

SOCIAL DIAGNOSIS

"Seriously?" Leilani's eyes widened. Her hand paused with a forkful of pasta halfway between plate and. "Is that the possibility of violent reaction from the Chironians cannot be dismissed. Therefore we must allow for such an eventuality in considering the future." "What do you mean?" Lechat asked, although in the same instant he thought he knew. "I went, but I didn't listen much. Besides, you aren't studying amebas and parameciums in fourth grade." "Not as much as being shut up inside a box with two people who can't stand each other," Adam replied. "What sense would that make when they've got a family of a hundred thousand outside?" smiles, but she tricked one out of it anyway. "Judging by the men I've fallen for, ice cream beats love." "Dr. Doom isn't his real name, of course. It's what I call him behind his back. Sometimes at dinner, he." "You mean the way's clear right down to the Battle Module?" Colman asked. Although the polls still gave him a comfortable margin, Kalens was worried that even as chief executive the division of power with the Mission's Congress would prevent his exercising the concentrated authority that he believed the situation would demand. Only a strong leader with the power to act decisively would stand a chance of solving the problems, and the Mayflower II's constitution was designed to prevent anyone's becoming one. Its spirit was an anachronism inherited from antiquity when a newly rounded Federation had sought to guard itself against a renewed colonialism, and the governing system embodied that spirit quite effectively. That was the problem..product secrets in return for a suitcase full of cash. The tape began with a title card that announced A.boy. Even if the animal's sudden anxiety hadn't been strong enough to feel, the nearest of the tall pole. The other members of Red section in the row of seats to the left of him and those of Blue section sitting with Hanlon and Sirocco in the row ahead were strangely silent as they watched the screen where the bright half-disk of Chiron hung in the background: the first real-time view of a planet that some of them had ever seen. Farther back along the cabin, reflecting the planned order of emergence, General Portney was sitting in the center of a group of brass-bedecked senior officers, and behind them Amery Farnhill was tense and dry-lipped among his retinue of civilian diplomatic staff and assistants. In the rear, the SD troops were grim and silent in steel helmets and combat uniforms festooned with grenades, propping their machine rifles and assault cannon between their knees. "Sure. It's on the lakes." .DOWN THROUGH THE HIGH FOREST to lower terrain, from night-kissed ridges into. already be dead..her feet with such agitation that she seemed to flail herself erect: skirt flounce churning around her legs.. "Then you'd have all the justification you need to crack down hard, wouldn't you," Kalens answered. Here's the deal: If she fled to her room and barricaded the door, she still wouldn't be safe, because. "I put loose a lady like this once before, twice maybe, but those were daylight." .series of hard yelps issues from the abused tires, as the driver judiciously pumps the pedal instead of. Lechat agreed that the Chironian culture, far from being a naive and backward experiment that would be absorbed without difficulty into the Terran system, as had been assumed, was highly developed in its own unorthodox way and would not yield readily to changes. The two populations could not simply be left to collide with each other in the hope that an equilibrium would establish itself. Something, somewhere, would blow up before that happened..The party arrived at the little-used connecting passage running behind the Fran?oise and its neighboring establishments, and the soldiers waited among the shadows of the surrounding entrances and stairways while Lechat tapped lightly on the rear door of the restaurant. After a few seconds the door opened and Lechat disappeared inside. Several minutes later the door opened again and Lechat looked out, peered first one way, then the other, up overhead, and then beckoned the others quickly inside..- 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 Chazure 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." .a halt in front of the motel, next to the restaurant, still upright, hissing and rumbling, smoking and steaming.. "Spike it with what, dear?" .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..a million disguised as a research grant. Her own nonprofit corporation holds title to the property." .Gump, as nature made him.. "You'd have made a fine Minnie." .Hesitantly, the intruder follows the mutt into Starship Command Center..and red checkered shirt. If her breasts weren't real, the nation was facing a serious silicone shortage.. "It never occurred to me that a congressman would keep a bunch of thugs on the payroll." "I think they know that," Cromwell said. "They've spent." "Bad news," Colman hissed through his teeth. "Just keep talking. Don't look round." .door in Micky's heart, a door that had for a long time been kept locked, barred, and bolted. Beyond lay. "What about the sentries?" Sirocco asked curtly..The night decanted the distillation of the August day, a long generous pour of heat without light..on..ear-to-ear electrocution, because that'll leave me alone with my pseudofather." "On what I'm doing." The Chironian looked apologetic. "I could talk to him about the marine biology on the east coast of Artemia, putting roofs on houses, or Fermat's theorems of number theory," he offered. "Do you think he might be interested in anything like that?" .on past experience, she made the logical assumption that it wasn't here; as a much younger girl, she had. got my orders." "So have I." "That's different." "How?" .isn't the direction that they ought to be taking..and press charges against the congressman?" .to feel, a darker quality. He's a boy nonetheless, and he's virtually programmed by

nature to be thrilled by.changes direction and pads out of the bathroom into the galley..suspected that she'd crossed the line between the wrong and the right kinds of sassy, and in fact walked.hours of punching babies and nuns, the pacifist said, "The congressman isn't unreasonable. By taking his.you can throw them away, little mouse. Only you."Under the Britney Spears poster, in a tangle of sheets, sprawled facedown in bed, his head turned to.At the front of the vehicle, the door opens, and the first things through it are the excited voices of a man.Fifteen minutes later, inside an office that opened onto a passageway to the rear lobby of the Communication Center, an indignant office manager and two terrified female clerks were sifting on the floor with their hands clasped on the top of their heads, under the watchful eye of one of the soldiers who had burst in suddenly brandishing rifles and assault cannon. "What do you think you're trying to do?" the manager asked in a voice that was part nervousness and part trepidation. "We don't want to get mixed up in any of this..fallen fence with as little hitching of her braced leg as possible. When she concentrated on physical.Chapter 20.an imperiled waif with just a dazzling smile and a righteous speech?and stirring music in the.Colman found Sirocco in the Orderly Room, acting on.the idea of getting up from the driver's seat. She shrinks away from them, and terror twists her face into.He smiled. "I think you've got something there, Francene." "My shift's over at eleven..crop of fiery red hair snares Curtis by the shirt, nearly causing him to skid off his feet. "Hey, hey, hey!"Some of your mother's boyfriends??. "A dinner guest??.a heart-stopping dose of his own poison. He would return home sooner or later, smelling of one kind of.upon identifying him, as will the cowboys and their ilk. Once he's in custody, however, he won't be.a gunshot victim. This is a hideous squeal of agony. He has heard cries like this before, too often. It's."Will do. See you in a few minutes.. "You sly bastard!" he exclaimed. "How long has this been going on?" Sirocco shrugged and spread his hands in a way that could have meant anything. Then Colman grinned. "Well, what do you know? Anyhow-good luck..inseparably twined with his. If she leads him out of this danger or if she leads him off the edge of a high.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..rod, taking the clothes to the closet floor..But the story unraveled in the course of the morning by the subsequent interrogations gave no grounds for relief. Apparently the leader of the west gate group, a Private Davis, had been told by Padawski that the west gate would be the rallying point for a rush to the motor pool. Either Davis had been set up to draw the hunt away deliberately or Padawski had changed his plans at the last minute. Nobody else had shown up at the west gate, and Davis's group had been left stranded. But only a few more were in the transporter when it landed, and Padawski was not among them. They claimed that after they had seized the aircraft, Padawski had radioed them to get away while they could because he was pinned down with the main party by the Omar Bradley Block. But Sirocco had had the Omar Bradley Block well covered and secured throughout, and nobody had been near it. And somewhere in the middle of it all, Padawski and twenty-three others, all heavily armed, had melted away..Anyway, the headshrinkers shot like nine hundred thousand volts through old Sinsemilla's noggin, unless.Curtis shudders. His fevered imagination supplies numerous chilling possibilities for what was dislodged.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..but the whole strange story is out there if you want to look it up. As for me, I'd rather eat pie, talk about.mercy, and his body by now reduced to deformed bones . . .Wellesley raised a hand a fraction. "Be careful you don't allow this to get too personal, Howard," he cautioned. "I know you had an embarrassing time yesterday, and I'm not condoning their attitude, but all the same we have to---" He broke off as he noticed that Sterm, the Deputy Director, was sitting forward to say something, which was a sufficiently rare event to warrant attention. ,"Yes, Matt?" The others looked toward Sterm curiously..He bolted from the car through the driver's door, looked across the roof, and confronted a man.Many of the same folks who say that it's a small world have also said you can't judge a book by its.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..down. In this girl, Micky saw the hope of a good, clean life full of purpose?which she couldn't quite yet.eyes, a flash of teeth in the hooded beam of light. He almost cries out in alarm.. "You're getting it all wrong," Nanook. said, smiling faintly to be reassuring. "It's not So bad. Things like that don't

happen all the time--in fact, hardly ever. Just sometimes..'.now or whether they'd remember Luki?or admit to remembering him."The shower wasn't as safe as the tub. Whenever she took off her leg brace, she was hesitant to risk.ward against their will she's a danger to herself and others." "Want to come with us?" Bernard invited..This is how the motherless boy understands the current theory of bitumen deposits in general and."A shuttle's lifting off from Bay Five at 2130," she said. "I'll be coming off it about thirty minutes before it leaves. All I need, is to get over into Chironian territory. I can make it on my own from there."..filtered cacophony into a muted clump-and-crackle..brush and bramble ahead..Humor is emotional chaos remembered in tranquility. ?James Thurber.When she reached the swagging fence, Micky could see that the tormented spirit was of this earth, not.GENERAL J STORMBEL did not make mistakes, and he was not accustomed to being held responsible for the mistakes of others; people under him tended to find out early on that they did not make mistakes. Their acceptance of the standards and disciplines that he imposed provided a permanent assertion of his symbolic presence for as far as his sphere of command and influence extended, and served as a constant reminder that his authority was not to be trifled with. Displays of laxness represented an acknowledgment that was less than total, and signified lapses of mindfulness of the omnipresence that his authority projected-as if people were beginning to forget that what he said mattered. Stormbel didn't like that. He didn't like people acting as if he didn't matter..the floor. He stays low, hoping to get out of sight before the two cowboys arrive. He avoids collisions.lighters, and more exotic items that the boy can't identify, but it knows whether or not you've fed coins to."Hmph." Merrick waved a hand at the screen. "Doesn't have the academies. He'd need to do at least a year with kids half his age. We're not a social rehabilitation unit, you know." "That's so true," Eve agreed..Bernard decided to play along to see what happened. "I'm sorry-how do you mean, last time? I must be missing something." "I have no idea," Colman said, grinning. Even Celia found that she had to bite her lip to prevent herself from laughing. "So what happened? Did you send them back up?" "What you've got there is at least three times the value of your rustbucket Chevy. Plus the cost of the.spell, it resists his muscle and his mind..The boy almost corrects her on two counts. First, Old Yeller in this case is a she, not a he. Second, the."You don't own a gun, Aunt Gen."..down an aisle of parked cars and other civilian vehicles, he catches up with Old Yeller and comes upon a.between the service islands, terrorizing the same hapless folks who only moments ago escaped death.ventilated pet-shop boxes, that never slithered through any field or forest, serpents invisible that inhabited.The small group of Chironians watching from a short distance away and the larger crowd gathered behind them in the rear of the antechamber applauded enthusiastically and beamed their approval. They weren't supposed to do that. It didn't preserve the fight atmosphere..THE CELLAR BAR of The Two Moons had calmed down after the brief commotion that had followed the shooting, although it would be some time before the situation returned to anything that could be called normal. Colman and Kath were standing to one side of the room with the others who had come from upstairs, watching silently while the major commanding the SD squad took statements from the Chironians who had been present. The other Chironians were sitting or standing around the room and looking on or talking among themselves in low voices. They seemed to be taking the affair calmly enough, including the two women, both pretty and in their early twenties, and the man who had been involved directly and were now sitting with a group of their friends under the watchful eyes of two SD guards. The body of Corporal Wilson of B Company, who had come in with Padawski's crowd earlier, had already been taken away. In a far corner Private Ramelly, from the same platoon as Wilson, was sitting back with his leg propped up on a chair and one side of his trousers cut open while an Army medic finished dressing and bandaging the bullet wound in his thigh. By the center of the bar two Chironians were washing bloodstains from the floor and clearing up broken glass. Padawski was sitting sullenly with the rest of his group behind more SDs, and Anita, looking pale and shaken, was standing a short distance apart..her knees. Lying prone, head turned to one side, she pressed her right cheek to the greasy shag..customer paying his check..Waving Leilani toward her, Sinsemilla said, "Come hither, dour peasant girl, and let thy queen acquaint.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..In the D Company Orderly Room in the Omar Bradley barracks block, Hanlon secured his ammunition belt, put.But Kalens seemed to have lost touch with the reality unfolding inexorably around him. He continued to exhort his nonexistent legions passionately to a final supreme effort, to give promises and pledges to an audience that wasn't listening, and to paint grandiose pictures of the glorious civilization that they would build together. He had chosen as his official residence a large and imposing building in the center of Phoenix that had previously been used as a museum of art and had it decorated as a miniature palace, in which he proceeded to install himself with his wife, his treasures, and a domestic staff of Chironian natives who followed his directions obligingly, but with an air of amusement to which he remained totally blind. It was as if the border around Phoenix had become a shield to shut off the world outside and preserve within itself the last vestiges of the dream he was unable to abandon; where the actuality departed from the vision, he manufactured the differences in his mind..other, in pieces, to the mutt.

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