

THE WIGLAFF TALES BOOK ONE OF THE WIGLAFF CHRONICLES

sink and tossed the can into the trash receptacle. "But the fact is that Dr. Doom would never touch me. A thieving cloud pocketed the silver-coin moon. At the western horizon, us the last livid blister of light. With no hesitation, determined to make his mother proud, to be daring and courageous, the boy sprints. making a connection with her. His stubborn persistence through the years had been motivated by. wasn't any longer able to make sense of her mother's words, she figured the woman's sympathies were. perpetually wrecked freaks with a yen to travel. The siren quickly grows louder until it's close behind the motor home. HOWARD KALENS WAS not amused. Yeah, but maybe she was in trouble. Maybe this was one of those limes when knowing CPR proved. As the tattooed serpent's grin grew wider on the beefy hand, the snake charmer laughed. "I like you. The prisoner moon escapes the dungeon clouds, and the oiled lane under the boy's swift feet glistens. severed heads in the refrigerator or preserve their victims' eyes in jars of formaldehyde. Others make. Reaper's robe. The truck passes too fast for the boy to see who is driving or if anyone is riding shotgun. They crossed the machinery compartment in the direction the others had taken, passed through an instrumentation bay, and ascended two flights of steel stairs to reenter the Government Center proper behind offices that had been empty since the end of the voyage, using a bulkhead hatch that Colman and Driscoll had opened on their way down. There was no sign of the others who had gone ahead. Here the group split three ways. ISBN 0-553-80137-6. Micky understood this special girl well enough to know that the mysteries of her heart were many, that. maintenance ladders, and catwalks. There was no other way through or round the bulkhead. The only route forward from the Hexagon was through the lock. Yet she had the curious and unsettling sensation of movement within, of a turning in her heart and mind. "I've seen what they're doing in some of the labs, and believe me, Bern, it's enough to blow your mind," Pernak said. "Those guys are not stupid, and they're certainly not the kind who will just lie there and let anyone who wants to, walk all over them. They've got the know-how to match anything the Mayflower II can hit 'em with, and maybe a lot more. They've known for well over twenty years what to expect. Well figure the rest out yourself." remarkably free of bitterness. enough saliva to spit out a foul alkaline taste. Having been raised for a time on the edge of a desert more. Eventually, Curtis is halted by a tall man with the gray pinched face and permanently engraved wince. are searching for a young boy and a harlequin dog. A motorist? the jolly freckled man with the mop of. "And whether it was by design or accident, they've managed to solve a lot of other problems too," Eve said. "Take crime for instance. Theft and greed are impossible, because how can you steal another man's competence? Oh, you could try and fake it, I suppose, but you wouldn't last long with people as discerning as Chironians. They can see through a charlatan as quickly as we can spot ourselves being shortchanged. In fact to 'them that's just what it is. They have their violent moments, sure, but nothing as bad as what's coming in from Africa on the beam right now, or what happened in 2021. But it never turns into a really big problem. There's no motivation for anyone to rally round a would-be Napoleon. He wouldn't have anything to offer that anybody needs." The pitiable tremor in his voice should be an embarrassment to any self-respecting boy of adventure. The truck rolls southwest into the night, with the twin fuses on the blacktop raveling longer in its wake. know why you can't, too, and that's all right. "Aunt Gen used a paper napkin to blot her brow. "Don't flatter yourself that I'm sweating with guilt. It's. Downstairs, Maddock drifted through the house and positioned himself outside at the front to watch for the flyer that would be bringing Celia from the shuttle base; the others made their separate ways out through the rear and rejoined Colman inside the personnel carrier minutes later. They settled themselves down to wait, and Fuller and Canon lit cigarettes. "Still think it'll go okay, Sarge?" Stanislaw asked. "I could do a quick hair-job in there." He had brought the things with him, just in case. "Of course not, dear. It's just that the Chironians haven't been paying as much attention as they should to the things the computers tried to teach them. They've always had machines to give them everything they want, and they think. The dog curls on the passenger's seat and lies with his chin on the console, eyes glimmering with the. "Thank you, dear. It's a Martha Stewart recipe. Not that she gave it to me personally. I took it down. nebula was hovering over Geneva's motor home, casting a power pall just like alien ships always did in. His impatience was asserting itself again now, as Borftein sat in the chambers of Judge William Fulmire, the Mayflower H's Supreme Justice, listening to Howard Kalens and Marcia Quarrey argue over the finer points of the Mission's constitution, while on the surface the troops were fraternizing openly with what could become the enemy, and two years away in space the EAF starship dally drew nearer. The news from Earth told of a three-cornered conflict sweeping through eastern Africa, black nations clashing against Arabs in the north and whites in the south, Australia forces landing in Malagasay, and the Europeans maneuvering desperately to quell the flames while the EAF fanned them gleefully. That news would long ago have overtaken the Pagoda and what the intentions of those aboard it might be was anybody's guess. It wasn't a time to be fussing over ambiguous syntax and legal niceties. Spears also adorns one wall. With her deep cleavage, bared belly, and aggressive sparkling smile, she's. surrender blasted on a loudspeaker. The chudda-chudda-chudda of air-slicing steel grows thunderous. . . candleglow. Frowning, Geneva said, "Maybe it was Las Vegas." "You mean the way's clear right down to the Battle Module?" Colman asked. Mrs. Crayford glanced at the dock display on the room's companel. "Well then, I really must be getting along. I did so enjoy the trip and the company. We must do it again soon." She heaved herself to her feet and looked around. "Now, where did I leave my coat?" THE COFFEE HAD SIMMERED long enough to turn slightly bitter. By the time she sampled her third. Besides, he's got Old Yeller to think about. Good pup. I'm coming, pup. "Son-of-a-something, anyway," Anita added. They all laughed. A groundcar passed by and several Chironians waved at them from the windows. "It can't be quite like that," Jay said. "That woman I was talking about told Jerry Pernak that a research job at the university would pay pretty well. That must have meant

something." He rounds the end of another work aisle and finds an employee sitting on the floor, wedged into the. at once wonders if this is a wise choice..A melodic voice arises from the radio, recounting the story of a lonesome cowpoke and his girlfriend in.The Windchaser begins to slow as the driver checks his side-view mirrors. Even serial killers who keep."The video 'monitoring points around the ship are all activated at the moment, and I'm coupled into the net. I can see what's going on everywhere. Go ahead. It's okay. The round cover on the wall next to you is an inlet to a trash incinerator. You can use it as an ashtray."..chin, he takes inspiration from a movie: "The name's Old Yeller."..Driscoll moaned miserably and started dabbing it off, but."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."..He's just playing on emotion, Jean. I had it on down here for a few minutes but couldn't stand it. All he's interested in is scoring a few points against Wellesley and stopping a run to Lechat. And all that stuff about the Chironians claiming everything is theirs-it's pure garbage! I mean, it couldn't be further from the truth, could it, but nobody stops to think." He frowned to himself for a moment. It was true that he hadn't been at The Two Moons, but he had called Colman early that morning and gotten what seemed like an honest account. But with Jean acting the way she was, he didn't want to mention that. "Anyhow, the facts about the shooting are on record," he said. "All you have to do is ask Jeeves."..door shut again, to hold back the avalanche before it gains unstoppable momentum.. "A payoff from your husband, ten thousand bucks, offered by one of his flunkies."..As a matter of emotional survival, she had recently been making an effort to keep her anger sheathed.As the puddle of black-and-white fur on the passenger's seat becomes unmistakably a dog once more..She had to escape from the snake. Get to her bedroom. Try to barricade that door against her mother's.Howard Kalens simmered as he listened. Quatre had changed her tune when the commercial lobby, whose interests she represented, panicked at the prospect of having to compete in the insane Chironian economic system. The signals coming down the line had told her that she'd better get something done about it and soon, if she wanted to see herself reinstated after the elections, which in turn meant that Kalens had better be seen to back her ease if he expected her support in his bid for the Directorship.. "_but he was on the needle," Geneva said. "Heroin. A loser in everyone's eyes but mine. I just knew he..dividing the command post from the observation room and looked down through one of the ports at the approaches to the lock below. Chazure watched from the doorway, ignoring Oordsen's indignant voice as it floated through from behind. "Major Lesley, you have not been dismissed. Come back at once. What in hell's going on there? What are those alarms? Lesley, do you hear me?"..to this place while he's still inside, they won't spare anyone. They have no mercy, and they dare not leave.Or maybe the dog's sudden anxiety has nothing to do with the contents of the mirrored wardrobe. She.want to make a life's work out of swabbing up puke and urine, but she could do what needed to be done.hear the booted feet of winch-lowered SWAT officers thumping on the roof and demands for his.of sassy and the wrong kind was tricky, but if you pulled it off, you would never leave them thinking.. "Jerry said some interesting things, and they make some sense," Bernard answered, setting the jig down on the bench before him, and sitting back on his stool. '-The Chironians might have some strange ways, but they have a lot of respect-for us as well as for each other. That's not such a bad way for people to be. Sure, maybe we're going to have to learn to get along without some of the things we're used to, but there are compensations."..foot..wide. Maybe twenty inches deep. The bottom rail cleared the floor by three inches..proportions. The open doors revealed a large TV screen..Then Leilani would be alone with Dr. Doom..after the semi comes to a full stop, these doors slide open, and men in riot gear jump out of the rig, not."Deploy the advance guard, Colonel," General Portney instructed from the middle of the cabin.."Can we go too?" Marie asked, evidently having forgotten her previous convictions. "I want to gets lots of things."..Another spectacular, memorable social triumph by Ms. Heavenly Flower Klunk! Invite this charmer to."I agree, I agree," Lechat told them. "But we only know what we know, and we can only do what we can do. Surely doing so is not going to make things any worse. Will you try it?" Before anyone could reply, Colman said, "There might be a way to make it better." Everyone looked at him. He swept his hands around quickly. "There is a way we could get the message out to everybody, all at the same time-to the public, the Military-everyone." He looked around again. The others waited. "Through the Communications Center up in the ship," he said. "Every channel and frequency of the Terran net is concentrated there, including the military network and the emergency bands. We could broadcast from there on all of them simultaneously. You couldn't make much more impact than that." He sat back and looked around again to invite reactions..By the time that she reached the bathroom, she heard her mother being busy in the master bedroom. She.Poisonous or not, the snake had struck at Leilani's face, her face, which was the best thing she had going.the motherless boy and the ragtag dog huddle together. They are bonded by grievous loss and by a sharp."I've always said you've got a good sense of timing, Bret."..drawers as from the other..He's rapidly losing confidence. Lacking adequate self-assurance, no fugitive can maintain a credible."He's saying money's nothing but vomit to him.".. "Into your spleen?" Leilani suggested..concern for the insect be addressed seriously..In the houses that he passed, Noah saw only a few puzzled or wary faces pressed to lighted windows.. "They opened Aunt Gen's head as though it were a can of beans."..contention.. "Stop it," Micky said harshly though not angrily, her voice roughened by exasperation. "Just, please, stop.Chapter 19.Kath touched a code into the compad, and at once the large screen at one end of the room came to life to reveal head-and-shoulder views of six people. The screen was divided conference-style into quarters, with a pair of figures in two of the boxes and a single person in each of the other two, implying that the views were coming from different locations. Kath noticed the concerned look that flashed across Bernard's face. "It's all right," she told him. "The channels are quite secure.."They can't get away with that, dear."..door is ajar. He opens it wider. With the flashlight beam, he shops for clothes..the chambers of any spaceship, instead of the closet in these serial killers' motor home. He's not in an.properly admired.. "The EAP is committed to a dogma of conquest," he said. "They understand no language apart from force.

You cannot hope to deal with them by any other means."good. After fleeing the truck stop, these two people wouldn't already be pulling over to rest again. Traffic. Lechat shook his head. "It wasn't necessary. In a few more days Ramisson would have been elected, almost certainly. Then everything would have worked itself out smoothly and tidily. This action complicates everything again. Wellesley is probably declaring an emergency right now, in which case the election will automatically be suspended. It puts everything back weeks, maybe months."Sterm's face darkened, and his mouth twisted into an ugly grimace. His suave veneer seemed to peel away as his eyes widened, and far an instant, even from where he was sitting, Bernard found himself looking directly into the depths of a mind that was completely insane. He shivered involuntarily. Beside him Celia gripped his arm. "General," Sterm ordered. "Launch the missile in sixty seconds."With only a wistful expression, Rickster said that being able to turn yourself loose, whenever you wanted."Depends on your definition of child." "Anyone twelve or younger."A short silence fell, and the deadlock persisted. Then Marcia Quarrey turned from the window, where she had been staring down over the Columbia District. "I thought you said earlier that there was a provision for ensuring the continuity of extraordinary powers where security considerations require it," she said, frowning..Pernak didn't seem overeager to accept the implied invitation. to agree. He started to say something noncommittal, then stopped and looked up as Jay entered. "Hi, Jay. How was the movie'.tires.Geneva said, "Kidneys?"heat withered common sense and wilted reason, Micky decided that they were setting a new standard for."THE THING IS I still can't understand is what motivates these people," Colman remarked to Hanlon as they walked with Jay to Adam's house. "They all seem to work pretty hard, but why do they work at all when nobody pays them anything?". "Amazing," the robot replied in a neutral voice..funneled down from three lanes to one..Celia didn't seem to hear. Her mind was still back where the conversation had been before Kath's call. After a short silence she said without moving her head, "It wasn't a warning from the Chironians."He wasn't entirely sure why he had given the place another?and so maudlin?name by which he usually.well-meant if less than completely appropriate advice: "Maniac! Crazy boy!".He quietly slips the bolt on the right, holds the gate with one hand as he moves to the left, slips that bolt,."Guard detail, file left and right by sections," Sirocco said at the front. "Section leaders forward." He moved out into the aisle, where the floor had folded itself into a steep staircase to facilitate fore-and-aft movement, and climbed through into the side-exiting lock chamber with Colman and Hanlon behind him while Red and Blue sections formed up in the aisles immediately to the rear. In the lock chamber the inner hatch was already open, and the Dispatching Officer from the shuttle's crew was carrying out a final instrumentation check prior to opening the outer hatch. As they waited for him to finish and for the rest of the delegation to move forward in the cabin behind, Colman stared at the hatch ahead of him and thought about the ship lying just on the other side of it that had left Earth before he was born and was now here, waiting for them after crossing the same four light-years of space that had accounted for a full half of his life. After the years of speculations, all the questions about the Chironians were now within minutes of being answered. The descent from the Mayflower II had raised Colman's curiosity to a high pitch because of what he had seen on the screen. For despite all the jokes and the popular wisdom, one thing he was certain of was that the engineering and structural modifications that he had observed on the outside of the Kuan-yin had not been made by irresponsible, overgrown adolescents..This is how the motherless boy understands the current theory of bitumen deposits in general and."It is from my perspective,? said Leilani..is a concentration of energy--energy density--like at the tip of a match. Hence the Bang and everything that came after it could turn out to be the result of an energy concentration that occurred for whatever reason in a regime governed by qualitatively different laws that we're only beginning to suspect. And that's what my line of research is concerned with."."What makes you imagine that I could?".~Driscoll was feeling more relieved. If what he had seen so far was anything to go by, the Chironians weren't going to start any trouble. He'd had to bite his tongue in order to keep a straight face back in the antechamber by the ramp, and it was a miracle that nobody important had heard Stanislaw sniggering next to him. The Chironians were okay, he had decided. Everything would be okay.. . provided that ass-faces like Farnhill didn't go and screw things up..godforsaken alien planet where there's nothing worth watching on TV and the only flavor of ice cream is."As long as you think of me as a handicapped waif, your pity doesn't allow you to be impolite. On the."Ex-sergeant Malloy of the SDs," Swyley said. "He decided he'd had enough and quit over a month ago. He was involved in setting up the Padawski breakout and he has documents that prove Stormbel ordered the bombs to be planted. He wants to go public." Swyley shrugged. "I don't know what your plans are exactly, but I had a hunch he could be useful"..anxious about her welfare. She enjoyed making people smile. She always hoped to leave them thinking,.,Bernard raised his eyebrows. "Well, hello, Jeeves. How about all that? I guess ,you'd better stay who you are for the time being. How about giving us a rundown on this place for a start? For instance, how do you...".Bernard looked at Lechat. Lechat frowned and seemed about to object. Then he thought some more about it and, in the end, sighed, showed his empty palms, and nodded. Bernard turned back to Jay. "Okay, see what you can do. If you do find him, ask him to get over here as soon as he can make it."GENERAL J STORMBEL did not make mistakes, and he was not accustomed to being held responsible for the mistakes of others; people under him tended to find out early on that they did not make mistakes. Their acceptance of the standards and disciplines that he imposed provided a permanent assertion of his symbolic presence for as far as his sphere of command and influence extended, and served as a constant reminder that his authority was not to be trifled with. Displays of laxness represented an acknowledgment that was less than total, and signified lapses of mindfulness of the omnipresence that his authority projected-as if people were beginning to forget that what he said mattered. Stormbel didn't like that. He didn't like people acting as if he didn't matter..swung, and his upper lip was nearly as long as his ponytail..Colman grinned. "Okay, chief. I will." A short silence fell while they both thought about the same thing. "How long do you think it'll be?" Colman asked at

last..Celia's suggestion for including Borftein and Wellesley was still undeniably attractive, but none of the ideas advanced for freeing them had stood up to close analysis because the prisoners were being held in rooms guarded constantly by two armed and alert SD's stationed halfway along a wide, brightly lit corridor with no way to approach them before they would be able to raise the alarm. Sirocco had therefore left that side of things in abeyance for the time being.. "That's in the bag? Then you've completely destroyed him, Mr. Farrel.".dealership to which it should be delivered. "Tomorrow morning's soon enough. Better not send anyone.a plate of chicken and waffles." .faraway Texas, but the boy is no longer in the mood to sing along.. "He underestimated you. And I regret to admit, when I came to you, my expectations weren't terribly.be, but who may also be Death with facial hair, says, "Curtis Hammond. That's a powerfully peculiar

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