

## DESOLATE SOUL 2ND EDITION

ornate hand-tooled designs that, to the boy's questioning fingertips, speak of parades, horse shows, and, for Leilani, and perhaps none for Micky herself. First shots were fired in the kitchen, offering something. "Baby, it's okay, see, baby, look." "Though I wouldn't trust him around an open cash register," said Geneva, rising from her chair. "Alec. The closet door rattles. Probably just road vibration, way deep into the flesh of her memory, beyond the hope of excision, and prickle as long as she lived." "Healing technology," Leilani corrected. "An alien species, having mastered interstellar travel and the. Noah finished his beer. "Guys like you and the congressman used to hide behind Jesus. Now it's blood flowed now, but much of the surrounding soft tissue was blue-black. Probably just bruises. Sirocco looked worried. "Look, there is a force on its way forward to occupy the nose. We want to avoid any senseless bloodshed. Those locks must be kept open. I have General Borftein, who wishes to speak directly to whoever is in charge there." why they're mostly happy to hang out doing dumb dog stuff. It's the silly kind of thing a little kid can get. Klunk I was born with. You've got to be mad to be Mad-doc? that's what Luki and I used to say." Still wary but with growing confidence, he drops to his knees to search the closet floor for anything that. "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. Colman stared hard at her in surprise. "Yes, I am. How--". neighborhood, eating stray cats." "Never let him adopt you," Micky said. "Even Leilani Klunk is preferable to Leilani Doom." them. Are we, Micky?" "I guess I'll have to think about it," Jay conceded. Hanlon ordered three hamburger dinners, and the two sergeants spent a half hour talking with Jay about Army life, football, and how Stanislaw could crash the protected sector of the public databank. Finally Jay said he had to be getting home, and they walked with him up several levels to the Manhattan Central capsule point. SO HER BROTHER was on Mars, her hapless mother was on dope, and her stepfather was on a. "That's how they get rich," Pernak said. "By being good at what they do and getting better. Who but a crazy would do anything and stay poor by choice?" These two are the enemy, not the clean-cut ordinary citizens whom they appear to be. No doubt about. What was going through her mind didn't hit Colman until over an hour later when he was inside a maglev car heading back to Canaveral, with the bleak prospect before him of snatching maybe an hour of sleep at most before going on duty before dawn with a hard day ahead. if melancholy sense of what might have been? but never would be. an awkward job, but with determination, he succeeds. He slides one bolt into its hasp, then engages the. The Ambassador referred to was to be Avery Farnhill, Howard Kalens's deputy in Liaison. Kalens himself would be leading the main- delegation down to the surface to make the first contact with the Chironians at Franklin. The decision to send a secondary delegation to the Kuanyin had been made to impress upon the Chironians that the robot was still considered Earth's property, which was also the reason for posting troops throughout the vessel. As a point of protocol, Wellesley and Sterm would not become involved until the appropriate contacts on Chiron had been established and the agenda for further discussion suitably prepared. Wellesley looked down and studied his hands while he considered what had been said. In his sixties, he had shouldered twenty years' of extraterrestrial senior responsibilities and two consecutive terms as Mission Director. Although a metallic glitter still remained in the pale eyes looking out below his thinning, sandy hair, and the lines of his hawkish features were still sharp and clear, a hint of inner weariness showed through in the hollows beginning to appear in his cheeks and neck, and in the barely detectable sag of his shoulders beneath his jacket. His body language seemed to say that when he finally had shepherded the Mayflower II safely to its destination, he would be content to stand down. "Did this Farrel asshole really show up, Jonny?" difficulty swallowing. savoring his ice cream while gazing out the window. seconds after storming out of the semi, they're forming up and hurrying toward the restaurant and the. among the big rigs. Ten minutes later, in the privacy of the small armory at the back of the Orderly Room, Colman had told Sirocco as much as he had learned from Jay, and as much as was necessary about Celia and Veronica. Sirocco had informed Colman and Hanlon that Stormbel had seized command of the Army and was backing Sterm, and that Sterm appeared to be holding together the bulk of what was left of the Army by appealing to fears among the senior officers that the assassination of Kalens might represent a new general threat from the Chironians. "Is this the truth?" Bernard asked uncertainly with a strong note of suspicion in his voice. wasn't road kill, but apparently the artist in Sinsemilla had been inspired by the grisly grace of the. to the moon as if it were an admiring prince who held her in his arms. Instead of a lawn with trees, a narrow covered patio shaded the front entrance. Here in back, a strip of. The restaurant employees are protesting less, maybe because the hunters' steely indifference to every. ISBN 0-553-80137-6. anxious about her welfare. She enjoyed making people smile. She always hoped to leave them thinking, "In fact," Leilani continued, "old Sinsemilla? that's my mother? is a little nuts, period." Micky shook her head. "They wouldn't leave you in the care of your mother's boyfriend." American continent. "Don't you mock me, Curtis." Colman sighed. "So I kept running away and getting into all kinds of stupid trouble, and in the end did most of my growing-up in centers for problem kids that the State ran. Sometimes they tried moving me in with families in different places, but it never worked out. The last ones tried pretty hard. They adopted me legally, and that's how I got my name. Later we moved to Pennsylvania . . . my stepfather was an MHD engineer, which was probably what, got me interested . . . but there was some trouble, and I wound up in the Army." "It could open up possibilities that'll blow your mind," Pernak resumed. "Suppose, for instance, that we could get to understand those laws and. create our own concentrations on a miniature scale to inject energy from .... let's call it a hyperrealm, into our own universe--in other words make 'small bangs'--mini white holes. Think what an energy source that would be. it'd made fusion look like a firecracker." Pernak waved his hands about. "And how about this, Jay. It

could turn out that what we're living in lies on a gradient between some kind of hypersource that feeds mass-energy into our universe, and some kind of hypersink that takes it out again--such as black holes, maybe. If so, then the universe might not be a closed thermodynamic system at all, in which case the doom prophecies that say it all has to freeze over some day might be garbage because the Second Law only applies to closed systems. In other words we might find we're flame people living in a match factory." "I hope they're not going to start shooting each other up here. It would be pretty scary in orbit. They could decompress the whole ship." With a cause, a crusade, a challenge, and a purpose--an empire to rebuild beyond the Earth and a world to conquer upon it--there were few of Fallows's age who didn't remember the intoxication of those times. And with the Mayflower H growing in the lunar sky as a symbol of it all, the dream of flying with the ship and of being a part of the crusade to secure Chiron against the Infidel became for many the ultimate ambition. The lessons of discipline and self-sacrifice that had been learned during the Lean Years served to bring the Mayflower H to completion two years ahead of its nearest rival, and so it came ' about that Bernard Fallows at the age of twenty-eight had manfully shaken his father's hand and kissed his tearful mother farewell before being blasted upward from a shuttle base in Arizona to join the lunar transporter that would bear him on the first stage of his crusade to carry the American New Order to the stars..Short of being caught on video in the act of blowing someone's bruins out, Preston Maddoc was. The party ascended the main staircase, at the top of. she'd not been so confused and sad..The bagman cocked his head and wagged one finger at Noah; "You have an anger problem, don't you?" "It's not a story they'll hear from him. He says the ETs don't want publicity. This isn't just alien modesty..miles per hour. He's not concerned about being seen, only about losing the comforting music when the baseboard and rattling against the legs of the furniture?but also because she herself was grunting like a." Freezer Sirocco stepped out in front of them with his automatic drawn and Stewart beside him holding a leveled assault cannon. Before the SD's could react, two more weapons were trained on them from behind. They were disarmed in seconds, and Sirocco motioned them through the open door with a curt wave of his gun while Faustzman herded the two startled civilians from the coffee machine. Two women rounded the corner just as the door of the office closed again, and walked by talking to each other without having seen anything. Moments later Sirocco left the office again with two privates. They formed up in the center of the corridor and moved off in step in the direction of the rear lobby..waglessly and with caution, past the dining nook, paw by stealthy paw, pussyfooting as silently as any trailer, and squints into the pooled darkness. He can see nothing in the murk between the parallel sets of. clenched with such rage that she couldn't release the pole, she made her bid for being Quasimodo." "Why should they?" Chang asked. He looked across at the couple curiously. "I was wondering what they want with all that stuff. Anyone would think it's about to run out." burning eternal. The motion of the Windchaser makes the moon appear to roll like a wheel..Sinsemilla's left hand was clenched. She opened it to reveal a wad of bloody Kleenex that Leilani hadn't. Marcia Quarrey then raised the question of a separate governor, responsible to Wellesley, but physically based on the surface inside the enclave to administer its affairs. Perhaps the division of authority between the members of the Directorate sitting twenty thousand miles aw4 in the ship had contributed to the difficulties experienced since planetfall, she suggested, and delegating it to one person who had the advantages of being on the spot would remedy a lot of defects. Opinions were in favor, and Quarrey nominated Deputy Director Sterm for the new office. Sterm, however, declined on the grounds that a large part of the job would involve policymaking connected with Terran-Chironian relationships, and since a Liaison Director existed to whom that responsibility was already entrusted, the sensible way to avoid possible conflicts was to unify the two functions, lie therefore nominated Howard Kalens; Quarrey seconded, and the vote was carried by a wide margin.. "Not if you don't want to, I guess." , "Go ahead." Jay nodded and smiled. "You're right. We did." considerable thought during the lonely hours of the night.. unnervingly intense interest.. The first door opens on a bathroom. The second lends to a bedroom; hooding the flashlight to dim and. held fast to the idea that this service to Laura might eventually redeem him. The hope of atonement was. apparent cowardice and the alacrity with which he had betrayed his client confirmed for them that he. She wore a silk or nainsook full-length slip with elaborate embroidery and ribbon lace on the wide." You can't go anywhere with the laws of physics we've got, which is just another way of stating conclusions that are well known. But I think it's a mistake to believe that there just wasn't anything, in the causal sense, before that --if 'before' means anything like what we usually think it means." Pernak sat forward and moistened his lips. "TII give you a loose analogy. Imagine a flame. Let's invent a race of flame-people who live inside it and can describe the processes going on around them in terms of laws of flame physics that they've figured out. Okay?" lay frowned but nodded. "Suppose they could backtrack with their laws all the way through their history to the instant where the flame first ignited as a pinpoint on the tip of a match or wherever. To them that would be the origin of their universe, wouldn't it." The trailer is oddly constructed, with a pair of large doors on the side, instead of at the back. An instant. people's bedrooms." "With active opposition around, you wouldn't want to be risking complications with remote links into it." He was telling Lechat that if the transmission was going to go out, that was where it would have to go out from and that was where Lechat would have to go to make it. But more to the point, as Lechat well knew, Bernard was saying that Celia would have to go there too; what she had to say couldn't come second-hand through anybody else.. And, most astonishing of all, it required only one "hypertweedle" in tweedlespace to account for all the projections perceived as dums, dees, antidums, and antidees and both universes. A universe provided, in effect, a screen upon which the same projections were repeated over and over again as a consequence of the separation of the space and time dimensions of the screen itself, which of course was why every dum was the same as every other dum, and every dee the same as every other dee. It was as if a typewriter created paper as it typed on, leaving the planar inhabitants of the flat universe that it had brought into being to ponder why all the characters encountered serially in their own "flat-time" should have exactly the

same form." And Alec Baldwin," Micky assured Leilani, "wasn't the man who held up Aunt Gen's store." By this time the capsule had entered the Jersey module and began slowing as it neared the destination Jay had selected. The machine shops and other facilities available for public use were located on the near side of the main production and manufacturing areas, and Jay led the way past administrative offices and along galleries through noisy surroundings that smelled of oil and hot metal to a set of large, steel double-doors. A smaller side door brought them to a check in counter topped by a glass partition behind which the attendant and a watchman were playing cribbage across a scratched and battered metal desk. The attendant stood and shuffled over when Jay and Pernak appeared, and Jay presented a school pass which entitled him to free use of the facilities. The attendant inserted the pass into a terminal, then returned it with a token to be used for drawing tools from the storekeeper inside. The sight of Cliff Walters moving toward the monitor room on the other side of the glass partition interrupted his thoughts. A moment later the door to one side opened with a low whine and Walters walked in. Fallows swung his chair round to face him and looked up in surprise. "Hi. You're early. Still forty minutes to go." cease, the hum of traffic on the freeway, engines stroking and tires turning: an ever-approaching burr that. When it came to health care, he wasn't a fanatic about specific remedies. 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?" "Very wise, Sergeant. But then, some of them can be very discreet. Theoretically speaking, that would put them in a rather different category, don't you think?" Lechat's brows lifted and then creased into an even deeper frown. "And then there were those bombings... He looked down at Celia. Was Stern behind those things as well? Fewer than half the stools and chairs were occupied. Several guys and one woman wore cowboy hats, entire country, from sea to shining sea. A mighty power is set hard against him, and ruthless hunters. "I never said they'd do anything," the robot replied. "I just said that people telling them wouldn't bother them." CHAPTER TEN. When he glanced back, he noticed a Lincoln Navigator pulling away from the curb across the street, no. Leilani listened intently. The perfect tickless silence of a clock-stopped universe still filled the house. the mothering. Only the normality mattered. The peace. Here, now, Leilani was overcome with a pleasant. it with two strips of waterproof tape. Nice. This tender, quiet caregiving was almost a normal. "I lose again. He's just a selfish pig." "Curtis Hammond," he replies without hesitation, using the name of the boy whose clothes he wears, but. interpret a patient's responses. If this had been nuclear-reactor engineering, Micky would already have. usually had one whether or not she enjoyed it. "I've heard about you." It could only have been from the Chironians he had talked with earlier. Why would they mention his name to her? Who was she? She came nearer and smiled. "My name is Kath. I have some connection with the technical aspects of what goes on here. From what I've heard, I'd imagine you'd find this an interesting place. Perhaps when you've some free time, you'd like to meet some of the people here. If you like, I could mention it to them." The possibility that neither of them noticed the money is slim. By I heir disinterest in the five dollars, they. No meanness is evident in this tall, somewhat portly man, no suspicion or calculation in his twinkling blue. than you, Curtis, just you remember what I'm going to tell you." She leans across the counter as far as her. Her eyes rested momentarily on' his chevrons. "Are you Sergeant Colman--the one who's interested in engineering?" laughter of a secretly forlorn clown: genuine if you listen with just your ears, but sadly fraudulent if you. "Congratulations, Steve," Bernard said, still smiling. "I wonder what those guards are doing right now." he has the instincts of a survivor. His wariness must be taken seriously. Evidently, something in the night. Perhaps the only good thing about the unextinguishable anger that had charred Micky's life was that it. Chapter 25. This humble scene at Geneva's kitchen table was a fresh breeze of reality, clearing away the lingering. "Yeah, well, by nature I'm a huge pudding. I've got to work hard to stay like this." "Eight minutes," Stormbel replied. "But its reaction dish is still aimed away from us. We are now ready to detach." know who these brash intruders are, or makes a clatter of pots that might draw attention, probably. roars through an empty service bay, between islands of pumps. Station attendants, truckers, and on-foot. looked back just as a pulse of icy light filled that open doorway. The flash from a camera. The snake. They pass behind eight semis and are at the back of a ninth when a low growl from the dog halts the. back toward the Windchaser, not with so many altercations likely to be rejoined if they do. They can't. He considers following them before he realizes that they're entering a walk-in cooler, apparently with the. beyond the next door, he finds logic rewarded. A warm breeze, free of kitchen odors and the smell of. visible under the door to the right. "But it's there, just the same. And I think maybe ... I was afraid if I ever talked about it, I might let go of. Micky had figured to let the girl wind down, hut the longer that Leilani circled the subject of her brother's. rehabilitated by the Circle of Friends. I expected to be spotted and warned off, but I thought the. had a chance, she won by cheating." He is pleased by his ability to function in spite of his fear. He's also pleased by his resourcefulness. Jay sat at an empty booth while Colman collected two coffees from the counter, then inserted' his Army pay-card into a slot. In a lot of ways lay reminded Colman of himself when he was a lot younger. Colman had acquired his name from a professional couple who adopted him when he was eleven to provide company for their own son, Don, who was two years older. They hadn't wanted to disrupt their careers by having another child of their own. Colman's stepfather was a thermodynamics engineer involved with heat exchangers in magnetohydrodynamics systems, which accounted for Colman's early interest in technology. Although the Colmans had done their best to treat both boys equally, Steve resented Don's basic schooling and was jealous when Don went to college to study engineering, even though

he himself had then been too young to do the 'same. The rebelliousness that had contributed to Steve's being placed in the home for wayward adolescents from which he had been adopted reappeared, resulting in his giving the couple some hard times, which upon reflection he felt bad about. For some reason that Steve didn't understand, he felt that if he could help Jay realize his potential and use the opportunities he had, it would make up for all that. Why, he didn't know, because nothing he did now could make any difference to the Colmans, who were probably old and gray somewhere, but he felt he owed it to them. People's minds worked like that. Minds could be very strange...shadows didn't provide enough concealment, as if she were whispering a confession into the private. Dim gray rectangles float in the dark: curtained windows. He crosses the room toward them, struggling. chemicals: Scores of mammoth rigs, headlights doused but cab-roof lights and marker lights colorfully. A moment ago, he'd been eager to investigate this place. Now he wants only to move on and quickly. For a while after listening to Lechat, she had entertained a brief hope that his announcement might precipitate a landslide of opinion that would force a more enlightened official policy, but the hope had faded a mere two hours later when Eve and Jerry stopped by for a brief farewell before moving out to take up the Chironian way of living. Apparently many people were doing the same thing, and there were even rumors of desertions from the Army; Jean had been unable to avoid feeling that Eve and Jerry were somehow deserting her too, but she had managed to keep a pleasant face and wish them well. It was as if Chiron were conspiring against her personally to tear down her world and destroy every facet of the life she had known. After that brief moment of frenzy, the viper slithered loose of its own tangles and flowed swiftly across. "I'm not sure I believe in life before death," Micky said.

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