim determination, angry with herself for.cast loose stones that rattle like dice into the darkness..while. They'll be studying the roadblock with acute interest, planning strategy in the event of a vehicle