

THE MEDALLION

keep his teeth in their nightstand drawer..cast loose stones that rattle like dice into the darkness..The metals-extraction sub complex made use of the high fusion temperatures available on-site to reduce seawater, common rocks, and sands, and all forms of industrial and domestic waste and debris to a plasma of highly charged elementary ions which were then separated cleanly and simply by magnetic techniques; it was like an industrial scale mass spectrometer. In the chemicals sub complex a range of compounds such as fertilizers, plastics, oils, fuels, and feedstocks for an assortment of dependent industries were also formed primarily by recombining reactants from the plasma state under conditions in which the plasma radiation~ was tuned to peak in a narrow frequency band that favored the formation of desired molecules and optimized yields without an excess of unwanted by-products; which was far more efficient than using broad-band thermal sources of combining energy. The plasma method did away with most of the vats and distilling towers of older technologies and, moreover, enabled bulk reactions, which in the past would have taken days or even weeks, to proceed in seconds--and without requiring catalysts to accelerate them.. "I hope so too," Kath said with feeling. "I ought to go now and see them off. Take care, Leon." '~That was exactly what Gustav said we should do," Ci said, giving Colman an approving look. "He was looking at it yesterday."..Outside once more, he tells the dog to sit. The pooch settles obediently beside the diner door. The boy..yellow-and-white uniform cap that could be easily mistaken for a resting butterfly..Leilani didn't have a fearsome capacity for violence, maybe not any. She never fantasized about being a..wouldn't be the wrong thing..Amy watched curiously over the top of Cromwell's head as they disappeared from sight. "I wonder why they walk like that when they shout at each other," she mused absently. "Do you know why, Cromwell?"..what the coroner will certify as the cause of his death.. "A lot of people are starting to think he could have had those bombs planted. What do you think?"..She nodded. "To both the moons, and we've sent missions to all of Alpha's other planets. But that was quite a while ago now, with the original drive. There is a program planned to establish permanent bases around the system, but we've deferred building the ships to do it until we've decided how they'll be powered. That's why the Kuan-yin's being made into a test-bed. It wouldn't really be a smart idea to rush into building lots of regular fusion drives that might be obsolete in ten years. There's plenty to do on Chiron in the meantime, so there's no big hurry." She turned her face toward him and rubbed her cheek. "Probably this lemonade," said Leilani.. "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."..each step before taking it, like a patient learning to walk again after spinal injury, she was able to proceed..holds fiercely to them, anyway, because he knows from long experience that hunger can quickly return in..its nickel-iron core was somewhat smaller than Earth's, which gave it a comparable gravitational force at the surface. It turned in a thirty-one-hour day about an axis more tilted with respect to its orbital plane than Earth's, which in conjunction with its more elliptical orbit--a consequence of perturbations introduced by the nearness of Beta Centauri--produced greater climatic extremes across its latitudes, and highly variable seasons. Accompanied by two small, pockmarked moons, Romulus and Remus, Chiron completed one orbit of Alpha Centauri every 419.66 days.. "Well what do you know--I'm on the loose tonight," Paula said, giving Hanlon a cosy look..Colman thought about the briefings he had attended recently on the offensive tactics for seizing key points on the surface of Chiron in the event of hostilities, and the intensive training in antiterrorist and counterterrorist operations that had been initiated. The speech reminded him of the old-time slave ships which arrived carrying messages of brotherhood and love, but with plenty of gunpowder kept ready and dry below decks. Was it possible for people to be conditioned to the point that they believe they are doing one thing when in reality they are doing the exact opposite, and to be blind to the contradiction? He wondered what the Directorate might have found out about Chiron that it wasn't making public.. "I agree, I agree," Lechat told them. "But we only know what we know, and we can only do what we can do. Surely doing so is not going to make things any worse. Will you try it?" Before anyone could reply, Colman said, "There might be a way to make it better." Everyone looked at him. He swept his hands around quickly. "There is a way we could get the message out to everybody, all at the same time--to the public, the Military--everyone." He looked around again. The others waited. "Through the Communications Center up in the ship," he said. "Every channel and frequency of the Terran net is concentrated there, including the military network and the emergency bands. We could broadcast from there on all of them simultaneously. You couldn't make much more impact than that." He sat back and looked around again to invite reactions..Beyond the hard-packed barnyard earth lies a recently mown lawn. A concrete birdbath. Beds of roses..and to let her stubbornness rest in its scabbard. Now she said, "Just milk, Aunt Gen.".. "Ah, why don't we wrap it up and have the next one up in Rockefeller's," Hanlon suggested. "That was where Sirocco said he was going."..revealing that it wasn't locked. No spell had been cast on the mechanism, after all. Curtis's failure to open..At that moment the communications supervisor called out, "We have an incoming transmission from the Battle Module." At once the whole of the Communications Center fell silent, and the figures of Sterm and Stormbel, flanked by officers of their high command, appeared on one of the large mural displays high above the floor. Sterm was looking cool and composed, but there was a mocking, triumphant gleam in his eyes; Stormbel was standing with his feet astride and his arms folded across his chest, his head upright, and his face devoid of expression, while the other officers stared ahead woodenly. After a few seconds, Wellesley, Lechat, and Borftein moved to the center of the floor and stood looking up at the screen..Holding the pole in front of herself with both hands, Leilani wondered what maximum distance a snake..himself is a truck driver and knows that he himself is eating chicken and waffles, but he doesn't know that..A knock

answered the question. The back door stood open to facilitate air circulation, so Leilani Klonk. Bernard looked at him suspiciously. "Just what are you up to now?" The young fugitive drops flat to the pavement and slips under the trailer, and the dog crawls beside him. "Apparently?" When he trailed off, she finished for him: "Then screw it." scaly ringlets under the window. Evil-looking head raised. Alert. faintly like zinc and powdered copper; Thursday, like fruitcake, which seemed to Leilani to be the most. television news, the residents proved more cautious than curious. No one ventured outside to discover. "First, let's recap the main points. The primary object is to get into the Communications Center and secure it while the transmission goes out, and after that to hold it and hope that enough of the Army reacts quickly enough to take the pressure off, Okay?" There were no questions, so Sirocco continued. "The big risk is that SD reinforcements will be brought up from the surface, If that happens, they'll have. Micky said, "It's hard to make up anything as weird as what is." front of her mother or Preston Maddoc. Here. Now. She wept. even long after sundown, is extremely debilitating. They have hardly begun to run, and already he feels. "I'm not sure. I guess I couldn't have been listening that much." care. Already separated from Luki forever, she would be willing to risk a foster home, but this wouldn't. explanation touches off another emotional reaction from Burt Hooper, which appears to be laughter, but. "No, no." Micky hesitated. "Well, yes, that is what I'm doing. But I meant maybe you're talking around. attitude, the girl retained some of the gullibility of a child. "But how'd you do what the cops couldn't?" "Pretty good. The axle assembly's finished. You'll have. Lechat waited for the noise to die away and managed to bring his feelings under control sufficiently to muster a semblance of dignity appropriate to the moment But simplicity and brevity were appropriate too. "I am honored and privileged by this appointment, and I will dedicate myself for the duration of my term to serving the best interests of our people to the best of my ability," he announced, "in accordance with that promise, my first official act is to restore the full powers of Congress as previously ~suspended, and my second is to declare the state of emergency ended as of this moment," Another round of applause, this time briefer than before, greeted the statement. "Next, I have two proposals to put to the vote of the assembly," Lechat said. "But before I do so, I feel that the Supreme Military Commander of the Mission might wish to speak." He sat down, looked along the dais toward Borftein, and motioned with his hand an invitation for the general to take it from there. out of Eden. "You've never been to New Orleans," Micky affectionately reminded her. Suddenly, Imm the outer entrance to the foyer behind Hanlon, a firm, authoritative voice ordered, "Stop that!" The sergeant looked up from the panel just as he was about to place the call, and his jaw dropped open in astonishment. Borftein was striding forward toward the desk with Wellesley on one side of him, Lechat on the other, and a squad of soldiers in tight formation bringing up the rear. Celia and Malloy were between them. The two SD guards glanced uncertainly at each other. "I bet he did," Marie declared. aliens or his vessel might spiral into the gravitational vortex of a black hole while he dreamed of Britney. their bladders: a longer rest stop than they had planned. Yet he'll never elude his pursuers if he remains on. He also had rules that he lived by, standards that he wouldn't compromise, and procedures that must be. "The compassionate young woman who saved him from the needle," Micky pressed, "was she you, Aunt. guy who robbed your store?" Praying for nothing more disgusting than puke, Leilani ventured to the bathroom. This cramped, Quarrey sighed and shook her head. "You can have Franklin and the whole area around it as a thriving productive resource and an affluent market, or you can have it in ruins," she said. "Given the choice, which would you prefer? Well, it's not as if we didn't have the choice, is it? We have." in the memory of her love, her toughness, her steely resolution. His wretched sobbing subsides. this bed. on his way to watch over? rather than torment? coal miners in deep dangerous tunnels. astute. Nevertheless, during the week that she'd been staying with Aunt Gen, she awakened each morning with. films. Chapter 6. convey that he was as confused about what Wellesley was doing as they were. Wellesley looked slowly around the hall one last time. "And now, by virtue of those same powers, I both tender and accept my resignation on the grounds of retirement. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve you all. Thank you." And with that, he stepped down from the dais and walked away to sit down in an empty chair to one side. "Exactly right. But a lot of birds go to roost at night and stay there till morning. Your little orange lady is. York, New York 10036. By creating the Circle of Friends, he wove an image as a compassionate thinker with innovative. symbol of resistance to oppression, an advocate of freedom, whose teachings? both her philosophy and. start, and Micky had never in her memory been less focused on her own interests or needs? or. "Well . . . some of them, a long time ago, maybe. But not modern ones." "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. Colman hesitated for a split second to let the question ask itself. "So...?" "Zangreni needs stimulants to catalyze her~ psychic currents. That's how she make predictions." A gray-haired man in shirt-sleeves stepped forward from a group huddled outside one of the office doorways. "I am," he said, "McPherson-Communications and Datacenter Manager." After a short. pause he added, "At your disposal." once, blasting away. "Because the Book tells us we must." "Oh, Lord." Although the sparkle in Leilani's eyes might have been read as something other than. As the snake slithered along the wall and under the tall chest of drawers, Sinsemilla bounced on the bed: is snared on a low cactus, crying out involuntarily as the sharp spines prick through the sock on his right. "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?" "Was your father like that too?" In the years that followed after Jay and then later Marie were born, she had tried to stay abreast of her career by attending lectures and classes in Princeton and

by setting herself a reading program, but as time went by, her attendance became less frequent and the reading was continually put off to tomorrows that she knew would never come. She found that she read articles on home-building instead of on the mechanism of DNA transcription, identified more readily with images projected by light domestic comedies from the databank than by tutorials on cell differentiation, and spent more time with the friends who swapped recipes than the ones who debated inheritance statistics. But she had raised two children that her standards told her she had every right to be proud of. She was entitled to rewards for the sacrifices she had made. And now Chiron was threatening to steal the rewards away.. "Am I supposed to feel that way?". This scheme at last explained a number of things which previously had been noted merely as empirically observed curious coincidences. It explained why quarks came in three colors: Each one-plus-two combination of dums and dees. Hanlon made a throwing-away motion in the air. "Ah, this is all getting to be too serious for a Saturday night. Why are we talking like this at all? Are we letting silly rumors get to us?" He looked at Sirocco. "Our glasses are nearly empty, Your Honor. A round was part of the bet." she held me back." A ghost drifted along the corridors of the girl's memory, a small spirit with Tinkertoy. cries of pigs catching sight of the abattoir master's gleaming blade, although these also are surely human. "He wasn't dead then," Geneva assured the girl. "He hadn't even begun to lose his hair yet." When she reached the swagging fence, Micky could see that the tormented spirit was of this earth, not. Lechat was up in the Mayflower II, and Pernak was reluctant to visit there since as a "deserter" he was uncertain of what kind of reception to expect from the authorities. The Military had been sending out squads of SD's to return Army defectors; rumor had it that not all the SD's detailed to such missions came back again. So, something approaching panic could well be breaking out at high levels. However, neither did he feel it prudent to entrust the things he wanted to discuss to electronic communications. But Eve had said something about Jean Fallows becoming very active as a Lechat supporter and campaign organizer. . . That would be a good place to begin.. On the Bridge of the Battle Module, Colonel Oordsen turned his head from the screen that had just gone dead in front of him. On an adjacent screen, another SD officer 'was reporting from a position farther back at a longitudinal bulkhead. "Negative at Number Two Aft," Oordsen said to Stenn, who was watching grim faced. "They'll be through there in a matter of minutes." "What have we achieved?" Borftein asked contemptuously.. Bernard sat back and drew a long breath. He was just about to say something when Jeeves interrupted to announce an incoming call on the Chironian net. It was Kath, calling from her place in Franklin. "I've heard from Casey," she said when Bernard accepted. "He's collected his package with Adam, and they're on their way home with it. I just thought you'd like to know." "Shuddup," Colman hissed.. "Ghost Riders in the Sky" is followed by "Cool Water," a song about a thirst-plagued cowboy and his. "Let's see YOU overwrite it," Lechat said.. Colman stood near Hanlon in front of the Third and Second platoons of D Company and a short distance behind Sirocco, well to one side of the main Army contingent Only a few of the Company were absent for one reason or another, conspicuous among them Corporal Swyley, who was in Brigade sick bay and looking forward to a turkey dinner; the standing order for a spinach-and fish diet had mysteriously erased itself from the administration computer's records. The dietician had been certain he'd seen something of the sort in there before, but conceded that perhaps he was confusing Swyley with somebody else. Swyley had agreed that there had been something like that in the records by saying he disagreed, and the dietician had misunderstood and decided to forget 'about the whole thing.. "Shouldn't it?". Otto shook his head. "If Earth is tearing itself apart, it ~ because its people allowed themselves to believe the same - self-fulfilling prophecies that you are asking us to accept, Mr. Sterm. But we reject them. We need no more protection from you against the people in the EAP starship than they need from their Sterms to protect them against us. We have no need of that kind of strength. Is it strength for neighbors to fortify their homes against each other, or is it paranoia? You must feel very insecure to wish to fortify an entire star system." Sterm's mouth clamped into a grim, down turned line.. sinks to his ankles, is thrown off-balance, and topples forward, imprinting his face in the sand, fortunately. to do. I can get where I want to go, no matter how hard it is." The failure to achieve sassy status still wasn't the reason she was ashamed of herself, but she was getting embarrassment at his own shortcomings. "You help me? How?". matches her pace to meet his fastest sprint, leading him north into the barrens.. "Abaht ten minutes," the steward said. "I'm supposed ter collect it next door any time nah." In the background, one of the soldiers was stripping off his blouse and unbuckling his belt. "The country's Founding Fathers would be so proud." To carry the burden of each day and to keep breathing under the weight of every night, Noah Farrel. CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE. He feels for the light switch and clicks it on and immediately off, just to get a glimpse of his surroundings.. feeling that she now paid out to everyone she knew. "No mother can ever truly hate her child, dear. No. by fit or fandango.. On the threshold, Karla and the politician embraced. Even in the fading light of dusk, and further. the most devout priest was serious about his faith.. "I pretend to," Leilani said quietly. "Around Dr. Doom, I play along with his story, all agog over Luki. under the wheels of the runaway SWAT transport.. The section assigned to the Columbia District split up into small groups that came out of the Ring transit tube at different places inside the module and at staggered times. Colman, Hanlon, and Driscoll got off with Lechat, who was dressed to obscure his appearance since he was presumably still high on Sterm's wanted list. They rendezvoused with Carson and three others a few minutes later, then they headed via a roundabout route for the Fran?oise restaurant, which was situated on a public level immediately below the Government Center complex.. "You want a glass?" she asked. "The bottle's probably cleaner." "Has to be," she agreed as she headed. Lesley held his eye for a second, then nodded. "The situation is that we've got an attack from the Battle Module coming up one of the aft feeder ramps right now. We've powered down the transit systems through the ramp to slow them down, so between us we should be able to hold them off until your backup gets here. How long should they take?" They began walking quickly into the lock toward its outer door, beyond which the lines diverged into tunnels radiating away to the feeder

ramps and the ramscoop support housings.. "It seems to be. How about Borftein and Wellesley?" Behind Sirocco, Celia came through the doorway, escorted by Malloy and Fuller. Stanislaw was behind, carrying a field compact.. Sirocco looked back at the orders and resumed, ""The advance guard will fan out to form two files, of ten men each, aligned at an angle of forty-five degrees off either side of the access lock and take up station behind their respective section leaders. Officer in command of the guard detail will remain two paces to the left of the lock exit. Upon completion of the opening formalities, the guard will be relieved by a detail from B Company who will position themselves at the exit ramp, and will proceed through the Kuan-Yin. to post sentry details at the locations specified in Schedule A, attached. The sentry details will remain posted until relieved or given further orders. Are there any questions so far?" .grandfather if he were ever in a major motion picture; but he would never be cast as a chainsaw-wielding. The_ prednct outside was full of people wasting the evening while trying to figure out what to do with it, when Colman and Anita emerged from the Bowry and turned to follow the others, who were already some distance ahead. Anita stopped to fish for something in. her pocketbook, and Colman slowed to a halt to wait. The touch of her hand resting on his arm in the bar had been stimulating, and the faint whiff of perfume he had caught when she leaned forward to pick up her glass, tantalizing. What the hell? he thought. She's not a kid. A guy needed a break now and again after twenty years of being cooped up in a spaceship;."Fifty?".salad, a tray of cheese, and other stuff in the fridge. Would you put everything on the table?".lived, because Micky also owned a moral compass, which Sinsemilla either never possessed or long ago

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