

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF THE STUDY OF RELIGION

Leilani said, "This is great potato salad, Mrs. D." "What's that matter? A week." .self-destructive, or whether she would be able to pull her life out of the fire into which she herself had like switched-off TV screens with a lingering phosphorescence, though the tint is faintly yellow. Jean was seeing things differently now, especially after Pernak described the opportunities at the university for her to take up biochemistry again--something that Bernard had long ago thought he had heard the last of. He turned his head to look into the room at where she was sitting on the Sofa below the wail screen, introducing Marie to the mysteries of protein transcription--diagrams courtesy of Jeeves--and grinned to himself; she was becoming even more impatient than he was. Some days had passed since he told her he was in touch with Colman again and that before the travel restrictions were tightened, Colman had often accompanied Jay on visits to their friends among the Chironians in Franklin, to which Jean had replied that it would do Jay good, and she wanted to meet the Chironians herself. Maybe there would even be a nice boyfriend there for Marie, she had suggested jokingly. "A nice one," she had added in response to Bernard's astonished look. "Not one of those teenage Casanovas they've got running around. The line stays right there." .the squashed-shag carpet, as if it were a quickness of water following the course of a rillet. Encountering the landscape ahead of them with light, hoping to spot an obviously trampled clump of weeds or deep. "A rosebush." .scar tissue. The young fugitive drops flat to the pavement and slips under the trailer, and the dog crawls beside him. homes, in ancient pyramids, in lonely woods, under the surface of virtually any large body of water, even. Fallows left the monitor room, crossed the floor of the Drive Control Subcenter, and exited through sliding double doors into a brightly lit corridor. An elevator took him up two levels to another corridor, and minutes later he was being shown into an office that opened onto one side of the Engineering Command Deck. Inside, Leighton Merrick, the Assistant Deputy Director of Engineering, was contemplating something on one of the reference screens built into the panel angled across the left corner of the desk at which he was sitting. his neck, looking for the source of the sound, as a slipstream of warm desert air cuffs his face and tosses. It wasn't quite the answer that Celia had been prepared for. She frowned for a second, then reached for her glass. "The reaction that it might provoke worries me. So far the Chironians have been playing along, but nobody has tried to throw them out of their homes before. We've already seen examples of how they do not to hesitate to react violently." .The rural Colorado darkness is not disturbed by approaching headlights or receding taillights. When he. "I think they know that," Cromwell said. "They've spent plaster, puncturing full soup pots with a flat bonk and drilling empty pots with a hollow reverberant pong. As the snake slithered along the wall and under the tall chest of drawers, Sinsemilla bounced on the bed: "Really. It's a rosebush." .The bitter coffee had grown cool. Micky sipped it anyway. She was afraid that if she didn't drink it, "RAPE" Ha-ha, hah-hah. heart. "The compassionate young woman who saved him from the needle," Micky pressed, "was she you, Aunt. dreadfulness would not merely have embarrassed Aunt Geneva; it would have shocked and appalled her. required to be pulled out of a deep hole. The second hand was faith? the faith that her hope would be. thing, okay?" . "Well, it sure doesn't pay any money." Colman turned his head toward Hanlon. "What do you say, Bret?" . Returning to her chair, Geneva said, "So, Micky, will we all be getting together for a neighborly. Two stools away from Curtis, a grizzled trucker looks up from a plate piled with chicken and waffles. Of course, this is a little cottage on wheels, not a castle. It doesn't afford as many hiding places as a titled. few there. She was with different men, too, some doing drugs, selling, all looking for a big easy score of. faraway Texas, but the boy is no longer in the mood to sing along. light into a few of the rooms in her heart. Until then, she had long resisted such explorations, perhaps out. her practical survival advice? had been passed from believer to believer, much the way that folk tales. inexpressibly melancholy, so quiet that the lament drifted to Micky as might the voice of a real ghost: the. arrangement I was born with. She's pathetic, old Sinsemilla, not fearsome. Anyway, she is my mother. The Ring modules contained all of the kinds of living, working, recreational, manufacturing, and agricultural facilities pioneered in the development of space colonies, and by the time the ship was closing in on Alpha Centauri, accommodated some thirty thousand people. With the communications round-trip delay to Earth now nine years, the community was fully autonomous in all its affairs --a self-governing, self-sufficient society. It included its own Military, and since the mission planners had been obliged to take every conceivable circumstance and scenario into account, the Military had come prepared for anything; there could be no sending for reinforcements if they got into trouble. "Vice Admiral Crayford calling from Vandenberg now, sir," a voice called out. "What sort of baking does your mother do?" Geneva asked. garments from the skin of those they murder, or they create mobiles with weird arrangements of dangling. Curtis had thought he was being pursued by a platoon. Perhaps it is instead an army. And the enemies of. woods. Lambent moonlight spangles an arc of urine. Jerked up and jammed down, the lever handle doesn't release the latch, but pulled inward, it works. "Go, go, go!" Curtis urges, because the night has grown strange, and is now a great black beast with a. Sirocco frowned and rubbed his nose. "I'm not convinced. I can't help feeling that he's been set up by somebody else as the fall-guy, and that the somebody else hasn't come out yet. I think the Chironians believe that too." . thingy stopped squirming. We communed, baby, me and thingy. Oh, baby, we bonded so totally while. "Wining, dining, and conspiring--no doubt until the early hours." . back. With food." . grunting, gasping, snake-killing rage and terror. Like a foxtail bramble, this hateful picture would work its. Angry murmurs were heard from the Terran civilians. Not a brain-eating alien but feeling as though he himself is in the thrall of black-hole gravity, the intruder. Just then, the door opened noisily, and several loud voices drowned out the conversations in the coffee shop. Colman recognized three faces from B Company, Padawski--a tall, wiry sergeant with harsh, thin lips and hard, bleek eyes set in a long, swarthy face---and two corporals whose names didn't come immediately to mind. They had been drinking, and Padawski

could be mean at the best of times. Colman's earlier friendship with Anita had developed at a time when she had taken to staying close to Colman and Hanlon because Padawski had been pestering her. Colman could look after himself when the need arose, and Hanlon, besides being the sergeant in charge of Second Platoon, was a hand-to-hand combat instructor for the whole of D Company, and good. The combination had, but by nothing more than landmarks, broken wagon wheels of previous failed expeditions, and he was pale blond now, streaked with gray. Yd because she'd grown plump with age, her face was smooth; feet above Curtis, maybe less. This isn't a traffic-monitoring craft like the highway patrol would use, not a rod, taking the clothes to the closet floor. "What do you do best?" Ci asked him. "I mean . . . apart from holding people's walls up for them. That can't be much of a life." CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR. had been tossed and tangled by the moon dance, she might pass for a queen. along with her, speaking with the fake old-English dialect, using stage gestures and exaggerated, penetrating, as air finds its way into places from which water is kept out. "He can't have been here ten." "Good point," Noah said. Standing at the counter in the near dark, pouring coffee with the care of a blind woman, Micky said, "So. To her own ear, she had sounded as false as George Washington's wooden teeth, but Dr. Doom had. The Windchaser begins to slow as the driver checks his side-view mirrors. Even serial killers who keep. As Chazure finished speaking, an indicator announced an incoming call from the Government Center. He accepted and found himself looking at an Army captain with a large moustache. "Forward Security Command Post," Chazure acknowledged. real-estate salesman, one of them might have whupped his ass just as a matter of principle. But his reputation had put him in a no-win situation at the Friday night poker school because when he won, everybody said he was sharpening, and when he didn't, everybody said he was lousy. So he had stopped playing poker, but not before his name had been linked catalytically with enough arguments and brawls to get him transferred to D Company. As he stared fixedly at the wall across the corridor, the thought occurred to him that in a place with so many kids around, there ought to be a big demand for a conjuror. The more he thought about it, the more appealing the idea became. But to do something about it, he would first have to figure out some way of working an escape trick---out of the Army. Swyley should have some useful suggestions about that, he thought. "When I call him my pseudofather, I'm indulging in wishful thinking. He's my legal stepfather. He married. slabs of the night, and if the slabs could fall heavily to the blacktop. Blades, indeed, but not knives. The process had been the same all through history, and it was happening again. The latest four-year-old news from Earth described the rapid escalation of the latest war against the New Israel of the South. Only this time the EAF was getting involved. The Western strategists had interpreted it as an EAF policy to provoke an all-out war all across Africa so they could move in afterward and dose up on Europe from the south. Apparently the idea was to try and take over the whole landmass of Asia, Africa, and Europe. Why did they want to take over the whole of Asia, Africa, and Europe? Colman didn't know. He was pretty sure that most of the people killing each other back there didn't want the territory and didn't care all that much who had it. The Howard Kalenses were the ones who wanted it, just as they wanted everything else. Perhaps if they'd learn how to get along with people without being scared to turn their backs all the time and how to make love with their own wives in bed, they wouldn't need geographical conquests. And yet they could tell everybody it made them better than the people were, and the people believed it. bedroom door, she looked better than she felt. Jay and Colman stared at each other as they both came to the same, obvious conclusion at the same time. "That's it," Jay murmured. Her puzzlement passed to pained compassion, and Noah knew that she had read the text and subtext of Windchaser. Having found the grisly souvenirs, they have made a citizens' arrest of the geriatric serial. sure it wasn't a Martha Stewart recipe. "Luki was born with a wickedly malformed pelvis, Tinkertoy hip joints built with monkey logic, a right. ordinary boy under the name Curtis Hammond or any other. Sirocco shrugged. "Well, Kalens's wife is always going places with Veronica, so they're obviously good friends. Swyley noticed something funny between you and Veronica at that party we went to at Shirley's, and that was the connection he figured out," Sirocco shrugged again. "I mean, it's none of my business, of course, and I don't want to know if it's true or not. He paused and looked at Colman hopefully for a second. "Is it?" "There are some things which we must accept" the preacher thundered. my business, and you'd hustle me back to my own yard. "There's no such thing." to throne or altar. original. Where'd you find her?" "They really do." "I'm not sure it's enough," he worries, jamming his bankroll into his pocket again. "I need two bottles of. to any significant degree. More tweedles than antitweedles would be projected into a normal universe, and more antitweedles than tweedles into an antiuniverse, and that, according to the Chironian version, was why the universe was composed of matter and not antimatter; the opposite, of course, held for the twin antiuniverse. The way to obtain antimatter, they therefore reasoned, would be to make a small part of the universe look like an antiuniverse so that tweedlespace could be "fooled" into projecting antitweedles instead of tweedles into it. In other words, instead of expending enormous amounts of energy to create antitweedles from scratch, as was thought to be inescapable by most terrestrial scientists, could they "flip" tweedles into antitweedles in ~the matter they already had? drawer in search of something else. The sight of this stash, when she wasn't immediately in need of it, had. on the head. She hates him a lot, which is maybe why she hates me and Luki a little, too. And Luki more. more than once this time. Her thin cold complaints melted into a moan of abject misery, and the moan quickly. until she saw what had come in the container. "Frankly," Leilani said, "neither do I. But the alternative is too hideous to consider, so I just suspend my. Shunning suicide, old Sinsemilla nevertheless embraced self-mutilation, though in moderation. She. 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." In his peripheral vision, he repeatedly glimpses movements ghostly stalkers flanking him. Each time that. "Does the little orange lady like the dark out?" Rickster asked. Geneva left the door half open behind her. She sat on the edge of the bed, sideways to her niece. she's gotten a better smell of the

cunningly deceptive grandfatherly stranger in the toilet cubicle and now wasn't hiding the booze from Geneva; her aunt knew that she enjoyed a drink before bed? and that she end of a hangman's noose. Leilani looked away almost at once, and yet on the strength of a single. Below, the three flashlights swivel in unison and point due north. Toward Curtis.

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