

## PRISCILLA CARPENTER AND THE SHARK

What troubled Fulmire was the specter of Kalens's emerging from the midst of it all as a virtual dictator, with Borftein supporting him and straining to be let off the leash. Every faction would see such a concentration of power as a potential battering ram to be harnessed exclusively for the advancement of its own cause, and even more as an instrument to be denied at all costs to its rivals. In an explosive situation like that anything could happen, and Fulmire had visions of the whole Mission tearing itself apart in internecine squabbling with a strong possibility of bloodshed at the end of it all when frustrations boiled over. The only force that he could see with any potential for exerting a stabilizing influence was the more moderate consensus as represented by the Mayflower 1's population as a whole; and Lechat, possibly, could provide a means of mobilizing it before things got out of hand. "Cool? You idiot, I liked that car." she held me back." A ghost drifted along the corridors of the girl's memory, a small spirit with Tinkertoy. He thought of the face of Celia Kalens, who had vanished presumably to safety, and then come all the way back to the heart of the Government Center; she'd risked everything for the truth to be known. Then he gazed out again at the sergeant, the corporal, and the figures standing behind them in a silent plea for reason. They were risking everything too, so that what Celia and the others had done would not have been in vain. Whatever Lesley stood to lose, it couldn't be more than those people had already put on the line. They stood but three feet apart, face-to-face, and in spite of Micky's compassionate intentions, a "Gut-feel," Pernak told him "The weapons have to exist. I tell you, I know how these people's minds work." Geneva left the door half open behind her. She sat on the edge of the bed, sideways to her niece. to dock at the Vandenberg bays, and that's why we've got Annley's section there to stop them. What do you do if you can't hold them, Mike?" Sirocco asked, looking down at the front row. "Yes, I was about to come to that," Sirocco replied. He lifted his head a fraction to address the whole room again. "As Velarini says, they could come in through the Battle Module and the nose. The Battle Module is the main problem. It's bound to be the most strongly defended section anywhere, and there's only one way through to it from the rest of the ship. Therefore we assault it directly only if all else fails. We've put Steve up near the nose of the Spindle with the strongest section to block that access route. Steve's short-sleeved top. On the back of the shirt, a cool yellow-and-red logo said ROSWELL, NEW. right for the weather." "That could be a good place to start," Kalens suggested to Wellesley. T-shirt. The impressive mass of bone in his brow surely weighed more than the five-pound sledge that he. to conserve electricity." Micky wished this would prove true; but she might be setting herself up for disappointment. Faith in the. "It's how the Chironians have been working all along," Lechat said. "They've been doing everything in their power to entice as many people as possible away from the opposition and effectively over to their side. Haven't they done it with us? When they're down to the last handful who'll never be able to think the way the Chironians think, they'll get rid of them, just as they did Padawski. That's how their society has always worked. When it comes down to the last few who won't be sensible no matter what anybody does, they don't fool around. And they'll do the same thing with the ship if Sterm makes one threatening move with those weapons up there. I'm convinced of it. The Chironians took out their insurance a long time ago. That would be typical of how they think too." light and shadows of her kitchen, and the jack-o'-lantern glow beyond. Gasping, he drops the jar where he found it, shoves the drawer shut, and steps back from the nightstand. address is also his apartment? and the whole shebang in three rooms above a palm-reader's office." "Nobody told me anything." brand in the refrigerator, and if no one drank it, she periodically replaced it with new stock when its. moment and in the firm grip of the real. Bernard sighed. As usual, Merrick seemed determined to twist the answers until they came out the way he wanted. "Of course not," Bernard replied. "But I think people are exaggerating the situation. That incident was not representative of what we should expect. The Chironians act as they're treated. People who mind their own business and don't go out of their way to bother anyone have nothing to be frightened of." away. I'm never going to forget the way he looked." The girl's voice grew softer but also more. "But suppose different people have different ideas about it," Colman persisted. His only sister, twenty-nine now, she would remain forever a child in his heart. When she was twelve. The scent of recently mown grass saturated the still air: the intoxicating essence of summer. coconut oil, three yellow butterflies as bright as gift-box bows? suddenly seemed full of meaning. Thus a quark or lepton was always three components or three anticomponents; mass followed as a consequence of there being no mixing of these within a triplet. Mixed combinations did not exhibit mass, and accounted for the vector particles mediating the basic forces—the gluon, the photon, the massless vector bosons, and the graviton. "Classified information," Colman murmured. Then he squeezed her arm one more time and turned to follow after the others. unnervingly intense interest. "How can they when there are hardly any around to start with?" Juanita asked him. "We told you—if they're like that, they don't last very long." Celia found herself staring into eyes that mirrored for a split second the calm, calculated. ruthlessness that lay within, devoid of disguise or apology, or any hint that there should be any. A chill quivered down her spine, But she felt also the trapdoor in her mind straining as a need that lay imprisoned behind it, and which she was still not ready to face, responded. Sterm's eyes were challenging her to deny anything that he had said. She was unable to make even that gesture. inspection. "Payoff for what?" Lesley turned to Jarvis. "Power the tubes back up and get some more guys down there fast. Put them in suits in case the cupola gets depressurized, and pull Brad's people back into the ramp." "Peace," said Geneva. She raised her head and at last made eye contact. "Peace, and God knows you." He will. He doesn't like people much, unless they're dead. He isn't likely to chat you up across the tires. Falls was still brooding fifteen minutes later in the transit capsule as it sped him homeward around the Mayflower lips six-mile-diameter Ring. Merrick was fight, he had decided. He had been a fool. He didn't owe it to the likes of Colman to put up with going

through the mill like that or having his own integrity questioned. He didn't owe it to any of them to help them unscramble their messed-up lives..Chapter 13."But you saw where the paths led."Abruptly the dervish dropped to the lawn with a boneless grace, in a flutter of flounce..your head, just like in mine. You sort of hide it, but I can see.".Noah settled into the armchair, from which he was able to see her dreamlit gaze, the periodic blink of."Not interested?".WELLESLEY STOOD TO deliver his final address from in front of the Mission director's seat at the center of the raised dais facing out over the Congressional Hall of the Mayflower if's Government Center. In it he recapitulated the events that had taken place since the Mission's arrival at Alpha Centauri, dwelled for a long time on the things that had been learned and the transformation of minds that had been brought about since then, paid tribute to those who had lost their lives to preserve those lessons, and elaborated on the promise that the future now held for everybody on the planet, referring to them pointedly as "Chironians" without making distinctions..LATER, AFTER AUNT GEN had gone to her room, when Micky sat back once more upon the..with wonder as she contemplated the immensity of creation.. "What are all the changes around the back end?" Colman asked curiously. "It looks like a whole new drive system."..mother anywhere."..blurred, and she heard vintage feeling wash through her words. "I could hope . . . one day I might be..the police..then feels unseen masses of road-life paraphernalia beginning slowly to slide toward him, he jams the..his remark: not more than was true about him, but more than he intended to reveal. "You're no dog, Mr..heat withered common sense and wilted reason, Micky decided that they were setting a new standard for."The white makes the best brandies, I believe," Celia said. "And isn't the amount of limestone in the soil very important?"..would then, of course, be mad-dog furious for having been subjected to university-trained doctors and."You mean by reputation, or something like that?" Lechat asked, beginning to look intrigued..million searching eyes. Motion is commotion, and distraction buys time, and time?not mere distance?is..abridged version, abusing the bed more than might have any gaggle of giddy girls at a pajama party..shadows cast by the rig.. "Everything I've said is true," Jay insisted. "There's this big kinds market in town. It's got just about everything, and you just walk in and take what you want. We got talking to some Chironians, and they showed us what you do. I don't understand it either, but that's how things work here."."He has, successfully self-taught Eng Dip One through Eve," Fallows pointed out. Sounding argumentative was making him feel nervous, but he wasn't being given much choice. "I thought that possibly he might be capable of making a Two on the Tech refresher..."..Driscoll couldn't buy that. "You mean they'd be just as happy doing what our people told them to?" he said..Leilani wrinkled her nose, "too precious."..between jamb and door. He hears her sniffing. Her exceptional sense of smell brings to her more..we're proud of them."..Many businesses were closed now, at 9:20 on a "Tuesday night.."Donella, don't be too hard on the kid. He didn't mean nothing by what he said. Nothing like you think..THE SD CAPTAIN commanding the defenses at Number 2 Aft Access Port inside the Battle Module pulled his forward section back from the lock as the inner doors started to glow cherry red at the center. The defenders had put on suits, depressurized the compartments adjoining the lock area, and closed the bulkheads connecting through to the inner parts of the module. From his position behind the armored glass partition overlooking the area from the lock control room, he could see the first of the remote-control automatic cannon rolling through from the rear. "Hurry up with those RCC's," he shouted into his helmet microphone. "Yellow section take up covering positions. Green and Red prepare to fall back to the longitudinal bulkhead locks,"..Amy watched curiously over the top of Cromwell's head as they disappeared from sight. "I wonder why they walk like that when they shout at each other," she mused absently. "Do you know why, Cromwell?".Colman exhaled a long breath. He could see now why Celia had been scared, and why Sterm had kept her under constant watch. No doubt until he had attended to the more pressing aspects of the unexpected opportunity that had presented itself..Abruptly the camera tilted down, too late to show the shattering of the windshield. Documented.. "I live in a hooley-free zone."..While staring at Sterm, Borftein tapped Judge Fulmire's personal call code with his fingertips and moved the compad quietly beneath some loose papers lying against a folder in front of him on the table.."Jay!" Jean exclaimed. "Did you find anywhere nice? -What are those things?".Her statement both reassures and strangely disconcerts the boy, so he makes another effort at..anymore, that she was the pope or maybe some pure and saintly girl named Hortense? She didn't have."Forget it," Colman interrupted. "It happens to everyone. Let's leave it with all the other stuff that's best left .up there."..five-hundred rummy."."Maybe it was an antidote to all that crap the Eagles sang."..At the front of the vehicle, the door opens, and the first things through it are the excited voices of a man..Cliff Waiters would never have gotten himself into a stupid situation like that. So what if Waiters did sometimes turn a blind eye to little things that didn't matter anyway? Waiters was a lot smarter when it came to the things that did matter. So much for Fallows, the smartass kid shuttling up from Arizonian to save the universe, who still hadn't learned how to keep his nose clean. Cliff Waiters had earned every pip of his promotions, Fallows conceded as part of his self-imposed penance; and he had earned every year of being a nonentity on Chiron that lay ahead'. Someday, maybe, he'd learn to listen to Jean..small, though it isn't beyond the realm of possibility.."I told her more than once. She punished me for lying. But she knew it was all true."..Lechat cut him off with a wave of his hand. "Don't make any noise," he said to the whole group, who were crowding around in astonishment. "Everything is okay:' He signaled Borftein over with another wave of his hand. Over by the door the soldiers had dragged in two unconscious guards, and two of them were already putting on the SD uniforms while the steward handed them two automatics, which he produced from inside the napkin he was carrying. "There isn't a lot of time," Lechat advised Wellesley and Borftein. "We have-to get you downstairs and into the Communications Center. Now listen, and I'll give you a quick rundown on the situation. ..rapped on the jamb.."Where do you get this stuff?"..a little, too, but then he realizes that her attention is elsewhere..Bernard shrugged. "What the hell? It's done now. We needed the exercise."..mother-daughter moment. It didn't matter that their roles were reversed, that the daughter was providing..scenes from A Clockwork

Orange weren't reenacted every day. Nevertheless, made fearful by too much.wasn't in view, but that didn't mean she wasn't present. By this hour, old Sinsemilla would have been."I see . . ." Lechat couldn't pretend to be as surprised as he would have been ten minutes earlier..The scene was an alfresco working-lunch, being held on the terrace of the roof garden atop the Government Center, which crowned the ascending tiers of buildings forming the central part of the Columbia District. High above, the shutters outside the module's transparent roof had been opened to admit the almost forgotten phenomenon of natural sunlight, streaming in from Alpha Centauri, as it held a position low in the sky below the nose of the Spindle while the Mayflower H rotated with its axis kept steady toward it..Kath nodded. "Wally and Sam. It was only briefly, became I had to get back to Farnhill and your other people, but from what they said it seems as if you know quite a bit about MHD. Where did you study?".To the door and through it, down three concrete-block steps, onto the lawn in the last magenta murk of.public has no opinion. You could ask them if a group of mad scientists ought to be allowed to create a.Micky had drawn herself to the unpleasant conclusion that her life to date had been wasted and that she."We all have to pay our debts," Nanook said unhelpfully..sufficiently well informed about the darker side of human nature to understand what he saw in that jar..If the stranger bends to pick up the money, he might glance under the truck. ....overheating vehicles..The Windchaser begins to slow as the driver checks his side-view mirrors. Even serial killers who keep."I am a nice boy," he assures her. "My mother was always proud of me..even though He's God with all His resources, realizes what He's gotten Himself into by agreeing to those.He bolted from the car through the driver's door, looked across the roof, and confronted a man."You too." The image vanished from the screen..The SD corporal at the rear-lobby security point was surprised when a captain of one of the regular units arrived with the relief detail and requested the duty log. "I didn't know they were posting regulars in here," the corporal said, sounding more puzzled than suspicious..Behind the truck, the highway remains deserted. The parallel median lines, yellow in daylight, appear.swarm the night.. "Too bad. How come?".We should handle the situation firmly, yes, but flexibly and with moderation until we've more to go on. Our forces should be alert for surprises but kept on a low-visibility profile unless our' hand is forced. That's my formula, gentlemen--firm, low-key, but flexible..miracle. Something so powerful can happen, someone so special come along, some precious.disbelief..Sinsemilla said she cried because she was a flower in a world of thorns, because no one here could see.Garfield Wellesley finished spreading liver pate on a finger of toast and looked up. "What about that character in Selene who claimed he was planetary governor and offered to receive us? What happened to him?".mention of her brother, but now they focused. Her gaze rose from her deformed hand to smiling Geneva..As he replaced the communicator, a subdued murmuring ran around the squad behind, punctuated by one or two almost inaudible whistles. He turned to find that the object of their approval was a woman coming out of the main entrance. She stopped for a second to look around, saw the soldiers, and began walking toward them..ON THIS, THE eve of the last Christmas that we shall be celebrating together before our journey ends, I have chosen as the subject of my seasonal message to you the passage which begins, 'Suffer little children to come unto me' The voice of the Mission's presiding bishop floated serenely down from the loudspeakers around the Texas Bowl to the congregation of ten thousand listening solemnly from the terraces. The green' rectangle of the arena below was filled by contingents from the crew and the military units standing resplendent and unmoving in full dress uniform at one end; schoolchildren in neat, orderly blocks of freshly laundered and pressed jackets of brown and blue in the center; and, facing them from the far end on the other side of the raised platform from Which the bishop was speaking, the ascending tiers of benches that held the VIPs in their dark suits, pastel coats, and bemedaled tunics. The voice continued. "The words are appropriate, for we are indeed about to meet ones whom we must recognize and accept as children in spirit, if not in all cases in body and mind ..". "The bullet didn't actually penetrate her head," Micky said..Shirley turned to look at Ci. "Say, wouldn't he be great to have at our next party? I love things like that." She looked at Driscoll again. "When are you coming down to Chiron?". "You'd have made a fine Minnie"..the calm night had no breath to cool the summer soup..PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.While they're busy doing lots of mysterious good works behind the scenes, saving us from nuclear war."I don't cheat." Gen's sly look was worthy of a Mafia accountant testifying before a congressional.vulnerability. But while remembered moments of their encounter now brought a smile to Micky, she was."Oh, lots of things. Old Sinsemilla may be a lousy mother, but she can take pride in being an equally.CHAPTER FOURTEEN.them to the silken gloom and the suety glow of the candle flames..Merrick's pained expression deepened into a frown, "Tch tch, that's inexcusable. How unfortunate. Let me see now-I can't remember exactly when it was but you were on duty. That was why I couldn't include you at the time." That was an outright lie; Bernard had been there on his day off, with Jay. "But anyway, we can soon put that straight. You'll find the place fascinating. A woman runs most of the primary process- a remarkable lady- I can promise you some interesting company as well as interesting surroundings. What I'd like you to do is arrange something with Hoskins for as soon as possible. I'm afraid I'll be tied up for the next couple of days..if . . ." "Dumb"..fiends..fallen fence with as little hitching of her braced leg as possible. When she concentrated on physical."No venom, baby. Thingy has fangs but no poison. Don't wet your panties, girl, we're doing less laundry.The communicator at his belt signaled a call from Sirocco, who, with Hanlon and a couple of the others, was taking a break inside the Chironian transporter that had flown from Canaveral. "How's it going?" Sirocco inquired when Colman answered. "Are the troops mutinying yet?".hasn't acquired Curtis's dread of this human monster. She seems to have an opinion of her own, to which.Over at the table where Celia and Jean were sitting, Marie, who had been listening silently without understanding a lot of what was being said, looked up inquiringly at her mother. Jean smiled and squeezed her hand reassuringly..of sandal, she sprints westward along the broken white line, flanked by frustrated motorists in their.What followed was a General Foul-up..Jay looked worried, and Bernard appalled. "You can't let people take the law

into their own hands like that," Bernard insisted. "Unchecked violence-mob rule--God alone~ knows what else. It's plain uncivilized--barbaric. You're going to have to change the system sooner or later."two words carried a heavier load than any of the freight trains that Micky had imagined escaping on

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