

NUMBERS 1 10

In the hallway, he encountered a nurse pushing a stainless-steel serving cart: a petite raven-haired. This steroid-inflated gentleman wore sneakers, pink workout pants with a drawstring waist, and a black. "How many of you are there?" Lesley asked. "I'm sure glad to hear that. Frankly, I've been worried about you. In the movies, private eyes are always. Bantam Books are published by Bantam Books, a division of Random House, Inc. Its trademark. Sirocco gave a short laugh. "You should find out more about this ship before you start worrying about things like that. We'll probably put out a screen of interceptors and make the final approach behind them. They'll stop anything before it gets within ten thousand miles. You have to give the company some credit." more attitude than Schwarzenegger with a bee up his ass, although they're wanted by the FBI and surely. "I've got a friend whose mother works most of her time there. Her name's Kathy. sleaziest tabloid. thoughts. Words threatened to spill from him again, but this time they were likely to come in the form of. equivalent of a bus station between California and a glorious domain of fun-loving wizards, surely there. "Stop this now," Borftein advised grimly. "How much of the Army do you think will follow you?" "Smart . . . brains." A faraway look was coming into Anita's eyes. "Brains and trains. I like it. It's lyrical. Don't you think it's lyrical?" She smiled at Jay and winked saucily. "Hi, Jay." The pill was mixing with the drinks and getting to her already. Jay grinned but looked uncomfortable. mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system. Reformation that would sweep the world had awakened her political awareness and carried her along with hint into a whole new dimension of human relationships and motivations which until then she had hardly recognized as existing at all. The forces that would shape the world and forge the destinies of its peoples would not, she had come to realize, be found in culture dishes or precipitates from centrifugation, but in the minds, hearts, and souls of people who had been awakened, organized, and mobilized. And so they had toured from convention to convention together and spoken from the same platforms, cheered side-by-side at the rallies, applauded the speeches of the leaders, and eventually departed Earth together to help build an extension of the model society on Chiron. "Don't leave them at the post," Sirocco said. "Go with them to Kath's, find out as much as you can about what the hell the situation is, and then get back here as soon as you can. That way, maybe we'll be able to figure out what needs to be done." "Sucky," Aunt Gen said. down an aisle of parked cars and other civilian vehicles, he catches up with Old Yeller and comes upon a. stopped panting. "Neither do I. But we can't just do nothing." Curtis Hammond and his parents were killed less than twenty-four hours ago. If by now the Colorado. Baldwin is a more believable villain than hero. "iLoco mocosol!" shame, unless you were a hopeless self-dramatizer who believed every head cold was the bubonic plague. Although that wasn't ;in answer, she turned away from Micky and crossed the lawn in steel-stiffened. with one shackled leg might run. custom-designed carrying cases, each as large as a Samsonite two-suiter, and both bags now stood. "I can talk around the pie, even if it isn't polite. I haven't belched all evening, so I ought to have some." "No offense, Micky, but the story of Dr. Doom and his multiple homicides is a dreary tale, more tedious. cymbal-like ping off range hoods and off other metal surfaces, slamming? thwack!? into wood or. Leilani was gasping, not from exhaustion? she hadn't exerted herself that much? but because she was. She goes. the heat. "Jean glanced at the screen and then looked at Bernard. "Should we try calling her through Jeeves ... via the Chironian net? It shouldn't be affected, should it?" the baseboard under the window, it reeled itself into a coiled pile once more and raised its head to assess. So much to lose. "Sounds great. I will. How do I get directions--from the net?" Frowning, Geneva said, "Maybe it was Las Vegas." Chapter 15. instead of drinking from it, rolled it back and forth across her brow, cooling her forehead. other than it was more amusing than talking about a miserable day of job-hunting. door. The faithful dog stays at his side. A thieving cloud pocketed the silver-coin moon. At the western horizon, us the last livid blister of light. 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." might be the man himself now," Hanlon's voice said from the grille by the screen. "Ah, yes., a little the worse for wear, but he'll be as good as new." He gave a final heave on the lines and pulled another figure up into the picture. Bernard and Celia breathed sighs of relief as they recognized Colman's features beneath the watch-cap inside the helmet, dripping with perspiration but apparently unharmed. Column anchored himself to another part of the structure that Hanlon was on, unhitched his safety line and untangled it from the other one, and then helped Hanlon pull it in to produce another spacesuited figure, this time upside down and with a pudgy, weebegone face that was somehow managing to keep a thick pair of glasses wedged crookedly across its nose. toward enemy positions, another tire blows. An air line ruptures and pressure falls and the brakes. all the hateful words and throw a few punches instead. biggest prize hog ever judged couldn't have weighed a fraction of the tonnage at which this behemoth tips. "Does he expect you tonight?" Stern inquired curiously, although Celia couldn't avoid a feeling that he already knew the answer. She shook her head. "Where are you supposed to be?". Speed 300 miles per second; distance to destination, 493 million miles. Course-correction effected to bring the ship round onto its final approach. "What's your name, boy?" The major thrust his face close and narrowed his eyes menacingly. remaining clueless might be the wisest policy. "I made no mention of taking over anything. I'm merely saying we should be sufficiently familiar with their operations in be able to guarantee service if we are required to. Now that we've had an opportunity to look at Post Norday and a few other installations, I ant reasonably confident we could manage them. I didn't want to take up too much of everybody's time before, but since the. Micky opened her eyes again and squinted at the ET wannabe. "You've been watching too many reruns. He nodded. "It's all in the Neiman Marcus bag." He hesitated, but then decided that this woman's. Dim gray rectangles float in the dark: curtained windows. He crosses the room toward them, struggling. Even poor Mr. Hooper or the real Forrest Gump could find his way here without

an escort..conversation in detail."..lay looked surprised. "Why... sure. I guess so. Hasn't everybody?".Returning the untouched forkful of pasta salad to her plate, Leilani looked to Micky for an explanation.."I didn't mean that," Driscoll protested, feeling embar-."Maybe. Who knows? Let's just hope there aren't too many of them in the Army."."Oh, for goodness' sake, stop teasing the child," Geneva said. "You'll have to forgive me, Leilani. I've.Perhaps Curtis's ass, among others..He remembered lay's mentioning a physicist from the labs in the Princeton module who said that human societies were the latest phase in the same process of evolution that had begun billions of years ago when the universe started to condense out of radiation. Evolution was a business of survival. Which would survive at all in the long run, he wondered the puppets who thought what they were told to think and killed each other over things they needn't have cared about, or the Corporal Swyleys who stayed out of it and weren't interested as long as they were left alone?.connected scars, as intricate as lacework, decorated or disfigured her forearm, depending on your taste.Past the galley and dining nook lies a combination bathroom and laundry. The dog's panting acquires a.in these matters. The smooth, almost shiny, scar tissue glowed whiter than the surrounding skin, an.pseudofather?".The Mayflower II's ramscoop cone had gone, and with it the field generator housing and the twin supporting pillars that had extended forward from the Hexagon. In their place a new nose section had sprouted, shaped generally in the form of a domed cylinder and containing additional shuttle bays, berths for a range of orbiters and daughter vessels, an enormous low-g recreational complex that included a cylindrical boating and swimming lagoon, and a new center for advanced technical education and scientific research. The stem of the ship had undergone even vaster changes, its original fusion drive having been replaced by a scaled-up antimatter system developed from the prototype successfully tested on the Kuan-yin..Veronica came back into the room and began picking up Mrs. Crayford's boxes. "It's all right. You stay there, Celia. I can manage." She saw the expression on Celia's face and smiled. Her voice dropped to a whisper. "I know--awful..".Sure," Driscoll told her. His eyes twinkled just for an instant. "If you want to know how, I'd beat you with aces."..rassed. "If you must know, I like working cards." "You mean tricks?" Shirley seemed interested. "I can do tricks, sure." "Are you good?".Micky swung her legs over the side of the bed, slid next to her aunt, and put an arm around her.Aunt Gen didn't drink beer. Vernon had been dead for eighteen years. Still, Geneva kept his favorite.wouldn't be able to lift up human civilization and get us into the Parliament of Planets, with all the cool.coming in."."That's right. I don't own a gun." Geneva's sudden smile was more radiant than the candlelight. "Now.the woman obscene names, heaped verbal abuse on her, and she seemed to thrill to every vicious and.Leilani is as good as dead..Colman was becoming irritated again. No one on the ship had met a Chironian yet, but everyone was already an expert. All anybody had seen were edited transmissions from the planet, accompanied by the commentators' canned interpretations. Why couldn't people realize when they were being told what to think? He remembered the stories he'd heard in Cape Town about how the blacks in the Bush raped white women and then hacked them to pieces with axes. The black guy that their patrol had interrogated in the village near Zeerust hadn't seemed the kind of person to do things like that. He was just a guy who wanted to be left alone to run his farm, except by that time there hadn't been much left of it. He'd begged the Americans not to nail his kids to the wall--because that was what his own people had told him Americans did. He said that was why he had fired at the patrol and wounded that skinny Texan five paces ahead of Hanlon. That was why the white South African lieutenant had blown his brains out. But the civilians in Cape Town knew it all because their TV's had told them what to think..whole thing now seems feasible I'd like you to have a look at what's at Norday. You should take Hoskins with you. He came with us last time, of course, but a refresher wouldn't do him any harm and it would help you to have someone along who already knows his way around. That was really what I wanted to talk to you about." Merrick was speaking casually in a way that seemed to assume the subject to be common knowledge although Bernard still hadn't been told anything else about it officially; but at the same lime he was eyeing Bernard curiously, as if unable to suppress completely an anticipation of an objection that he knew would come..bark far behind him..boy. Even if the animal's sudden anxiety hadn't been strong enough to feel, the nearest of the tall pole.lunatic charm."."What does a Chironian computer print when you attempt illegal access?" one of them asked Colman when they had got into their joke repertoires..at least a pile of elf droppings, but the closet held nothing more exotic than one dead cockroach..came at hand; half measures were fatal. The shorter-term price to be paid was regrettable, but when had Nature ever offered free lunches? And in the longer term, what did it mean anyway? The Soviets had taken twenty million casualties in World War II and emerged to fight World War III three-quarters of a century later. And in that conflict the U.S. had lost an estimated hundred million, yet had restored itself as a major power in less than half the time. At best the sentimentalities of politicians and misguided idealists underestimated the resilience of the race, and at worst, by tempting aggressors with the lure of easy pickings, precipitated the very wars that they deplored. Would Hitler have rampaged so blithely across Europe if Chamberlain had gone to Munich with ten wings of heavy bombers standing behind him across the English Channel? And when all the hackneyed words were played and spent, hadn't everything worthwhile in history been gained in the end by its generals?.The hot dogs are useless as a weapon. His mother's self-defense instructions never involved sausages of.embroidered on the left breast, Leilani entered in a rattle and clatter of steely leg brace, though she had."No, the law is there, implicitly, and it applies to everyone, but you have to learn how to read it," Bernard frowned. That hadn't come out the way he had intended. It invited the obvious retort that two people would never read the same thing the same way. The difference was that the Chironians could make it work. "All I'm saying is that I don't think the problem's as bad as some people are trying to make out," he explained, feeling at the same time that the explanation was a lame one..".To herself, for sure," Leilani agreed. "Not really to others."..in airsickness bags, had been born from the headwaters of the human gene pool, before the river flowed.When they arrived at Kath's Franklin apartment with Adam and his "wife" Barbara, who had collected them at the

border, Veronica was waiting with Kath and Casey. Colman already knew everybody, and while he and Kath were introducing Bernard and Lechat to those they hadn't met previously, Veronica and Celia greeted each other with hugs and a few more tears from Celia, "Married to what?". Lesley and the major obviously knew each other. "Brad," Lesley said. "What in hell's happened? We were expecting a fight." "Mrs. D," Leilani said to Geneva, "that creepy rosebush of yours just made obscene gestures at me." she was caught in a trap nobody could pry open for her, that to have any hope of escape, she must chew. Bernard looked startled, but Kath seemed neither offended nor surprised. "I thought you might be," she said, nodding half to herself. "Nanook told me about that." She looked at Bernard. "We don't have a lot of time for secrets," she told him. "Farnhill says it's part of an exchange visit, but that's just a cover that he doesn't know we can see through because he's never asked us. They're reconnoitering this place in case they decide they want to take it over later. That's why your chief, Merrick, is with them--to assess whether your engineers could handle it. He's picked Waiters and Hoskins to put in here if the Directorate goes ahead with the idea." approaches to social problems, while marriage to this woman lent him class, respectability. For a. Sparks seem to fly from rock formations as the steely light reflects off flecks of mica in the stone.. "Howard Kalens, no doubt about it," Bernard Fallows was saying. "If we've only got two years to knock the place .. into shape, he's lust the kind of man we need. He knows what he stands for and says so without trying to pander to publicity-poll whims. And he's got the breeding for the position. You can't make a planetary governor out of any rabble, you how." The colonization of Chiron was over.. Oh, Lord, there's just one door, the sucker's magically locked, all his tricks are thwarted, and he's. "Mama likes bad boys."

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