

BORDER DISTRICTS A FICTION

unwinking stars?with nothing done yet about the problems of oxygen, food, and water for the years."I checked the clock," she said.."Hold it," Crawford said. "I just wanted to know if you had any ideas." He was secretly pleased at the argument; it got them both thinking along the right lines, moved them from the deadly apathy they must guard against..Thomas Af. Disch.pleading. Its screams continued, that one monotonous, hopeless note repeated over and over. It lowered."Then come with me," said the grey man, and the rough sailors with cutlasses rose about him and hoisted the trunk to their grimy shoulders?Onvbpmf, came the thick sound from the trunk?and the grey man flung out his cape, grabbed Amos by the hand, and ran out into the street.."They died out I know that much. People, we're not intrepid space explorers anymore. We're not the.allowed it..sweaty and hot. A wind sighs in the aspen leaves. A faint steady hiss comes from the viewer you hold in.The ship had left Earth with only sufficient fuel on board to accelerate it to cruising speed and had followed a course through the higher-density concentrations of hydrogen to collect what it needed to slow down again.."Crisscross, cross, and double cross!" cried the grey man triumphantly as once more Amos and Jack.emerged from the firmament, reached down and seized the tiny shaft A mighty thumb pressed it between.addition, the Edgar is going to clean the pantry to the bone and give us everything they can possibly spare.was expelled?".At first he'd assumed that he'd failed. A reasonable assumption, since he had struck out his first time to bat, with a shameful 43. But when two weeks had gone by and there was still no word from the Board of Examiners, he wondered if maybe he'd managed to squeak through. He didn't see how he could have. The examiner, a wizened, white-haired fuddy-duddy whose name Barry instantly forgot, had been hostile and aggressive right from the word go, telling Barry that he thought his handshake was too sincere. He directed the conversation first to the possible dangers of excessive sunbathing, which was surely an oblique criticism of Barry's end-of-August tan and the leisure such a tan implied, then started in on the likelihood that dolphins were as intelligent as people. Barry, having entered the cubicle resolved to stake all his chips on a tactic of complete candor, had said, one, he was too young to worry about skin cancer and, two, he had no interest in animals except as meat This started the examiner off on the psychic experiences of some woman he'd read about in Reader's Digest. Barry couldn't get a toehold anywhere on the smooth facade of the man's compulsive natter. He got the feeling,.to be the site of the most glittering premieres. They even had the Oscar ceremonies there for 8 while..That's what got me the job with Alpertron, Ltd., die big promotion and booking agency. I'm on the concert tour and work their stim board, me and my console over there on the side of the stage. It isn't that much different in principle from playing one of the instruments in the backup band, though it's a hetL of a lot more complex than even Nagami's synthesizer. It all sounds simple enough: my console is the critical link between performer and audience. Just one glorified feedback transceiver: pick up the empathic load from Jain, pipe it into the audience, they react and add their own load, and I feed it all back to the star. And then around again as I use the sixty stim tracks, each with separate controls to balance and augment and intensify. It can get pretty hairy, which is why not just anyone can do the job. It helps that I seem to have a natural resistance to the sideband stopover radiation from the empathic transmissions. "Ever think of teaching?" said the school voc counselor. "No," I said. "I want the action." "Best indecent proposition Fve had all week".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:.does get a little involved, doesn't it?".number to go.".me one hour to produce a full report justifying the project and went storming back up to the executive.balloon. When the arena's full, the body heat from the audience keeps the dome aloft, and the arena crew turns off the blowers.."This is what would kill us, Crawford. What's your first name? Matt. Matt, this baby is a flyer for the.about to go for the third mirror himself." "Then we have been found out and all is lost," said the prince. "For it is noon already, and the sun is.Nina."Mary, I told you about that already," he complained. It was a gentle complaint and, even more.on watch at all times. In drills, they had come from a deep sleep to full pressure-integrity in thirty.wearing the same shoes.".could be erected above his hapless corpse." (William Atheling, Jr. [James Blish], The Issue at Hand,.64.had become his own. He dared not leave her alone. But he moved quietly as a beast in the dark. He left."My red hair," said Amos, "is only on the top of my head. My clothes are ragged and dirty and will probably turn grey in no time with all that mist. Are there any bright-colored clothes on the ship, glittering with gold and gleaming with silk?".That particular morning she was working through a set of torturous-looking exercises that made my.After the funeral I went to the Los Angeles Public Library and started checking back issues of the Times. I'd only made it back three weeks when the library closed. The LA. Times is thick, and unless the death is sensational or the dead prominent, the story might be tucked in anywhere except the classifieds..From across the room Billy Belay tried to make a sign for Amos to be quiet, but the grey man turned.day to see if she needed anything.."Do you mind my giving you some honest advice, Barry??.The Company has pulled out!.in the Mariner's Tavern, you could hear him walking overhead just like that.".The Detweiler Boy by Tom Reamy 17.22.Nolan followed her gaze. "No one out there." He moved to the window, peered at the clearing.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..She is instantly and utterly consumed. The face of Atropos remains shrouded in shadows.."What about it?" said Jack..The cause of this high morale rests with one programmer in our department, Morris Hazeldorf, the."About as far as you can get without comin? out the other side. Did you know most of the people.results were erased. But assuming that I did, that's the reason. I never got any practice. The basic.Crawford nodded. He looked around at the other occupants of the room.

There was the Surface. "Yeah," I say. "Sorry. Just . . . trying to make up for previous lag-time." .knowing exactly what will come up in forty thousand years. When it starts to get cold here and they. "No!" Her vehemence startled me. She quickly lowered her voice and went on: "My friends call me Amanda,". "Neither one of those facts is so incredible compared to some of the strange things in this world," said. He smiled at her. "No, thanks. But what you said is right I have no hankering to take charge of anything. But I do have some knowledge that might prove useful." .He retreated a step. "No," he said..invaded by a horde of alien beings, the Zorphs. They enslave all planets in their path. Those that resist are. "The Company is in the King's employ. The King, ex offido, is the very essence of (be community. Thus, the Company, in carrying out the wishes of the King, represents the King and the community; is, in effect, indivisible from the community." .from the case. While our schedules have slipped a bit in the last couple of months, morale is at an all-time. She was in time to see McKillian and Ralston hurrying into the lab at the back of the ship. There was a red light flashing, but she quickly saw it was not the worst it could be; the pressure light still glowed green. It was the smoke detector. The smoke was coming from the lab.. "Maurice didn't seem to mind." He sniffed and lit another cigarette. "When did Detweiler leave?" .Smith reached for the phone and punched McCranie's number..printing it although writing book reviews (except for places like the New York Times) is underpaid.,read every third word, or quit in the middle. We can't We must read carefully, with our sensitivities at full.change places with Ben. With my old buddy to talk to, time went by fast.. "This is new territory," I answer. "We never had a million before." I know she thinks it's an excuse.. "What sort of deal?" .anybody's going to incur it, the Company is. Because I happen to have it from a pretty good. Gordy.,who care the most who suffer the most; irritation is a sign of betrayed love. As Shaw puts it: .They started forward again toward the fires. It was so dark and the cave was so big that even with the light they could not see the ceiling or the far wall. The fires themselves burned in huge scooped out basins of stone. They had been put there for a warning, because just beyond them the floor of the cave dropped away and there was rolling darkness beyond them.. "Still, it got you picked for this mission out of hundreds of applicants. The thinking was that you'd be a wild card, a man of action with proven survivability. Maybe it worked out. But the other thing I remember on your card was that you're not a leader. No, that you're a loner who'll cooperate with a group and be no discipline problem, but you work better alone. Want to strike out on your own?" .pictures clearly. When he succeeded, the image on the screen was instantly recognizable. It was a view. She sat down close to him and whispered into his ear, "If anyone, such as Freddy, for instance, should happen to ask what we were talking about, say it was the New Woolly Look, okay?" .hesitation stretches much longer in my head than it does in realtime. So much passion, Rob. . . . It seems. it in their own lives; they make decisions based on indirect evidence all the time and strongly resist any. on a proposed naval system. Thus, we have pretended that we are fighting a space war of the future. "Thanks." Setting the tray on the table, she contrived to brush against his left foot. "I see you're wearing the same shoes." .German buildings. Conditions in Germany were still pretty chaotic at the time, and the stamps were. in such a way as to remove its nucleus, either by delicately cutting it out or by using some chemical. truncated Martian day that would never touch the blackness over his head.. The adults were standing separately around the space while tiny helicopters flew around them, wrapping them from head to toe in strips of webbing like human maypoles.. Oh, yeah, another and less friendly inward voice replied. Now all you need are three endorsements.. Thomas M. Disch. his device was sharp and bright When he varied the inputs to the components in a certain way, the bright. Samuel R. DeUuty. Nolan wiped his forehead. Maybe he'd been too hasty, bringing Darlene and the baby here. But a. He wrote down the coordinates for the plane crash in which his daughter and her husband had died.. "I didn't say that" Tired as he was, Nolan still remembered the basic rule? never contradict these. Meanwhile, the bills keep coming in.. We sped through the city in what I judged to be a locomotive, although there were no tracks. "What. pretty easy to walk through one of them if you thought it was open. "Are all the apartments alike? Those. Fuffle, came from the trunk, and the grey man smiled.. "I said back off! We don't want her higher than ninety." .245. Colman frowned to himself as his mind raced over the data's significance. No sane attacking force would contemplate taking an objective like that by a direct frontal assault in the center--the lowermost stretch of the trail was too well covered by overlooking slopes, and there would be no way back if the attack bogged down. That was what the enemy commander would have thought anyone would have thought. So what would be the point of tying up lots of men to defend a point that would never be attacked? According to the book, the correct way to attack the bunker would be along the stream from above or by crossing the stream below and coming down from the spur on the far side. So the other side was concentrating at points above both of the obvious assault routes and setting themselves up to ambush whichever attack should materialize. But in the meantime they were wide open in the middle.. hung up about taking the last cookie on the plate." .Stan Dryer. 38, had committed suicide in an apartment court on Las Palmas. (Detweiler hadn't gone very far. The. predilection for gas-pump jockeys, car-wash boys, and parking-lot attendants. I guess it had something. Detweiler's breathing grew slower and quieter, more relaxed. He lay with his eyes closed and an expression of almost sexual pleasure on his face. The thing's body got smaller and smaller, the skin on its beDy growing wrinkled and flaccid. A trickle of blood crawled from the wound, making an erratic line across the Detweiler boy's back. The thing reached out its hand and wiped the drop back with a. An alarm started in his helmet, flat and strangely soothing coming from the tiny speaker. He stood. 181. Now Jack said, "To the top of the mountain where there is a piece of a mirror." . "But I can never express it. Everything I say seems to make more sense than what I can feel inside of me." . "Good for you," he said when Amos had climbed onto the deck and given him the glass. "Now come. 253. The topmost platform of the scaffolding was on a level with the serrated apex of the unfinished wall.. Zorphwar! by Stan Dryer. as the discoverer?" .she thought of people who disobeyed her orders, when the dome shuddered like jellyfish.. "Did you bring any bubblegum?" the girl asked.. "Done!" .to their unwitting acceptance of the popular

interpretation of the Project's purpose..the touch, limbs that could writhe in boneless contortion to squeeze the breath from a man and crush him.to send him into a state of fugue in which conversation in the linear sense became next to impossible. So."I'm not sure. Marty thinks there's a chemical metabolism in the upper part of the shell, which I haven't explored yet. But I can't really say if it's alive in the sense we use. I mean, it runs on wheels! It has three wheels, suited for sand, and something that's a cross between a rubber-band drive and a mainspring. Energy is stored in a coiled muscle and released slowly. I don't think it could travel more than a hundred meters. Unless it can recoil the muscle, and I can't tell how that might be done."..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..And the song ends, one last diminishing chord, but her body continues to move. For her there is still music..from the audience keeps the dome aloft, and the arena crew turns off the blowers..After a while, she says, "Robbie, I'm cold,?" and so I move bade to her and hold her and say nothing..way a bricklayer feels sometimes. It's really great I feel sorry for brickmakers. You'd never catch me.The meeting started out with everybody shouting and talking at once; then the Organizer showed up, and everybody quieted down. He climbed up on the platform, in that casual way he has, and stood there looking down at us with his big golden eyes, his face glowing as it always does at such times, as though there's a light inside him shining through his pores..Immediately he let the lid drop again, and the sailor with the iron key locked the lock on the top of the box. From inside came the mew of a cat that ended with a deep, depressing: Elmlmpf..sixty-track stim by RobCal.I stood there stunned. So did Ike. So did Eli and Dan. Ike got his breath back first. "Where's the.phenomenon. Quid pro quos were the general rule, in the form either of cash on the barrel or services.by THOMAS M. DISCH.loosed her scarlet cape and that too fell to the floor..too sharp to ignore. At last I reach the summit..return and eat my eggs and sausages."..bank statement She dropped it on the desk with a papery plop. "Don't worry," I assured her, "I won't.?I'm Columbine Brown," she said, as though that offered an explanation..We flew over and spent most of the day glubbing around in the Pacific with a bunch of kids fifteen years younger than I and five years younger than Janice. I'd been on these jaunts with Janice before and enjoyed them so much I'd bought my own wetsuit But I didn't enjoy it nearly as much as I did Saturday night and all of Sunday..but I've also seen her perform worse and still come off the stage happy..Sirocco sighed. "I suppose I have to put it in writing that I authorized the assault on my own initiative and without any substantiating data." He cocked his head at Colman. "Happen to know anyone around here who makes a good pair of pants?".devious magic."..and loving care. I may have been mistaken about his not moving..Tavern swung in the breeze.."I have no idea. I only saw them in the hall a couple of times. Maurice and I were ... not close." He.Friday morning I sat at my desk trying to put the pieces together. Trouble was, I only had two pieces and they didn't fit. The sun was coming in off the Boulevard, shining through the window, projecting the chipping letters painted on the glass against the wall in front of me. BERT MALLORY Confidential Investigations. I got up and looked out. This section of the Boulevard wasn't rotting yet, but it wouldn't be long.."You've heard of the long-period Martian seasonal theories? Well, part of it is more than a theory.."No. I told you it was a stray-puppy relationship. I wish Murray were here. He's much better with words than I am. I'm visually oriented."..morning. I think the Organizer should back down a little?settle, say, for a ten-percent raise and forget."Thanks." He got up to go.

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