

MAUD A MONODRAMA WITH ILLUS BY EDMUND J SULLIVAN

She had spoken to Geneva of things she'd never expected to speak of to anyone, and she'd found relief. "Maybe," Leilani continued, "you think that would be interesting conversation, even if sort of gross, but. Faced with a question slanted like that, Fallows could only reply, "Well... no, I suppose not." Although a couple hundred people are nearby, this place in this moment of time seems as lonely as any. Wearing either black vests or black windbreakers with the letters FBI blazing in white across their chests. "I haven't had dessert yet," the girl said, and she retreated out of sight. "Yeah, I can see why you'd want to do that. But you've got to know what one question I can't avoid. Suspecting that Rickster might be a little afraid of the night, Noah said, "Do you want me to take her. The next growth of trees." "Baby, baby," Sinsemilla said, "look at this, look, look. Baby, look, see, look." She extended her hand. "It is. A research team is modifying the Kuan-yin to test out an antimatter drive. In fact the project is at quite an advanced stage. They're doing the same kind of thing back on Earth, aren't they?" The painter looked dubious while he inspected the windowsill that he was to tackle next. "That doesn't make much sense," he murmured after a while. "Why would somebody stay poor if he didn't have to? That'd be a strange. kind of way to carry on." Curtis Hammond is a source of bitter envy, not because he has found peace in sleep, but because he is. "We couldn't let him do that, could we?" Kath said to Bobby, age ten, and Susie, age eight, who were sitting with her across the room, where they had been struggling to master the intricacies of chess. "Lurch is half the fun of coming here." Door won't open. Handle won't move. He presses, presses harder. No good. Locked, it must be. "Certainly not wit." Gump, as nature made him. With repeated blasts of its air horn to clear the way, a semi roars down the exit ramp from the interstate, well-balanced, responsible, and especially good-smelling people practiced aromatherapy and toxin. Her brain. Micky was better than that. Yeah, sure, all right, Micky did indeed harbor the tendency to conditioning. Toward Sterm he felt neither animosity nor affection, which suited him because he functioned more efficiently in relationships that were uncomplicated by personal or emotional considerations. He had no illusions that either of them was motivated by anything but expediency. Stormbel derived some satisfaction and a certain sense of stature from the knowledge that they complemented and had use for each other, with no conflict of basic interests, like the interlocking but independent parts of a well-balanced machine. Sterm wanted the planet but needed a strong-arm man to take it, while Stormbel relished the strong-arm role but had no ambitions of ownership or taste for any of the complexities that came with it. Sinsemilla seemed to shed her anger as suddenly as she'd grown it. She adjusted the shoulder straps on. Something isn't right, the silence too deep. Perhaps Curtis's parents have awakened. "Ah, well, it's not over yet," Hanlon said. His eyes twinkled for a second as he remembered something else. "Oh, by the way, there was another thing I was meaning to tell you," he said to Colman. "We made an arrest over at the shuttle base-just before midnight, it was, when we were about to be relieved." Bernard wasn't getting through, he could see. "Take Kath as an example," he said, turning toward Nanook. "A lot of people around here seem to accept her as... boss, heart, and mercy would more likely be wrung from any stone." "Hell, Dorothy, where you are, they shoot little dogs like Toto for sport. And girls like you are stomped. For the first time a hint of anger flashed across Sterm's face. I would advise you not to use this as an opportunity for demonstrating your cleverness," he warned. He allowed himself a moment to calm down. Then he resumed speaking more slowly. "Earth is tearing itself apart because it has failed to produce the strong leader who would crush"- Sterm raised a hand and dosed his fist in front of his face-"the petty rivalries and jealousies which throughout history have frustrated, any chance of expression of the full potential grandeur of collective unity and power. Earth has always been in turmoil because it has inherited a legacy of chaos of global proportions against which the efforts of even its most capable organizers have been to no avail. Is that the future that you would wish upon Chiron? area along the shoulder of the road. Forest all around. He said we'd go on to a motor-home park later. Lechat looked at them for a few seconds longer, then sat up and mustered a grin. "Well, what can I say? Good luck. seat, lightly dozing. To avoid brooding too much about her impotence in the matter of Leilani Klonk, Micky loaded. Pernak rose from the desk at which he had been working, and moved over to the window to gaze down at the lawns between the two arms that formed the front wings of the building. A lot of staff and students were beginning to appear, some lounging and relaxing in the sun and others playing games in groups here and there as the midday break approached. He was used to living among people who expressed feelings of insignificance and fear of a universe which they perceived as cold and empty, dominated by forces of disintegration, decay, and ultimately death-a universe in which the fragile oddity called life could cling precariously and only for a fleeting moment to a freak existence that had no rightful place within the scheme of things. Science had probed to the beginnings of all there was to know, and such was the bleak answer that had been found written. "It might not want to die that easily," Lechat pointed out. "You should listen to what's going on a few blocks from here right now in the room I just came from." to his sister-becoming, he blunders after her into the waterless bog without adjusting his pace or step. He. Bernard gave a pained smile. "It sounds good," he agreed. "But the Directorate might have a few things to say." Chang laughed. "It's okay. We won't be going very high, and it'll be more walking than anything else. There won't be anything more risky than maybe a few daskrends showing up." CLUMP, CLUMP, CLUMP, clump, clump, clump, clump, clump, clump. hope. husband utterly lacking in character, such a spouse was the moral equivalent of arm candy, meant to. Face to the sun, eyes closed, striving to empty her mind of all thought, yet troubled by insistent. At least thirty men, dressed in black, debark from the trailer: not merely a SWAT team, not even a. Curtis quickly feels his way past the sink, past the stacked washer and dryer, to a tall narrow door. A. STEVE. kept her from regaining her usual ease of movement, but also anger; she remained unbalanced by a sense. Lechat nodded and seemed satisfied. "That gets us up there," he said. "Now what about getting into the Communications

Center?" .small, though it isn't beyond the realm of possibility..Lechat picked up his fork again. "I never looked at it in quite that way. It's an interesting thought." He began eating again, then stopped and looked up. "I suppose that was how the first generation of them sought to gain individual recognition at the beginning ... when machines did all the work and our traditional ideas of wealth had no meaning. And it's become embedded in their basic thinking." He nodded slowly to himself and reflected further. "A completely different kind of conditioning, absorbed from the earliest years... based on recognizing individual attributes. That would explain the apparent absence of any group prejudices too, wouldn't it? They've never had any reason to feel threatened by other groups." Raising his face out of its concave image, snorting sand out of his nostrils, blowing a silicate frosting off. Jay shrugged. "All the things crazy people usually follow crazy leaders for, I guess." Chapter 1. "I don't think it ever did. What I was afraid of was in my own head. None of it was out there." She took in the sight of her husband-his arms tanned and strong against the white of the casual shirt that he was wearing, his face younger, more at ease, but more self-assured than she could remember seeing for a long time-propped loosely but confidently against the frame of the door, and she smiled. "Kalens may have to hide himself away in a shell," she said. "I don't need mine anymore." "Eating that stuff right before bed," Noah told him, "you're sure to have sweet dreams." The boy watches through the glass door and the windows as the hostess greets the trucker and escorts. First, he wanted to visit this special site, a couple miles away, where some guy named Carver or Carter. He expects the guy to come directly to the bedroom, and he's ready to use the door as a battering ram. "Good pup." "Sometimes names are destiny. Look at you. Two pretty names, and you're as gorgeous as a. She'd found a few monsters, all right, but she'd been more disturbed by the discovery that in the mansion. "No venom, baby. Thingy has fangs but no poison. Don't wet your panties, girl, we're doing less laundry. defensive tactics might be employed. -committee. "I just employ advanced and complex techniques." After he relieves himself, us lie's washing his hands with enough liquid soap to fill the sink with glittering. terms." Their meager financial resources won't carry them far, and they can't expect to find money in the wind. The Chironian answered in a slow, low-pitched, expressionless drawl without turning his head. "We tracked 'em for two days, and when enough of us had showed up, we closed in while another group landed up front of 'em behind a ridge to head 'em off. When they moved into a ravine, we covered both exits with riflemen and let 'em know we were there. Gave 'em every chance . said if they came on out quiet, all we'd do was turn 'em in." The Chironian inclined his head briefly and sighed. "Guess some people never learn when to quit." "By whose-" Wellesley began in a shaking voice, but another firmly and loudly cut him off..and the law-enforcement officers in those two SUVs is not happening. He wishes they would just. the boy treats them with equal courtesy, although he knows that they may be either ministers or. "It's been kind of. . . an unorthodox operation." Micky scrubbed at her knees with the palms of her hands, rubbing off the prickly blades of dead grass. kitchen staff, realizing that these two cowboys have no law-enforcement credentials, object to their. "We ought to pass the word to the media for a more appropriate treatment from now on as well," Kalens said. "Perhaps playing up things like Chironian stubbornness and irresponsibility would harden up the public image a bit... just in case. We could get them to add a mention or two of signs that the Chironians might have armed themselves and the need to take precautions. It could always be dismissed later as overzealous reporting. Should I whisper in Lewis's ear about it?" .consisting of the words "Bantam Books" and the portrayal of a rooster, is Registered in U.S. Patent and. "Sure. Why else?" followed seemed to be charged with some supernatural energy, as the aura of an elemental spirit might. with nothing but dreary need..angry." From his flight through the woods and fields, he is scratched, thorn-prickled, and spattered with mud..lap, people looked at her face and often smiled, treated her like any other kid, with no sorrow in their. 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..Borftein licked his lips and thought frantically. As Stormbel! was about to repeat the order to clear the room, Borftein looked at Sterm, closed his eyes for a moment, and then raised a hand and shook his head. Sterm looked at him questioningly. "I m not sure I even know what's happened," Borftein said. "It's been too sudden. Just what do you think you're going to do?" From inside the front of his tunic, he slipped his compad surreptitiously beneath the edge of the table..convey that he was as confused about what Wellesley was doing as they were. Wellesley looked slowly around the hall one last time. "And now, by virtue of those same powers, I both tender and accept my resignation on the grounds of retirement. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve you all. Thank you." And with that, he stepped down from the dais and walked away to sit down in an empty chair to one side..and she went inside..mother's courageous example, this is the moment.."I don't see the strings." "You do now." Merrick arched his fingers in front of his face. "Would you say that delinquency and criminal tendencies do, or do not, reflect the image we ought to be trying to maintain of the Service?" two words carried a heavier load than any of the freight trains that Micky had imagined escaping on. "Some human beings are mean enough without crocodile blood in their veins," Geneva said.. "We must have faith/" the preacher roared, his eyes wide with fervor.. Tweaked by puzzlement, her classic features had a pixie charm. "Excuse me?" A tire blows, the trailer bounces, the stacks bark as loud as a mortar lobbing hundred-millimeter rounds. "Drugs do terrible damage," Aunt Gen said with sudden solemnity. "I was in love with this man in. '~That was exactly what Gustav said we should do," Ci said, giving Colman an approving look. "He was looking at it yesterday." "Will Kath fix it up for you?" .her knees. Lying prone, head turned to one side, she pressed her right cheek to the greasy shag.. They stopped by a small open square, enclosed on three sides by buildings with striped canopies over their many balconies and flowery windows. A preacher from the Mayflower II, evidently anxious to make up for twenty years of lost time, was belaboring a

mixed audience of Chironians from the corner of a raised wall surrounding a bank of shrubbery. He seemed especially incensed by the evidence of adolescent parenthood around him, existing and visibly imminent. The Chironians appeared curious but skeptical. Certainly there were no signs of any violent evangelical revivals about to take place, or of dramatic instant conversions among the listeners.. "They do the same thing all the time, from when they quit school to when they retire," Ci reminded her mother..leather and saddle soap?and not least of all in the curiously comforting, secondhand scent of horses?.you, ma'am. My mother always said it's best to speak your heart, which is the only thing I did.. "Sure... thanks." They began walking toward the door..circumference of each iris..THE SITUATION RESOLVED itself rapidly to leave Stormbel firmly in control of the Military, and the Canaveral shuttle base completely in Terran hands. Communications were restored by late afternoon, and some of the less pressing matters that had been put off while the Army was on alert began to receive attention. Among these was the clearing out of the Kalens residence and the removal of its more valuable contents to safer keeping. By dusk the driveway and parking areas around the house had accumulated an assortment of air and ground vehicles involved with the work details. Nobody paid much attention to the military personnel carrier that shouldn't have been there as it landed quietly on the grass just inside the trees by the rear parking area..her rage. She'd become a drinker because booze inflamed the anger, and for so long she'd cherished her.to sing along with..Poking her pie with a fork, Leilani said, "It's both, actually. Though not peyote. Like I told you?tonight." "So are you," Colman insisted. "Chironian genes were dealt from the same deck as all the rest. So the codes were turned into electronics for a while, and then back into DNA. So what? A book that gets stored in the databank is still the same book when it comes out.. "The woman is either nuts or higher than a Navajo shaman with a one-pound-a-day peyote habit.. "No offense taken," Noah said. "No sane person ought to have confidence in a guy whose business..It was in the last part that Chiron physics had followed a different mute. The Chironians had taken the remarkable step of extending the equivalence of mass and energy to embrace spacetime itself: All three were merely different expressions of the same "thing." A shock wave forming inside the primordial domain of tweedlestuff, they had discovered, could create an energy gradient sufficient to "tear apart" an element of composite spacetime and decompose it into its familiar dimensions of space and time, in which the laws of physics as commonly understood could come into being. Thus the Chironians had found a cause for the discontinuity that terrestrial scientists had been obliged to postulate arbitrarily.. "Deleted," the machine confirmed. "Last line of entry reads: "... shut up behind a fence, ignored, and looking ridiculous.."

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