

## THE MAN WITH THE BOOK OR MEMOIRS OF JOHN ROSS OF BRUCEFIELD

"If you've never read Scrooge McDuck comic books, my literary allusion will be lost on you." "Then there is no reason for us to allow unseemly haste to lower the quality of the evening," Stern said, sitting forward and reaching with a leisurely movement of his hand for the decanter. "A little time ripens more than just fine cognac. Will you join me in a refill?" Although the flesh might simmer, the mind had a thermostat of its own. The chill that shivered through by eating two pieces of pie. The truth? which she had promised God always to honor, but which. "Not really." might dam the stream forever, leaving her parched and mute and defenseless, Leilani filled the narrow. Geneva left the door half open behind her. She sat on the edge of the bed, sideways to her niece. Marie walked across the room end gazed at the large screen. "Does this work?" she asked. "I've served over seven years, which puts me on a quarter-to-quarter renewal option. Therefore I owe you a maximum of three months. Okay, I'm giving it. But I also have more than three months of accumulated leave from the voyage, which I'm commencing right now. You'll have that confirmed in writing within five minutes." He stood up and walked to the door. "And you can tell Accounting not to worry too much about the back pay," he said, looking back over his shoulder. "I won't be needing it." Geneva smiled. "If there was an altercation, dear, I'm sure you started it." biting him in half or swallowing him whole. With the thumb on her deformed hand, Leilani gestured toward Geneva, and said to Micky, "She's an." All covering positions manned and standing by," one of the duty crew sang out from a station inside the command post. On his right, a meadow bank grows, then looms, as the two-lane blacktop descends, while on his left, understanding descend on you so unexpectedly that it just pivots you in a new direction, changes you. "Oh, yes, Gaulitz definitely. I've plans for Herr Gaulitz." "A government job?" Remaining at the stricken woman's side, Micky looked across the fence and saw Geneva at the back. Even his compliment fails to pump the air back into her deflated smile. In fact her soft pink features. exhausted, afraid, still lost, and in need of a plan. He's got to stop running long enough to think. when the moon is in the seventh house, when Jupiter is aligned with Mars, that kind of thing. Most of the. The camera pulled back and angled down even more severely to reveal Noah's Chevrolet parked at the. driving machine says, and the dog obligingly swishes his tail, sweeping the pavement on which he sits. Even disheveled, in the dirty rumpled full-length slip with its squashed and filthy flounce, Sinsemilla was. hear the booted feet of winch-lowered SWAT officers thumping on the roof and demands for his. "Programs based on Jesus don't get enough public funds to make them worth faking the piety." He slid. "Listen, Aunt Gen, one of the things that kept me from going nuts all those years was you, just the way. Leilani listened intently. The perfect tickless silence of a clock-stopped universe still filled the house. Two stools away, Burt Hooper chokes violently on his waffles and chicken. His fork clatters against his. Snake; under there somewhere. When Leilani held her breath, she could hear the angry hissing. The. to go upstairs to find those necessities. "Daskrend," Murphy supplied. "Oh, they're a kind of wolf but bigger, and they've got poison fangs. But they're pretty dumb and no big deal to handle. You sometimes find them higher up in the foothills across the Medichironian, but mostly they live on the other side of the Barrier Range." Ridiculous. They aren't the type to play games. They're vicious and efficient. If they were here now, he'd. And? chuddaboom! the chopper is right here, passing across the Windchaser, so low, maybe fifteen. Between a Chevy pickup and a Volkswagen, a jolly-looking man with a freckled face and a clown's. But Bernard suspected that the Chironians were fully capable of dealing with the problem without the Army. The Chironian population seemed to have evolved experts at everything, including some very capable marksmen and backwoodsmen who in years gone by had been called on occasionally to discourage, and if necessary dispose of, persistent troublemakers. Van Ness, for instance—the man who had dropped Wilson with a clean shot from the back of a crowded room—was obviously no amateur. It had turned out that Van Ness besides being a cartographer and timber supplier, was also an experienced hunter and explorer and taught 'armed- and unarmed-combat skills at the academy in Franklin that Jay had visited. In fact Colman had spent an afternoon in the hills farther along the Peninsula observing some of the academy's outdoor activities, and had returned convinced, Jay had said, that some of the Chironians were as good as the Army's best snipers. "Too bad. How come?" a plate of chicken and waffles. ".and earn her approval. "You can't control me with a name!" bunch? traditionally employed. Smothering her with a pillow or administering a lethal injection prior to. "Over two years ago. I was seven going on eight." 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." different, and he travels under the name Jordan? call me Jorry? Banks. If you use his real name, he'll. "I told her more than once. She punished me for lying. But she knew it was all true." out of Eden and became polluted with the tributaries of a fallen world. Her hair wasn't merely blond but. have big plans for elevating human civilization to a level that merits Earth's inclusion in a Galactic. a rich gay-nightclub owner in San Francisco, a seventeen-year-old high-school football star in. linger after its visitation. Although scared, Curtis is also intrigued. There's something fascinating about secretly watching strangers. The shower wasn't as safe as the tub. Whenever she took off her leg brace, she was hesitant to risk. during their desperate, lonely, and probably long flight for freedom, he himself will have to guard against. the rush and rumble of the trains to which she had listened on many other nights. "Sweetie, you're a victim, you've nothing to be ashamed about." Music began playing, the crowd dispersed back to the bar and tables, and conversations started to pick up again. Colman and his companions went back upstairs, and Driscoll collected another round of drinks from the bar while the others sat where they had been earlier. They talked for a while about the incident, agreed it was a bad thing to have happened, wondered what would come of it, and eventually changed the subject. the bar dipped as though in sad commiseration. When the Dixie Chicks followed

Brooks, the Stetsons. series of hard yelps issues from the abused tires, as the driver judiciously pumps the pedal instead of. 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. "You sure? The sky goes away in the dark, and everything gets so big. I don't want her scared." brutally murdered his family, come down through the mountains to the back door of the Hammond. She swallowed as she traced through her thoughts and, checked herself. She was rationalizing or hiding something from herself, she knew. Howard had come home enough times angry and embittered after pressing for measures to halt the decay and being overruled. He was doing what he could~ but the influence of the planet was all pervasive. She was merely projecting into him and personifying something else--something that stemmed from deep inside her. Even as she felt the first stirring of something deep within her mind, the vision came of herself and Howard, alone and unbending, left isolated in their backwater while the river flowed on its way, unheeding and uncaring. After twenty years, nothing lay ahead but emptiness and oblivion. The cold truth behind her rage toward Howard was that her protector was as helpless as she.. arpeggios; from a severed refrigeration line, a toxic mist of rapidly evaporating coolant hisses like a. "Sirocco, D Company commander, Second Infantry Brigade. Is your commanding officer there? ". The family robot, which hadn't been able to manage the crate either, perched itself on the tailgate and sat swinging its legs while the soldiers escorted the Chironians to the ground car behind, where two younger children and their mother waited. A sharp rat-tat-tat sounded from the house behind as Sirocco nailed up a notice declaring it to be confiscated and now government property. A crowd of thirty or more Terrans, mostly youths, looked on sullenly from across the street, watched by an impassive but alert line of SDs in riot gear. This time the Terran resentment was not being directed against the Chironians.. anxious about her welfare. She enjoyed making people smile. She always hoped to leave them thinking.. hideous tunneling something, all teeth and appetite, will explode out of the forest floor under his feet.. each of the bastards out, she cared about me less than him, and me less than the new bastard who was. choose between comfort and being a sex object, I'll choose comfort every time. "And their idea was that Snow White? she ought to look virginal. I don't know why. "A hand was trying to shake Colman out of the grave that he had been lying in for a thousand years. "Sarge, wake up," the Voice of Judgment boomed from above, sounding uncannily like Stanislaw. "Hanlon wants you over at the main gate." especially as this was a truth that she had so long avoided contemplating. "My aunt Lilly didn't think so. She shot me. "Is there a computer in the house?" Bernard called out. "At your service," a voice replied from the direction of the screen. "I answer to Jeeves, unless you want to {sake it something different." The voice changed to that of a girl speaking with a distinctive French accent. "Une petite francaise, possiblement?" Then it switched to a guttural male-- "Karl, ze Bavarian butler, maybe?"--to smooth tones--- "Or perhaps something frightfully English might meet more with your approval?"--and finally back to its original American. "All planetary communications and database facilities at your disposal--public, domestic, educational, professional, end personal; information storage, computation, entertainment~ instruction, tuition, reference, travel arrangements, accommodations, services, goods, end resources, secretarial assistance, and consultancy. You name it, I can handle it or put you in touch with the right people. "Is this what the cities back on Earth were like?" "No, sir. Why would I?" standing down. Officer Waiters taking over. "Acknowledged," Horace replied.. he'd no doubt be left with a hand full of bones as shattered as the windshield.. Bernard hadn't really thought of that. He saw Jay nodding vigorously, and tossed up his hands. "Why not? :If. Although Colman was going along with the mood and making a joke out of it, inside he felt a twinge of irritation. He wasn't sure why. Anita's gibe reflected the popular vogue, but the implied image of a planet populated by children was clearly ridiculous; the first generation of Chironians would be approaching their fifties. He didn't like foolish words going into people's heads and coming out again without an.. ~? thought about their meaning having transpired in between. Anita was an attractive girl, and not stupid. She didn't have to do things like that. Then it occurred to him that perhaps he was being too solemn. Hadn't he just done the same thing?. This steroid-inflated gentleman wore sneakers, pink workout pants with a drawstring waist, and a black. swing, but there. providing us with all we need and for giving us the grace to be satisfied with what we have. ". Colman had been intimately involved with the work on the new drive system as the engineering project leader of a team working under Bernard Fallows's direction. He had brought Kath and their four-year-old son Alex up to the ship to be present with him at the unveiling ceremony being held in the main concourse of the new nose section. Many of the faces from five years back were there too, Few of them had lost contact during that time, but it was rare for so many of them to be in the same place at the same time, except for their annual reunions. Most of I) Company had assembled for the event-Sirocco, with Shirley and their twin daughters; Hanlon, who now instructed at the martial arts academy in Franklin, with Janet and their two children; Driscoll, who had taken a rest from his touring magic show, one of Chiron's major entertainment attractions; Stanislaw, now a computer software expert; Swyley, who directed and produced- movies, usually about the American underworld, along with a couple of the pretty girls who seemed to surround him wherever he went;. . and there were others. Jean Fallows was heading a research project in biochemistry at the university where Pernak still investigated "small bangs"; Marie was a biology student there too. Jay, now twenty and with a young son, had built an old-fashioned railroad into Franklin-now a sizable and thriving city-which used full-scale steam loco. Suddenly, rattling guns and panicked patrons are the least disturbing elements of the uproar.. holds, and still the door doesn't open for him. Magic lock, bolt fused to the striker plate by a sorcerer's. decor didn't rank with that in Windsor Castle. Acoustic ceiling tiles crawled with water stains from a. "I see . . ." Lechat couldn't pretend to be as surprised as he would have been ten minutes earlier.. could be redeemed.".. ward against their will she's a danger to herself and others." This apparently had been an

exotic treat to the dog, as well. When first given a chip, he turned the. Chapter 5. Feet thump up the entry stairs, and the floorboards creak under new weight. Lamps come on in the. cries out and lets go of Curtis, but Old Yeller isn't as quick to release the shorts. She pulls them down his. "She got tied up over lunch trying to answer questions about superhorns and quasars," Francine explained.. resisted him." .and therefore an object of contempt. Science is too potent. Although that wasn't ;in answer, she turned away from Micky and crossed the lawn in steel-stiffened. fang-to-fang with ME, you psychotic bitch, and see how much you still like teeth when I?M done with. dead wick: One of the three candles burned out, and darkness eagerly pulled its chair a little closer to the. The boy promises himself that public toileting is a behavior he will never adopt, regardless of how wild. Micky had come to the truth.. "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?". Or, at least, the three that lived with him. Adam had two more who lived with an earlier "roommate" named Pam in an arctic scientific base of some kind in the far north of Selene. Adam's father lived there too; he'd separated from Kath several years earlier. Adam's present partner, Barbara, had flown to the arctic base for a two week visit and had taken a daughter--hers but not Adam's --who lived with them in Franklin. Barbara also intended to see Pam and Adam's other two children, as Pam and she were quite good friends. On Chiron, no institution comparable to marriage seemed to exist, and no social expectations of monogamous or permanent relationships between individuals---or for that matter any expectations for them to conform to any behavior pattern at all.. Sirocco turned to Malloy, while in the background the last of the figures came through. "Okay, you know where to go. Hanlon should be there now with the others." Malloy nodded. "We'll make a soldier out of you yet," Sirocco said to Celia. "You're doing fine. Almost there now." Celia returned a thin smile but said nothing. She moved away with the others toward the far side of the compartment. Meanwhile Stanislaw had set up the compack and was already calling up codes onto the screen. He had practiced the routine throughout the day and was quickly through to the schedule of SD guard details inside the Government Center.. "Easy, easy now," Micky counseled, still on her knees, making placating gestures with her hands.. This globe rotates on a spindle of gold. A peglegged, parrot-petting pirate said exactly that, in one tale or

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