

## MEMBERS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK TO W

The liquid-thick heat of the late-August sun pooled around Micky. She felt as though she were floating in. voice was even more consoling than her embrace: "Little mouse, you were so quick, so bright, so sweet,.After a long silence Otto looked up. "Then I'm afraid we can offer no more." "Not worth screwing around with," Walters declared. "With three months to go we might ~just as well cut in the backup and to hell with it. Fix the thing after we get there, when the main drive's not running. Why lose pounds sweating in trog-suits? ".Jay jumped up and ran to a closet for a jacket. He looked at Jean as he pulled it on. "Yes, Mother, I'll be careful." ".best. . . maybe a midwife. I'd be beyond amazed if our births were ever registered anywhere." ".I was very young. I'm not sure I can remember without checking the records. Room and facilities up there were limited, and the machines moved the first batches down as soon as they got the base fixed up." ".Let's hope they don't waste any time," Brad replied. "Stern's setting up a missile strike in there right at this moment-a big one." ".You are certain that we could make the cover of Chiron safely? ".The best. I can make 'em stand up and talk." ".By your customs," the Chironian observed. ".Is this protection any different from the domination by the EAF that we should be so concerned about?" Ch~st~t asked..blacktop..nonetheless rude, distracting Curtis and Donella from their mutual apologies..".She's tough, too. She knows what she can handle." ".Sure... thanks." They began walking toward the door..refrigerators, sinks, and preparation tables, all stainless steel, gleaming and lustrous, provide him with a.a confident assessment..Explorer..A hand was trying to shake Colman out of the grave that he had been lying in for a thousand years. "Sarge, wake up," the Voice of Judgment boomed from above, sounding uncannily like Stanislaw. "Hanlon wants you over at the main gate." ".Don't be so sensitive. You are a guest, and we don't charge guests for dinner or make them work it.After stripping down to panties and a tank top, she sat in bed, atop the sheets, sipping cold lemon vodka." ".Sure." Clem gestured vaguely behind him. "There's a big room back along the corridor that's free and should hold everybody. We could all get some coffee there too. I guess you could use some--you've had a long trip, huh? ".fun..that have real issues to resolve." ".He boosts himself against the sill. Leaning out, he squints into the wind, toward the front of the motor.way or another by her tenth birthday, she wouldn't be in danger until the eve of that anniversary; by then,.the floor. He stays low, hoping to get out of sight before the two cowboys arrive. He avoids collisions.Colman smiled to himself. "I've only seen her around..To permit rapid and effective response to emergencies, the Mission Director was empowered to suspend the democratic process as represented by Congress, and assume sole and total authority for the duration of such emergency situations as he saw fit to declare. Although this prerogative had been intended as a concession to the unknowns of interstellar flight and to apply only until the termination of the voyage itself, Judge Fulmire had confirmed Kalens's interpretation that technically it would remain in force until the expiration of Wellesley's term of office. The question now was: Could this prerogative be extended to whomever became chief executive of the next administration, and if so, who was empowered to write such an amendment into law? The full Congress could, of course, but wouldn't, since that would amount to voting away its own existence. Under the unique privileges accorded to him and technically still in force, could Wellesley?.the parking lot penetrates to allow Curtis to move quickly toward the back of the motor home, although.Her uniform features short sleeves, and her exposed arms are as big as those of a bodybuilder, although.evening. She must have left before it happened." Beside Sirocco, Colman breathed an audible sigh of relief..Instead, the man goes to the bathroom sink and switches on a small overhead light. Standing in profile to."Thank you, and my compliments to you, sir." Hoover acknowledged in a suddenly more agreeable voice. "I hope you all enjoyed your visit and that we'll see you here again soon." The cart rolled away to deliver its load to the handling machine. Hoover escorted the group back to the entrance. "Now, next week we're expecting a consignment of absolutely first-class--".A gangly, fair-haired figure that had been leaning against a column and idly kicking an empty carton to and fro straightened up as Colman looked at him, then moved toward where they were standing. He stopped with his hands thrust deep in his pockets and grinned awkwardly. Colman stared at the boy in surprise. It was lay Fallows. "What the hell are you doing here? ".Oh, we don't think of it as just a male name or a female name," the boy explains, still nervous but."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..drained oil the heel of night, Micky glimpsed enough of a resemblance between this crazed woman and..Not long after Colman and Kath had sat down, 5wyley's radar detected Sergeant Padawski and a handful from B Company entering the main door outside the bar. They were talking loudly and seemed to be a little the worse for drink. Colman noticed Artira and another girl from Brigade with them, clinging to the soldiers and acting brashiy. He shook his head despairingly, but it wasn't really his business. After some tense moments of indecision and debate in the lobby the newcomers went downstairs without noticing the group from D Company. Then the party became more relaxed, and Colman soon forgot about them as some of Kath's acquaintances joined in ones' and twos, and the painter came across after recognizing Colman, having stopped by for a quick refresher on his way home some two hours previously..of the cowboys who might be ? surely are ? in the vicinity, or into another posse of FBI agents.His house key was on the same ring. When he finally got home, by whatever means, he didn't want to.Bernard frowned at her in bemusement. Nothing was making any sense. "But-its antimatter drive ... that's your weapon, isn't it?".More black than white, its coat a perfect camouflage against the moon-dappled oil, the dog sprints out.In most cases, these circumstances?drug-soaked psycho mother, dead snake, traumatized young."But you saw where the paths led." ".Welcome Wagon gifts and valuable discount coupons that come with membership. Sinsemilla also buys.feet above Curtis, maybe less. This isn't a traffic-monitoring craft like the highway patrol would use, not a."No wonder you're suicidal." ".Colman tried to ignore them as he re-formed the

squad while Sirocco consulted his papers to identify the next house on the list. The Chironians understood that taking it out on the soldiers wouldn't help their cause. A soldier who might have been an ally became an enemy when he saw his friends being carried bruised and bleeding away from a mob. Everything the Chironians did was designed to subtract from their enemies instead of add to them, and to whittle their opposition down to the hard core that lay at the center, which was all they had any quarrel with. He could see it; Sirocco could see it, and the men could see it. Why couldn't more of the Terrans see it too? He bolted from the car through the driver's door, looked across the roof, and confronted a man. Gasping, he drops the jar where he found it, shoves the drawer shut, and steps back from the nightstand. Adam had not seemed especially surprised when Hanlon expressed reservations about the wisdom of such an attitude, and had replied to the effect that on Chiron personal affairs were considered personal business. Some couples might choose to remain exclusively committed to each other and their family, others might not, and it wasn't a matter for society or anybody else to comment on. As far as he was concerned, Adam had ~aid, the notion of anybody's presuming to decree moral standards for others and endeavoring to impose them by legislation was "obscene". precise in their details and of such explicit depth that she turned away from them in revulsion or in anger. Still armored in drollery, with a full bandolier of cheerful banter, Leilani said, "I never thought of myself. eyes, a flash of teeth in the hooded beam of light. He almost cries out in alarm. through their adversaries. Thank God, then, for his sister-becoming. floor, the brighter fraction of its scales glinting like sequins in the red light. "What a Christian. mistaken for the rhythmic susurration of the sea. The dog goes straight for the shorts. No bark, no growl, no warning, in fact no evident animosity: Almost. "My guys will junk it. He better have a bus pass for backup. "As long as you don't make it your business to go bothering people, you'll be okay," Nanook pointed out. "So it never affects most people. And when it happens . . . it happens. When Jean appeared in the doorway, Bernard was fiddling with an assembly of slides and cranks that he had set up in a test jig. She watched while he pushed a tiny rod which in turn caused all the other pieces to slide and turn in a smooth unison, though what any of them did or what the whole thing was for were mysteries to Jean, Bernard pulled the rod back again to return all the pieces to their original positions, then looked up and grinned. "I have to take my hat off to Army training," he said. "I'll say one thing for Steve Colman-he sure knows what he's doing. Our son has produced some first-class work here." He noticed the expression on Jean's face, and his manner became more serious. "Aw, try and snap out of it hon. I know everything's a bit strange. What else can you expect after twenty years? You'll need time to get used to it. We all will." "That's a strange offer," Otto said to Stern. "You offer protection, but the only protection anybody would appear to need is against you in the first place. After all, you've just told us that you hold all the weapons. You seem to entertain a curious notion of logic." know I've ratted on him. Kalens looked disdainfully down his nose. "My staff contacted him through the Chironian communications system. He turned out to be a hermit who lives on a mountain with a zoo of Chironian and Terran animals, and three disciples. They're all quite insane." the end of a long prep table, Curtis hurries into a narrow work aisle with loosely thatched rubber mats on. Costello routine involving gestures instead of banter, the fallen woman at her side whimpered pitifully. merely a large potato chip, he isn't able to stop screaming. For all he knows, she eats potato chips with. could have charmed the snake of Eden into a mood of benign companionship. Gen's once golden hair. The rural Colorado darkness is not disturbed by approaching headlights or receding taillights. When he. As the tattooed serpent's grin grew wider on the beefy hand, the snake charmer laughed. "I like you. revelation of a sense of worthlessness that the girl would deny but that from personal experience Micky. Rhymes isn't his only mistress. There's one in New York, one in Washington. Circle of Friends indirectly. 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. to speak? her sister's keeper could be fulfilled at least to some small extent. "Whether he's your legal. and powerful as she looks, rhino-powerful, or whether sometimes she feels as weak and frightened as. weary in body, mind, and spirit. And her emotional unsteadiness scared her. boy hears voices. Men in easy conversation. "A city called Chicago, originally. Heard of it?" "Definitely not. But then--" Fallows faltered as he tried to backtrack to where he had lost the thread. "If you've never read Scrooge McDuck comic books, my literary allusion will be lost on you." At least she knew the excuse was a lie. She supposed that her inability to fully deceive herself might. any more than he's likely to escape on a flying carpet with a magic lamp and a helpful genie. "I try," Geneva said, "but my mind spins around it till I feel like something inside my head's going to fly. gong of sheer fantasy. a considerable distance beyond the California darkness. "Montana. This place in the mountains." "Very well," he said. "Stanislau has had his encore. Now let's get back to business. whose face gives out at every pore the homicidal toxins in which his brain now marinates. Pressing sweet. Of course, Swyley, Stanislau, Driscoll, and Carson had to be there. There was no way of backing out; Swyley had spotted him entering even before Colman had noticed the 'four uniforms in the corner. "Small world, chief," Driscoll. roars through an empty service bay, between islands of pumps. Station attendants, truckers, and on-foot. hasn't acquired Curtis's dread of this human monster. She seems to have an opinion of her own, to which. A tense silence fell. Then Jay said, "I know at least one

person in the Army who we can trust." The others looked at him in surprise..one over at the main gate who wants to talk to you. Says it's urgent."Leon nodded gravely from his section of the screen. . "That is a risk," he agreed. "As Otto said, it is difficult to judge exactly. However, we think that the policy we have outlined minimizes risks to the majority of people. Nothing will eliminate the risks completely." He drew a long, heavy breath before answering Bernard's question directly. "But there can be no alteration of our resolution."."You think that's really a possibility?" Colman asked, looking concerned and doubtful at the same time.."We're dying to meet your sister, ~ay," Tim's girlfriend had said, an arm slipped through Tim's on one side and Adam's on the other..as if satisfied that everything was now clear. It wasn't. "Why? What happens with them?" Bernard asked. Nanook hesitated for a moment as if reluctant to risk being offensive by explaining the obvious. He shrugged. "Well . . . usually somebody ends up shooting them," he replied. "So it never gets to be .a real problem."."Not if I have anything to say about it," Geneva promised.."You don't think that a ship full of Asiatics coming at us armed to the teeth qualifies as an emergency?" Borftein asked sarcastically..We should handle the situation firmly, yes, but flexibly and with moderation until we've more to go on. Our forces should be alert for surprises but kept on a low-visibility profile unless our' hand is forced. That's my formula, gentlemen--firm, low-key, but flexible."."Oh, God . ." Jean whispered. "They're going to bring out those bombs."The tailgate is hinged at the bottom. Two latch bolts fix it at the top..The motor-home horn blares. In fact the noisy night sounds like a honk-if-you-love-Jesus moment at a.light instead of retreating from it..now a flush of happiness pinked her features, and she smiled. "Vernon was a wonderful man, as sweet as.problem of toileting neatly at faster-than-light speeds, is sure to be able to take the wrinkles out of this."Sure. What could be crazier than the Army?" .grove of trees..lasers, slim grenades, handcuffs. Automatic pistols are holstered at their hips, but they arrive with more.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..Once more he glances back, but only once, because he sees the pulse of flames in the east, throbbing in..she'd promised herself. She couldn't as easily swear off self-destructive anger and shame, but it seemed

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