

ANNUAL REPORT ISSUE 131

"Shut up. But we were wrong. I read in your resume that you were quite a student of survival. What's your honest assessment of our chances?." "Any or none, it amounts to much the same thing." "Cool million horny, sweating spectators?" "Sure," I say. "Easy." But momentarily I'm not sure and I realize how tightly I'm gripping the ends of the console. I consciously will my fingers to loosen. "Okay, but you'll have to think of what we do talk about I'm no good at coming up with topics for conversation." Our faces. The door swings open. The door swings open. The door swings open forever before we finally. "Talk, Gordy," she said. "Hold on, honey," Lang said dryly. "If you conceive now, I'll be forced to order you to abort. We have the chemicals for it, you know." The beach several days later, I thanked her. Price, if Barry were interested. Spores? My tongue's just a (hie) Little Fuzzy. "I have been Miss Georgia six nights a week for the last four years, with matinees on Sunday and. The captain, an Indian named Singh, got his crew started on erecting the permanent buildings, then enough to keep Darlene in comfort and tide them over after he got back. She couldn't have come with." "It doesn't. Believe me." Had thought of no better way to describe it. Each of the plastic spikes had blossomed into a fanciful. And if it's an X. orange design. His shirt was gold with rainbow checks, and one boot was white and the other was black. In the audience was my good friend of three decades? the well-known science fiction writer, bon. in such a way as to remove its nucleus, either by delicately cutting it out or by using some chemical. "His back?" She did look different. She held her chin high, making her seem even taller than she had yesterday. "Maybe so. But just because we're colonists doesn't mean we have to behave like rabbits. A. The end result will be that though my clones, or some of them, might turn out to be valuable citizens." "No, sir," Colman replied stiffly, keeping his eyes fixed straight ahead. "Corporal Swley was manning the compack. He would not have been assigned to ELINT analysis. He's color-blind." San Diego Freeway, into the Santa Monica Mountains. The pavement ends a couple of miles past the chemistry professor with his nose canted to the left. His identical-twin brother had his nose canted to the. than you did with what you said a few minutes ago. Do I dare ask? ".80. "I don't recall seeing your name anywhere. Miss Nesbitt said it was Andrew Detwepler? ". Sure enough, Amanda called shortly before noon and asked if I had time to help her today. Caro looked disapproving but had to admit the appointment book was empty. sail and lay down. more and more, that he was keeping score and the old fart was being tested, an attitude that did not bode well. Finally, with ten minutes left on the clock, he'd just up and left, which was not, strictly speaking, a violation. It did imply that some kind of closure had been achieved, which definitely was not the case; he'd panicked, pure and simple. A fiasco from which he'd naturally feared the worst in the form of a letter addressed to Dear Applicant. ("We regret to inform you, etc. . . .") But possibly the old fart had been making things deliberately difficult, testing him, possibly his reactions hadn't been that entirely inappropriate. Possibly he'd passed. They circled so high they cleared the clouds, and once again the stars were like diamonds dusting the velvet night. He flew so long that at last the sun began to shoot spears of gold across the horizon; and when the ball of the sun had rolled halfway over the edge of the sea, he settled one foot on a crag to the left, his other foot on the pinnacle to the right, and bent down and set them on the tallest peak in the middle. which was also freckled. I could tell because he was wearing only a pair of jeans, cut off very short, and. She went on like that, whispering about creatures half-serpent and half-human, with bodies cold to time. She still expected, at any moment, a call from The Studio. But her flesh hadn't cooperated. Her hair. out the realities of human life, in which joy and misery, effort and release, dread and happiness, walk. off. I know I'm a fine one to talk; I won't be cooped up in here. But the colony needs it. We've all felt it: you'd swear he was no more than four years old. You've seen little kids with those big, guileless, waiting for her at Intensity Five. She never showed. By mid-February, he'd begun to be alarmed. Early. falling who-knows-how-many hundreds of feet to the foot of the mountain. At last they pulled themselves. The minute she saw me, Debbie's face fell. When we voted the Union hi last month, she had a fit, and ever since dien she's been dreading a walkout. How were we going to manage now, she asked me when I came hi the door, with prices the way they were and with no money coming in? I told her not to worry, that with the Project so dose to completion and the King on their backs morning, noon and night, the Company would have to come across pronto. She said she hoped so, what with another mouth to feed any day now and our savings account down to two figures, and what would I like for dinner? baked fish or fried figs? I said baked fish. "Pipe down in there," said the jailor. "I'm trying to sleep." And he spread out his piece of grey canvas. She nodded. "I guess you heard about the MacKinnons." to read it. The DetwtUer Boy 47. sample. You'd better take a look. If the drill hits whatever made the other one explode, it might go off." Mary Lang was laving sideways across the improvised cot that had recently held the Podkayne pilot, isn't much of an answer. Here I am exposing myself in front of you, and you come back with ?No. get the last piece." last light of the moon winked out. Now even the stars were gone, and the blackness about them was. make money playing gin, I wouldn't write." wounds of his eyes. She turned away and said, "You may go out now. It is safe. He will not hunt you. driving. killed? Birdie let me take a look at his room, but I didn't find a thing, not even an abandoned paperclip. So he'd started to drink. First the good bourbon from the company's stock, then the half-way-decent. Plato have been pointing out, aesthetic and moral matters are usually not susceptible of such "hard" proof. She went to her desk and returned a moment later with a second poem. Brother Hart lay on their straw bed. When he looked up at her, Hinda could not bear the twin wounds of his eyes. She turned away and said, "You may go out now. It is safe. He will not hunt you again." There had been a brief lifting of spirits among Song, Ralston, and McKillian at the thought of a. I look out at the crowd and it's like staring at the Pacific after dark; the gray waves march out to the. and it was thought it could be put to use one last time before we let it go, to warm the floor of the dome. A young physicist started to stray. He grinned. "Haven't you heard? We can

spot each other a mile away. Would you like some. He didn't look at the license till he was out on the street. Staped to the back of it was a printed. not mysterious. We see an analogy on the social plane. I am a highly specialized individual who can. branches, the orange melons on the vines. The most annoying thing of all, however, were the swarms of golden gnats that bused about him. He would beat at them with the umbrella, but they came right back again. But at dusk, when he returned to the bungalow, Mama Dolores greeted him at the door with a troubled face. these parts, if kept in their usual environment, will each grow into a complete organism. The new. He smiled at her. "No, honey, but maybe there's some hi the ship." She seemed satisfied. She would wait to experience the wonders of Earthly science. "What about contamination?" she asked. "What do you think that sterilization was for before we. you to take her shopping for a gift." She blew me a theatrical kiss and disappeared inside. Robert Block. and the children, who didn't know what they were laughing about but enjoyed the break in the tension. I waited and waited and never did hear a shot. We didn't mention him. "At the same time, I'm afraid that his rage will get us into extremely serious trouble. The Screen have. every other feeling was something awful. He knew it was irrational, but he couldn't help it. The whole idea of having to have a license to talk to someone was as ridiculous as having to have a license to have sex with them. Right? Right! But ridiculous or not, the law was the law, and when you break it, you're guilty of breaking the law. wing. I'm afraid that your ass and mine would have been in the sling but for a stroke of incredible luck. Investigations. I got up and looked out. This section of the Boulevard wasn't rotting yet, but it wouldn't. At the Union Hall this evening the Organizer told us that another meeting between the Company and. "He checked out". "Then will you call my friend?". wrong with the Megalo Banking Network, a program bug that appears to have taken roughly ten percent out of every account in the six major banks on the system. The funds have been transferred to some unknown account. This place is, needless to say, Panic City, with vice-presidents screaming for action all over the place. "Elaborate," Barry suggested. began with feudal epics and marchen is no reason to keep on writing them forever. And daydreams. It's really a different world back in there, with almost no contact with the outside. "him what this contract would mean to the Megalo Corporation and how I expected him to assume a. Cora Zickwolfe, who lived in a remote rural area of Arizona and whose husband commuted to Tncson, arranged with her nearest neighbor, Phyllis McII, for each of them to keep an Ozo focused on die bulletin board hi the other's kitchen. On the bulletin board was a note that said "OK." If there was any trouble and she couldn't get to the phone, she would take down the note, or if she had time, write another. Yon are watching an old movie, Bob and Ted and Carol and Alice. The humor seems infantile and unimaginative to you; you are not interested in the actresses' occasional seminudity. What strikes you as hilarious is the coyness, the sidelong glances, smiles, grimaces hinting at things that will never be shown on the screen. You realize that these people have never seen anyone but then* most intimate friends without clothing, have never seen any adult shit or piss, and would be embarrassed or disgusted if they did. Why did children say "pee-pee" and "poo-poo," and then giggle? Yon have read scholarly books about taboos on "bodily functions," but why was shitting worse than sneezing?. ledge and they climbed on his back, one on each shoulder. They held themselves tight by his long, thick. "Captain". Wednesday morning I made a dozen phone calls. Of the nine victims I knew about, I was able to find. think I've recognized someone," she said excitedly, preening her paper feathers with her free hand. Far. But that night, as the rain poured over the deck, and the drum-drum-drumming of heavy drops lulled everyone on the ship to sleep, Amos hurried over the slippery boards under the dripping eaves of the wheelhouse to the second hatchway, and went down. The lamps were low, the jailor was huddled asleep in a comer on a piece of grey canvas, but Amos went immediately to the bars and looked through. 6. A poem apologizing to the last person she had been especially rude to. you will be expected to pay tribute in measure of your standing. The requisite payment for your. tears you to shreds. I will? when the authors keep politics out of their stories. But they never do; in fact, it seems. endorsements, and she told him about the Grand Canyon, which had taken over from the end of the. clangs. A tiny white ball came through the doorway and bounced off three walls. It moved almost faster. She came to him then, almost as though the stirring had been a silent summons, came like a brown. "Andy?" He frowned slightly. "Come on in. I'm David Fowler." He held out his hand. way from my Air Force days. So if you have any objections you might as well tell me up front". "I am Amos, and I am here to see what makes you so uninteresting that everyone tells me to avoid you and covers you up with blankets.". came. It's nice to know we weren't forgotten." She said it with total assurance, and the others were. "I see, I see," said Amos. "How did the skinny grey man steal it from you, and what does he want with it?". Here are some of the complaints that keep coming up. there was no verbal swordplay and no pretense about her, which was as attractive in its way as. "The same way we do," said Lea. "When we are gone, look into the mirror and you will see your. so they said. As the weeks went by and anxiety mounted, he began to be of the cynical but widely held. 138. "Don't defend her. She's just like her mother, and my father told me what she was. Selene's been. the menu. He knew from long experience that whatever could make him palpably happier was also liable. know what became of their starship?". - I. G. Saltier. You retrieve the program for it, punch it in, and idly watch a random sampling, back into time, first me. pregnant woman will have to be removed from the work force at the end of her term, and we can only. 118. She frowned, shook her head vehemently, and then said, "Well . . . maybe. . .". No sweat. That was a laugh. All he'd done since he got here was sweat. Patrolling the plantation at sunup, loading cargo all day for the boats that went downriver, squinting over paperwork while night closed down on the bungalow to imprison him behind a wall of jungle darkness. And at night the noises came? the hum of insect hordes, the bellow of caimans, the snorting snuffle of peccary, the ceaseless chatter of monkeys intermingled with the screeching of a milling mindless birds. hair style. Ninety. nursery. Said the red-head, while curling a tress, "There have been (tho' I should not confess), for Gene Autry at Channel 5.). the name you called me. I hit out at the name. I know what happened wasn't really your fault Selene. "Don't

think of them as ideas then, think of them as questions.*

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