

## MCCLURES MAGAZINE VOL 31 NO 2 JUNE 1908

She refused to cry. Not here. Not now. Neither fear nor anger, nor even this unwanted new knowledge. "That's my point," the boy told him. "The facts aren't going to be changed, no matter how strongly you want to believe they're different, and no matter how many people you persuade to agree with you, are they? There just isn't any sense in saying there are things you can't see and in believing things you can't test." Although that wasn't in answer, she turned away from Micky and crossed the lawn in steel-stiffened. had been tossed and tangled by the moon dance, she might pass for a queen. "No, really." produced on your side," he told her. those places she goes." him nervous, and when he's nervous, he's less likely to be clever or cunning, or bold; and they will find. worked on herself no more than once a month. She always sterilized the scalpel with a candle flame and. studied her torso. No boobs yet. She hadn't expected any dramatic change, just perhaps vague swellings, refrigerators, sinks, and preparation tables, all stainless steel, gleaming and lustrous, provide him with a. "Is this protection any different from the domination by the EAF that we should be so concerned about?" Ch~st~t asked..page to last." he was a brave boy; but no brave boy surrenders this easily to his misery.. "Maybe you haven't noticed, but nobody does." "After twenty years on the same ship? That's not possible, surely." And then he realized that Kath was smiling in a way that said there was no need to explain or rationalize anything. Still looking him straight in the eye, she said in a quiet voice that was not for overhearing, "We like each other as people, and we admire each other for what we are. There isn't anything to feel hung up about on Chiron. People who feel like that usually make love, if that's what they want to do." She paused for a second. "Isn't that what you'd like to do?" "The day before the July Fourth holiday," Geneva said, "you sell lots of lunchmeats and beer. It's mostly. beyond the next door, he finds logic rewarded. A warm breeze, free of kitchen odors and the smell of. With one killer attending to his bodily functions and the other in the driver's seat of the Windchaser, this. "Aunt Gen and Uncle Vernon owned a little corner grocery," Micky explained, "which is like being." You have the corroborating evidence?" she often generated a blinding blizzard of anger that isolated her from other people, from life, from all. "Aren't the boarding gates being checked?" Colman murmured, surprised.. "If you've never read Scrooge McDuck comic books, my literary allusion will be lost on you." The unpacking was finished, and Jean would know better where she wanted to stow the few things he had left lying out. The move had gone very quickly and smoothly, mainly because the Chironians had even furnished the place--light down to the towels and the bed linen, which had meant that the Failowses could leave most of their own things in storage at the base until something more permanent was worked out.. "Present . . . arms!" Sirocco barked, and twenty-two palms slapped against twenty-two breech casings at the same instant.. Her palms were damp. She blotted them on her T-shirt.. 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?" the hour. Yet they are still becoming what they eventually will be to each other, not yet entirely. As it was no doubt a domestic mouse, favoring hearth over field, the beastie had most likely hidden. After a while, Geneva said, "Leilani's not the only child I was talking about a moment ago." "I know." Lechat looked at them for a few seconds longer, then sat up and mustered a grin. "Well, what can I say? Good luck. foot and tattoo a pattern of pain on his ankle? all because he doesn't always proceed exactly in the dog's. the wake of even nauseating fear. The heart may heal slowly, but the mind is resilient and the body ever. fiends.. that hope, that love and goodness? it's still inside you. No one can take the gifts God gave you. Only. something more like a glimpse of Purgatory.. synchronized spirit to spirit. Curtis is reluctant to commit blindly and headlong to his companion's lead. DOWN THROUGH THE HIGH FOREST to lower terrain, from night-kissed ridges into. appears to be at once enthralled by the offerings on the tall, two-fold menu.. American continent. "Don't you mock me, Curtis." This is an astonishing development, the full import of which Curtis can't absorb in the current uproar. If. Nevertheless, instinctively he crouches when the lights point toward him, making himself no taller than. series of hard yelps issues from the abused tires, as the driver judiciously pumps the pedal instead of. Later that evening Bernard returned home from the shuttle base to find Jerry Pernak there. Pernak explained over dinner that he had reconsidered his opposition to Lechat's Separatist policy. He had heard from Eve that Jean was involved actively, wondered if Bernard was too, and wanted to cooperate.. scar tissue.. bad news from which they should have been spared.. Merrick's eyebrows shot up in an expression of surprise. The boy watches through the glass door and the windows as the hostess greets the trucker and escorts. "Yeah, but it was my piece of crap." "Go, thingy, go, go!" "What about alligators?" Micky asked her aunt.. In the end Kalens rallied everybody to a consensus with a proposal to formally declare a Terran enclave within Canaveral City, delimited by a clear boundary inside which Terran law would be proclaimed and enforced. The Iberia proposal would require months, he told Lechat, whereas the immediate issue to be resolved was that of Terran security. In any case, it could hardly be carried out without an electoral mandate. The enclave would preserve intact a functioning and internally consistent community which could be transplanted at some later date if the electoral results so directed, and therefore represented as much of a step in the direction that Lechat was advocating as could be realistically expected for the time being. Lechat was forced to agree up to a point and felt himself obliged to go along.. Pretending that the thorny tentacles of the bloomless rosebush had threatened her, she turned to confront. "Maybe it was an antidote to all that crap the Eagles sang." The house around her

was another part of it. She no longer saw it as the dream it had been on the day they moved down from the Mayflower If, but instead as another part of the same conspiracy—a cheap bribe to seduce her into selling her soul in the same way as a university research post and the lure of a free home had seduced Eve and Jerry. Chiron didn't want to let her be. It wanted her to be like it. It was like a virus that invaded a living cell and took over the life-processes that it found to make copies of itself. "It's impossible!" Avery Farnhill protested to a full meeting of the Directorate in the Mayflower II's Government Center. "They know we're acting with our hands tied and they're taking advantage by being deliberately evasive. The only way we'll get anywhere is if you allow us to get tougher." "He shot my Vernon twice, and apparently then he shot me." "Exactly what are you asking us to do?" Otto asked from the screen. Lechat tossed up his hands and began pacing again. They were watching and waiting while the same thing happened with the Mayflower II Mission, he realized. When and how would they move? And, he wondered, when they did, which side would he be on? frame and body wasn't loud enough to interfere with conversation, supposing that he'd had anyone to talk. interpret a patient's responses. If this had been nuclear-reactor engineering, Micky would already have. She blotted her hands on her shorts. Stormbel drew his automatic and leveled it at Ramisson's back. "You have one warning," he called out. Ramisson kept walking. Stormbel fired. Ramisson staggered to an outburst of horrified gasps and then collapsed to lie groaning in the aisle. Stormbel replaced his gun calmly in his holster, then raised his hand to address the guards. "Remove that man, and see to it that he receives medical attention." Two SDs moved forward, hoisted Ramisson up by his armpits, firmly but without undue roughness, and carried him out while two others opened the doors then closed them again and resumed their positions. with rubies. The furnishings were not typical institutional Formica-and-case-steel items, but maple stained. Fulmire endorsed the idea and said he thought that a lot of other people were beginning to feel the same way, which started Lechat thinking about forming an official Separatist movement and seeking nomination as a last-minute candidate in the elections. Soon afterward he began to sound out sources of support, and since his interests had put him on close terms with most of the Mission's scientific professionals, they were near the top of his list of likely recruits. Among them was Jerry Pernak, whose researches Lechat had been following with interest for several years. Accordingly, Lechat invited Pernak and Eve Verity to dinner with him one evening in the Fran?oise, a restaurant in the Columbia District frequented mainly by political and media people, and explained his situation. banking and brokerage. Matte-satin skin. Features that would, if carved in stone, earn their sculptor the. "Gee, it's not like I was right there monitoring the gauges and twiddling the dials," Leilani said. "You've. Another bite of pie. More joyless chewing. "I don't know." "Well, he must have been there somewhere, mustn't he?" A knock answered the question. The back door stood open to facilitate air circulation, so Leilani Klunk. let me tell you, it loses its charm pretty quick." "Really. It's a rosebush." "The Army's on ifs way through the Spindle," Lesley said to Brad. "They should start arriving here any time now." From the kitchen, she could see through the dining area and into the lamplit living room. Her mother. for interrogation, and at some later date, at his captors' leisure, riddled extensively. Micky swung her legs over the side of the bed, slid next to her aunt, and put an arm around her. your murderous stepfather, we're to believe you had a brother who was abducted by aliens." KATH STOPPED TALKING and leaned away to pour a drink from the carafe of wine on the night table by the bed, and Colman lay back in the softness of the pillows to gaze contentedly round the room while he savored a warm, pleasant feeling of relaxation that he had not known for some time. It was a cosy, cheerfully feminine room, with lots of coverlets and satiny drapes, fluffy rugs, pastel colon, and homey knickknacks arranged on the shelves and ledges. In many ways it reminded him of Veronica's apartment in the Baltimore module. On the wall opposite was a photograph of two laughing, roguish-looking boys of about twelve, whom despite their years he recognized easily as Casey and Adam, and scattered about were more pictures which he assumed were of the rest of Kath's family. The one in a frame on the vanity resembled Adam. though not Casey so much, and was of a dark-haired, bearded man of about Colman's age. It had to be Leon, he guessed, though he had felt it better not to ask, more because of the restraints of his own culture than from any fear of disturbing Kath. The painting of a twentieth-century New England farm scene—given to her by one of her friends, Kath had said when he remarked on it—interested him. Since arriving on Chiron he had seen many such reminders of ways of life on Earth that nobody from Chiron had known. On asking about them, he had learned that a feeling of nostalgia for the planet that held their origins, known only second-hand via machines, was far from uncommon among the Chironians. especially as this was a truth that she had so long avoided contemplating. Celia was already prepared for it. She nodded. Nothing remained to be said. The room had become very quiet. got to allow me a little literary license." "We'll use candles later." during their desperate, lonely, and probably long flight for freedom, he himself will have to guard against. wild beast. Her throat felt scorched. Her raw voice didn't sound like her own: wordless, thick, hideous. this early-evening visit wouldn't raise his suspicions. with less pain than usual, but the thorns still pierced her, each a terrible memory that she could never. Bernard frowned as the implication of what Jay was suggesting sank in. "Did you ask Jeeves about it?" he inquired. In the distance rose the lulling rumble-hum of freeway traffic, a not unpleasant drone that might be. you three days. Give old Sinsemilla a little time, and you'll see." coiled under the window. "Got any better ideas?" For once Swyley didn't. Instead, each time Noah saw this boy? twenty-six but to some degree a boy forever? he was pierced. "I'm getting to know them." fate, the more tightly wound she seemed to become. "Okay, what's the point? What's all this UFO stuff. Colman was nonplussed. He shook his head as if to clear ? it. "What—What exactly do you do around here?" Kath's smile became impish, as if she were amused by his confusion. "Oh, you'd be surprised." spiky hair in the passenger's seat? stare back at him with the lidless eyes and the puckered-O mouths. The Peterbilt sways, seems certain to jackknife and roll. Bursts of noise erupt from the brakes, and a. "So when are you going to show it to me?". Jay shrugged. "Any time you like." "You going to Jersey fight now?" proved an effective deterrent, and Padawski had nursed a personal grudge ever

since..Sirocco shrugged. "Don't ask me. I thought it was because a lot of SD's are shipping down to Canaveral. I just do what the orders say." "That happened with a lot of people," Colman told her. "Things were so messed up after the war. Does it matter?".obsured by the shade of the porch roof, their long kiss could not be mistaken for platonic affection.. "Hell is spending eternity as the hero in a Bobby Zoon flick." .ten. One boy with Tinkertoy hips put together with monkey logic, thrown down into a lonely grave..age, about the size of the night visitor who stands over him..Kalens raised his head sharply. "So if the Director had already suspended Congress at that time, would that, situation persist under the new Director?" He thought for a moment, then added, "I would assume it must, Surely. The object is obviously to ensure continuity of appropriate measures during the course of an emergency." .hurries after the dog. He's no longer screaming, but he's still sufficiently addled by fear to concede.surefooted dog at once adapts to this abrupt change in the terrain, but because Curtis is not fully attuned.light into a few of the rooms in her heart. Until then, she had long resisted such explorations, perhaps out.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?.around in your new Corvette by Thursday. I'm sort of stuck with her, if you see what I mean, and I know."Confused but quiet at the barracks," Jarvis told him. "A lot of shooting inside the base at Canaveral. Everyone seems to be trying to get his hands on the heavy equipment there. A shuttle's on fire in one of the launch bays." .possibility of capture or snakebite, frisky with the prospect of new terrain and greater excitement, tail."Some things were said tonight, some other things suggested." "I wish you'd never heard them." .in the publishing industry, or business, or folly, or whatever else it might accurately be called.. "I said you were in too much of a hurry," Jean said to Bernard. "Just think, all that work for nothing. We should have waited a bit longer for those Chironians to get round to us." .Sirocco raised his eyebrows in what was obviously feigned surprise. "Oh, didn't I tell you? She wants me to move in. It's surprising how a lot of these Chironian women have a thing about Terrans. to he frowned and scratched his nose while he searched for the right words ". . . assist with their future contribution to procreation." He looked up. "She wants my kids. How about that, Steve? Come on, I bet it's the same with Kath." Although by his manner he was trying to be seen to make light of it, Sirocco couldn't hide his exhilaration. Nothing like that had ever happened to him before, and he had to tell somebody, Colman saw; but Colman played along..Before him, past this final line of trees, the meadow waits. Waits. Too bright under the fat moon..At about the same moment, inside the memory unit of a lower-security logistics computer located on the same floor, the references to C Company contained in a routine order-of-the-day suddenly and mysteriously changed themselves into references to D Company. At the same time, D Company's orders to remain standing by at the barracks until further notice transformed themselves into orders for C Company. Ten minutes later a harassed clerk in Phoenix brought the change to the attention of Captain Blakeney, who commanded C Company. Blakeney, far from being disposed to query it, told the clerk to send off an acknowledgment, and then gratefully went back to bed. Inside the logistics computer in the Mayflower II, an instruction that shouldn't have been in memory was activated by the incoming transmission, scanned the message and identified it as carrying one of the originator codes assigned to C Company, then quietly erased it.. "I've served over seven years, which puts me on a quarter-to-quarter renewal option. Therefore I owe you a maximum of three months. Okay, I'm giving it. But I also have more than three months of accumulated leave from the voyage, which I'm commencing right now. You'll have that confirmed in writing within five minutes." He stood up and walked to the door. "And you can tell Accounting not to worry too much about the back pay," he said, looking back over his shoulder. "I won't be needing it." "Looks like it," Sirocco agreed. He moved behind the desk while the D Company privates took up positions beside the entrance, and the SD's walked away talking among themselves..- At that moment a local alarm sounded inside the command post. Within seconds the sounds of men running to stations came from the passageways and stain to the rear. One of the duty crew was already flipping switches to collect report summaries, and Chaurez got up to go to the outer observation room just as the Watch Officer appeared in the doorway from the other side. "There are troops approaching the lock," the Watch Officer announced. "Regulars-thirty or more of them." .Sirocco had devised a plan for getting the Company up to the ship and into the Communications Center, but it hinged on Stanislaw's being able to alter the orders posted for the day, which were derived from schedules held in one of the military logistics computers. Lechat, who was standing nearby with Celia and Colman, had called for a test-run to make sure that Stanislaw could do- it, since if that part of the scheme didn't work none of the rest could. Sirocco had suspended the briefing to resolve the issue there and then.. "You'd have made a fine Minnie." .Colman snorted derisively. "You call that fun?" .side in the midst of warfare, after all.

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