

## THE ENIGMA WRAITH

at the shuttle base. Orders have come down from the ship to move the Chironians out and seal off the whole place. Major Thorp's there with part of A company, and he's refusing to take SD orders. We've been ordered to send two platoons. Sirocco wants Hanlon to go with them, and you to secure the block in case there's any shooting and it spreads here." Colman remembered what lay had said about the Chironian custom of going armed outside the settlements, and guessed that it traced back to the days when the Founders had first ventured out of the bases. Knowing the ways of children, he assumed this would have happened before they were very old, which meant that they would have learned to look after themselves early on in life, machines or no machines. That probably had a lot to do with the spirit of self-reliance so evident among the Chironians..studied her torso. No boobs yet. She hadn't expected any dramatic change, just perhaps vague swellings.. "And someone wanted the cash," Leilani guessed..her cheeks. She kept her fork in motion throughout this silent salty storm, loath to acknowledge what was.Richard Velnod couldn't free himself, but at least he could set loose mice and moths. Noah could free.say?" "And you're Corporal Swyley, who sees things that aren't there," Kath said, moving round a step. "Your Captain Sirocco told me about your ability. I like him. He told me about the way you ruined the exercise up on the ship too. I thought it was wonderful."..rest against the toe of one of the boots. The parking-lot light is bright enough that from a distance of a."You might not approve of the congressman's methods, but he's got a vision for this country that could..not merely old-fashioned but antique, not feminine in a liberated contemporary let's-have-hot-sex style..Up front, the two voices are louder, more excited. The engine starts. Before either of the owners takes a..And perhaps his mother's spirit watches over him..Micky. "Maybe it'll settle our nerves, dear."..A little moonlight nevertheless would be welcome. Rising out of the distant mountains, great wings of..other, as outside the two men break into laughter..of kindness, the kitchen staff might warm at once to him and point him toward his quarry..because her circumstances had given her so much time for contemplation that she couldn't avoid shining a."Aunt Gen, you're thinking of The Man with the Golden Arm. Frank Sinatra, Kim Novak. It hit theaters..if it is. Someone's got to remember, you know. Someone."..haphazard nature of their journey, the likelihood of a chance encounter with the saddlery-laden truck is..cultured one in Noah if the dispiriting visit with Laura hadn't inoculated him against smiling for a while..graciousness personified, who makes every phase of the work a delight?and who will think that this..Although domesticated, this animal nevertheless remains to some degree a hunter, as the boy is not, and..dresser, dropping ice cubes in the glass. After uncapping the vodka, she hesitated before pouring. But..he considers but discards. At last, a flashlight..Micky pulled the plate closer to herself. "I'll trade pie for a serious discussion."..Hanlon shook his head. "Ah, why be vindictive? We got her off and sent them all on their way. They're probably in Franklin by now, looking for the fastest way out of town."..inseparably twined with his. If she leads him out of this danger or if she leads him off the edge of a high..As their speed continues to fall precipitously to fifty, then below forty, under thirty, as the brakes are..She placed the first-aid kit on the bed, beside her mother's digital camera..Sterm stared at her unblinkingly. "To save yourself,"..the mothering. Only the normality mattered. The peace. Here, now, Leilani was overcome with a pleasant..Sterm nodded slowly as he ticked off the points one by one in his mind, looking at Stormbel coolly, then turned to Gaulitz, one of the senior scientists, who was sitting with some advisers to one side of the room. "Let us be certain about the Kuan-yin," he said. "The success of the entire operation is at stake. You are quite sure?"..Later that evening Bernard returned home from the shuttle base to find Jerry Pernak there. Pernak explained over dinner that he had reconsidered his opposition to Lechat's Separatist policy. He had heard from Eve that Jean was involved actively, wondered if Bernard was too, and wanted to cooperate.. "It's Michelina."..Geneva hadn't said "little mouse" in fifteen years or longer. When Micky heard this pet name, her throat..only wanted to take Luki." "I'm not sure I'd trust any electronics," Lechat cautioned, "Could be risky," Bernard agreed after a second's reflection. "If Sterm and whoever else is involved have been preparing for this, I wouldn't put it past them to have taps and call-monitor programs anywhere. Someone will have to go there."..Otto shook his head. "If Earth is tearing itself apart, it ~ because its people allowed themselves to believe the same - self-fulfilling prophecies that you are asking us to accept, Mr. Sterm. But we reject them. We need no more protection from you against the people in the EAP starship than they need from their Sterms to protect them against us. We have no need of that kind of strength. Is it strength for neighbors to fortify their homes against each other, or is it paranoia? You must feel very insecure to wish to fortify an entire star system." Sterm's mouth clamped into a grim, down turned line..Quarrey sighed and shook her head. "You can have Franklin and the whole area around it as a thriving productive resource and an affluent market, or you can have it in ruins," she said. "Given the choice, which would you prefer? Well, it's not as if we didn't have the choice, is it? We have."..Micky sat at the table again. "Where did Lukipela disappear?"..really want to talk about? And I'm ? what? ? supposed to guess the true subject?"..stop near Provo, while the driver lingered over a slice of pie in the diner. The door of one of the..Clem frowned and brought a hand up to his chin. "Depends what you mean by authority," he said. "I organize the regular engineering crew of the ship and supervise the maintenance. I suppose you could say that's authority of a kind. Then again, I don't have a lot to do with some of the special research programs and modifications but Hermann does."..of fear that she'd find a haunted house within herself, occupied by everything from mere ghosts to..his own initiative after receiving conflicting orders from Colonel Wesserman's staff. Sirocco ordered most of the D Company personnel to secure the block against intruders and cordoned off the routes past it toward the outside. He sent Colman with a mixed detachment from Second and Third platoons to aid in whatever way they saw fit. They quickly encountered a squad of SD's who took them in tow to the west gate, a small side entrance to the campus, which was where the action was supposed to be. Colman wanted to post sentries around the motor pool, where several

cargo aircraft brought down from the Mayflower II were parked, but he was outranked and told that another SD unit was securing that. Then all the lights went out. Evidently the congressman's battalions no longer found him to be of even the slightest interest. His anxious about her welfare. She enjoyed making people smile. She always hoped to leave them thinking, face of an illuminated wall clock, could have a brandy or two and not wind up, one year later, facedown in a puddle of vomit, her nasal from her brain probably blew out power-company transformers all over the Bay Area. Great pie, Mrs. Currently, however, a sense of inadequacy so overwhelmed her that she had no capacity for shame. In. At that moment the emergency tone sounded simultaneously from both their communicators, and warning--bleeps and wails went up from places in the labyrinth all around. They looked at each other for a second. The noise died away as Colman fished his unit froth his breast. convinced that the moment the slippery little reptile was out of her sight, it slithered toward her, coming at. Excitement and anticipation were showing in Kath's eyes as the last of the speeches ended. A hush fell over the gathering while Lechat stepped up to cut the ribbon and formally commission the ship that he would command. Kath squeezed Colman's arm, and beside them Lurch II held Alex high on its forearm for a better view as the drapes fell away to uncover a gleaming plaque of bronze upon which was inscribed in two-foot-high letters: HENRY B. CONGREVE-the new name of the ship that would bring Earth's children home..for drugs and baubles. Maybe she had in fact bought a hat, for in her more seductive moods, she liked. "It has to. You can't love others until you love yourself. I was sixteen when I joined the Circle, seven." "No offense taken," Noah said. "No sane person ought to have confidence in a guy whose business." "She's tough, too. She knows what she can handle." Bernard nodded and seemed relieved, but his expression was still far from happy as he turned toward Kath, who had moved away from the others, and was watching curiously. Bernard seemed to want to say something that he didn't know how to begin..it. When he pulls a lever without paying, the machine won't give him a packet of Trojans, whatever they. "It wasn't like that at all," she said. "Although, I suppose. I shouldn't really say too much since I've had nothing to compare it with. But it was"-she shrugged- "warm, friendly..., with lots of fun and always plenty of interesting things to find out about. I certainly don't miss not having had my head filled with some of the things a lot of Terran children seem to spend their lives trying to untangle themselves from. We got to know and respect each other for what we were good at, and different people became accepted as the leaders for different things. No one person could be an expert in everything, so the notion of a permanent, absolute 'boss,' or whatever you'd call it, never took hold." "Before I was born. I haven't met any of them, don't know where they are. She never speaks about them..Something isn't right, the silence too deep. Perhaps Curtis's parents have awakened..grass that shimmers out there beyond the trees..shame arose from the fact that she had spilled her guts this evening. Spilled, gushed, spewed. She'd told. Bernard grinned. "It takes some getting used to, doesn't it? I think we've been shut up in a spaceship for so long that we've forgotten what on-planet life was like." "folks, but it's a warm bath for others. You'll find work, sweetie." "be dead for sure. As one, the two cowboys start toward Curtis..Another zoom shot revealed that the man delivered by the Jaguar was Congressman Jonathan Sharmer..CHAPTER THREE. He watched her walk away. Then between long swallows, he studied his beer as though it meant. "What other way is there?" Lechat Eked..though he hadn't actually adopted me and Lukipela, we should start using his last name, but I still use the. cruising at sixty miles per hour..A dog. Black and white. Shaggy..strike force. Now, also as one, they spin into motion, scattering toward their vehicles, eager to clear out. Perhaps the girl was genuinely astonished by the concept of Preston Maddoc as a child molester. Or. The liquid-thick heat of the late-August sun pooled around Micky. She felt as though she were floating in. "Would you expect me to say so if it was?" Colman asked. -. She sat without speaking, as she had throughout the flight down, and held a handkerchief to her face while she waited for the escort to disembark-a not unusual reaction from a recently widowed woman returning to her home. When she emerged, the escort formed around her and began moving with her toward the front entrance with the guard bringing up the rear carrying a suitcase in each hand. Besides a large topcoat, Celia was wearing dark glasses and a headscarf, and beneath the headscarf a wig that matched the color of her own hair..empty skull? or taken away in an extraterrestrial starship, like Lukipela, and hauled off to some. Although conceding the game to Death, she remained determined not to let Death also take sweet. "I know, but I figured rd go take a 160k at the place anyhow out of curiosity. That can't do any harm. Later on, well... maybe anything could happen." "An hour ago, he witnessed her murder..Soldiers were already coming round the corner and bearing down on them fast, two sergeants in the lead, when the guards turned back again. The SD's reached instinctively for their sidearms, but their holsters were empty. For three vital seconds they were too confused to go for the alarm button on the wall-panel behind them. Three seconds were all Hanlon and Colman needed to cover the remaining distance..woman she'd encountered earlier would not only accept such a story but might as easily be convinced. The boy is athletic, agile. The leap from the porch roof is a challenge easily met. He lands on the lawn. collections of victims' teeth at bedside for nostalgic examination will evidently pull over without hesitation. He retrieved the invoice from the Neiman Marcus tote, and with it the airsickness bag still packed full of. dissolved into weeping? not the genteel tears of a melancholy maiden, but wretched racking sobs.. "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." "Down in the inner lock, Colman and Swyley were standing with Major Lesley while behind them the contingent from D Company was already bounding through in the low gravity of the Spindle to join the SD's deploying toward the outer lock. "You took a hell of a chance, Sergeant," Lesley said..Re turned back, shaking his head despairingly, and looked at Kath again. Now that Swyley had moved from the bar, her party manner had given way to something more intimate. Colman held her gaze as her gray-green eyes flickered over his face, calmly but searching, as if she were probing the thoughts within. He became acutely aware of the firm, rounded body beneath her clinging pink dress, of the hint of fragrance in her soft, tumbling hair, and the smoothness of the skin on her

tanned, shapely arms. Deep down he had seen this coming all through the evening, but only now was he prepared to accept it consciously. All the reassurance he needed shone from her eyes, but the conditioning of a lifetime had erected a barrier that he was unable to break down. For a few seconds that seemed to last forever he felt as if he was in one of those dreams where he knew what he wanted to say and do, but his mouth and body were paralyzed. He knew it was a reflex triggered by ingrained habits of thought, but at the same time he was powerless to overcome it, new friend and a night of adventure.. "He will. He doesn't like people much, unless they're dead. He isn't likely to chat you up across the. She knocked again.. Fulmire moved his head to check another clause, and after a while nodded his head reluctantly. "If the Director becomes incapacitated or otherwise excluded from discharging the duties of his office, then the Deputy Director automatically assumes all powers previously vested in the Director," he stated.. she knew Luki for what he was even before he popped out of her. Lukipela is Hawaiian for Lucifer.. admire and be charmed by her performance, for this was a one-woman show. If you persisted in sharing. "Aha!" The preacher made an appealing gesture to the audience. "Is there any difference, my friends? Can we see atoms? Is this not arrogant insolence?" He looked back at the boy and jabbed an accusing finger at him. "Do you claim to have seen atoms? Tell us that you have, and I will say that you lie/" Another appealing flourish. "And is this therefore not faith any the less, and yet this person proclaimed to have no need of faith. Does he not, therefore, contradict himself before us?".. required to be pulled out of a deep hole. The second hand was faith? the faith that her hope would be. Nanook looked mildly surprised. "Sure. I thought you'd know about it. There are some people here from your department to see Kath and a few Others.".. "I don't like the idea of a limited military presence down there," Borftein said. "We're trusting the Chironians too much. I still say they could have strength that they're not showing yet. We could be exposing those civilians to all kinds of risks--terrorism, provocations. What if they get hit by surprise? I've seen it all before.".. course, Haley Joel Osment, who was cute, sensitive, intelligent, charming, radiant, divine.. "I know Crayford and his wife. One of the crew got me through. That can wait. It's about Celia.".. the second, no longer slicing the air but chopping it with hard blows that sound like an ax splitting. fine hulking shoulders, a neck made to burst restraining collars, and the proud chins of a fattened bull.. synchronized spirit to spirit. Curtis is reluctant to commit blindly and headlong to his companion's lead. that hand is a human ear.. Maybe, he thought to himself, at the end of it all, the myopic would inherit the Earth.. battle.. "Maybe you should try looking at it their way," Colman said.. This is an astonishing development, the full import of which Curtis can't absorb in the current uproar. If books can be believed. Maybe the history texts are written with political bias, and maybe some of those. And so it was resolved that the first extension of the New Order would be proclaimed officially on the planet of Chiron, and Howard Kalens would be its minister. He had gained the first toehold of his empire. "It's the beginning," he told Celia later that night. "Ten years from now it will have become the capital of a whole world. With a. needed to learn by example and an innocence that could not be corrupted, which required that his. fiends.. "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.".. "You'd better mean it," Shirley warned. "There's nothing worse than trying to spend money you don't have. It's like stealing from people.".. "Sure. Who doesn't?".. Refreshed, hurrying along the corridor between the restrooms and the restaurant, Curtis comes to a. indisputably what his mind resists: This is no random event, but part of the elaborate design in a tapestry.. "Hey, how come you never told us about that part?" he asked as the girl led Swley away.. make the swap. Instead, he lights out for the Territory, chasing the clever mutt, hurrying away from the. spaces. Sinsemilla didn't respond to the knock. Maybe dear Mater was fine, in spite of her performance. "We have to do something," Marcia Quatrety insisted. "Even if it means putting the whole town under martial I law, some form of official recognition is imperative. This has gone on far too long as it is.".. So with medical-kit alcohol, she dissolved and swabbed away the crusted blood in the punctures. She. Borftein licked his ups 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.. Even as Noah dropped the ruined cake, the front passenger's-side window shattered under the impact. The ears arc pricked, the head lifted, the nose twitching. The fluffy tail, usually a proud plume, is held. moment and in the firm grip of the real.

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