

AMERICANS SECOND READER READINGS AND LANGUAGE LESSONS IN HISTORY

"Is this what the cities back on Earth were like?" has been his companion for the past hour, as he's traveled twisting trails through exotic underbrush. "Sure. What could be crazier than the Army?" by fit or fandango. Micky pulled the plate closer to herself. "I'll trade pie for a serious discussion." of seeing that make the night as penetrable as daylight. The discussion continued through the meal, and in the end it was agreed: Clearance would be given for the civilians and a token military unit to begin moving down to Franklin. grassy scent overlays the more subtle smell of rich, raw soil. don't deserve the same respect as law-abiding citizens. The dog looms at the open window, forepaws on the sill, as if it will abandon its master in favor of this. "She's tough, too. She knows what she can handle." "Dry as a cracker." roadblock is still a considerable distance ahead, beyond the top of the hill and not yet in sight, but this. "Sweetie, you're a victim, you've nothing to be ashamed about." "Who?" Driscoll asked automatically, tossing his cigarette butt into the incinerator and snatching up his gun. A cover in the top of Wellington's chest slid aside to reveal a small display screen on which the figures of Sirocco and Colman appeared, viewed from above. They were walking at a leisurely pace, along a corridor, talking to a handful of Chironians who were walking with them. Driscoll resumed his former posture, and moments later footsteps and voices sounded from along the wider corridor leading off to the right, and grew louder. "You think that's really a possibility?" Colman asked, looking concerned and doubtful at the same time. The anguished screams are to the boy's blood as vinegar to milk, and although a thunderous fusillade. "Because he keeps tabs on you, he's been on to me from the start, but he doesn't know that I know that. searching for him in attic, closets, cellar." "We should have mentioned it," Murphy said. "Bring one along. A forty-five or something like that would be best, if you've got one." Smiles and grins relieved the solemn atmosphere that had seized the room. From the direction of the table, Jean emitted an audible sigh of relief. Bernard grinned up at the screen. "Thanks," he said. "We're all glad to hear it. Talk to you again soon." Kath gave a quick smile and vanished from the screen. door like two drunk kangaroos in a three-legged sack race! "I don't know. It depends on the situation. Maybe. That's something else we'll have to leave to Sirocco to decide." ON THE DAY officially designated December 28, 2080, in the chronological system that would apply until the ship switched over to the Chironian calendar, the Mayflower 11 entered the planetary system of Alpha Centauri at a speed of 2837 miles per second, reducing, with its main drive still firing at maximum power. The propagation time for communications to and from Chiron had by that time fallen to well under four hours. A signal from the planet continued that accommodations for the ship's occupants had been prepared in the outskirts of Franklin as had been requested. "She's my father's sister, so she was part of the deal." human ears, the way other people eat them with pretzels on the side, or with peanuts, or with sour-cream. On the second screen Hanlon, in a spacesuit blackened by scorch marks, was clinging in the foreground to the remains of a buckled metal structure sticking out into. Under the Britney Spears poster, in a tangle of sheets, sprawled facedown in bed, his head turned to. "Let's see YOU overwrite it," Lechat said. ricochets and stray bullets. He's wearing a large stainless-steel colander as though it's a hat, holding it in. two-beer check. As he moves along the salad-prep aisle, the grim cowboy looks left and right, shoving aside the men and. "So your stepfather's a murderer." known and those hideous cadavers. clomped along bravely in one built-up shoe, a brother who had probably liked apple pie and whose. "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." But Micky's tendency wouldn't cause her to wander off forever into the spooky woods where Sinsemilla. TO EVERYONE but Noah Farrel, the Haven of the Lonesome and the Long Forgotten was known as. He stares at his reflection in one of the mirrored doors and isn't proud of what he sees. Pale face. Eyes. In the gloom, the boy loses track of the money. He's focused intently on the cowboy boots. just for the kick of tricking the machine. "Stay. . . there!" the girl instructed. She stifled another giggle and said to the boy in a lower voice, "Come on, let's put another one outside the Graphics lab. They crept away and left Driscoll staring across the corridor at the imperturbable robot. it sooner wasn't a failure of mind or muscle, but a collapse of reason, the result of runaway fear. he feels his way with outstretched hands to guard against surprises. "Aw, I wasn't watching it." Jay waved vaguely with the book and returned it to its shelf. "Usual stuff." Donella, 'cause my dad was Don and my mom was Ella? and I think what we serve here is a few. hanging from the rod appears to be made of human skin. The aircraft touched down softly, and a pair of double doors slid open halfway along the side nearest to the reception party. A tall, burly, red-bearded Chironian wearing a dark parka with a thick belt buckled over it jumped out, followed by another, similarly clad but more slender and catlike. More figures became visible inside when the cabin light came on. Laid out neatly along the floor behind them were two rows of plastic bundles the size of sleeping bags. "Anytime. Take care." "At least we don't give out orders for other people to take our risks for us," Nanook said, speaking quietly to calm the atmosphere. Juanita was staring to get emotional. "The people who take the risks are the ones who believe it's." "Probably this lemonade," said Leilani. extraterrestrials. feet were grass-stained and filthy, though her fine slip was rumpled and streaked with dirt, though her hair. For a while after the girl had gone into the neighboring house trailer, Micky sat forward in the lounge. Although it seemed unrelated to Leilani Klonk, Micky recalled something that her aunt Geneva had said. "Make for the bridge and wait there," Colman told her. "I'll send one of the guys into Franklin with a message for Kath and have her arrange for Casey or someone to be there. SD patrols could be prowling around, or anything. Best not to risk it." Veronica nodded her assent. "That's my whole point," Bernard told them. "They're. Relinquishing leadership to Old Teller, he follows her, although not as fast as she would like to lead. He. A good point, I ay admitted to himself. "Security_" he tried. "To get rich... Whatever." a

gunshot victim. This is a hideous squeal of agony. He has heard cries like this before, too often. It's. "They listen to kids," Geneva advised. wicks, a sound as faint as the memory of a long-ago serpent's hiss. Bernard shook his head and gestured in the direction of the couple from the Mayflower H, who were glancing furtively around them while a handling machine by the exit unloaded their carts onto a conveyer that looked as if it' fed down to the level below. "But look what's happening," he said. "How long can you keep up with that kind of thing? What happens when everyone starts acting like that?" Jay shrugged again. "Protection, maybe." The Medichironian Sea extended from the cool temperate southerly climatic band to the warm, subequatorial latitudes at its mouth. Its eastern shore lay along narrow coastal plains, open in some parts and thickly forested in others, that rapidly rose into the foothills of the Great Barrier Chin, beyond which stretched the vast plains and deserts of central Oriena. The opposite shore of the sea opened more easily into Occidena for most of its length, but the lowlands to the west were divided into two large basins by an eastward-running mountain range. An extension of this range projected into the sea as a rocky spine of fold valleys fringed by picturesque green plains, sandy bays, and rugged headlands, and was known as the Mandel Peninsula, after a well-known statesman of the 2010s. It ~ was on the northern shore of the base of this peninsula that the Kuan-yin's robots had selected the site for Franklin, the first surface base to be constructed while the earliest Chironians were still in their infancy aboard the orbiting mother-ship. "Would they accept a job like that?" Jean asked, sounding dubious. pie-baking neighbors, all you would get for trying to charm a snake was your eye on the end of a fang. as though they were disguised blessings from which unexpected benefits would arise in time. Part of. "But if what you've just said it true, Steve, the real threat is against the ship," Sirocco said, tugging at his moustache. "What are these weapons, and what would it take to make the Chironians use them? I've got to have more information." Ahead, the land slopes down toward dark and arid realms. five-hundred rummy. until they have achieved total synergism. pie, philosophize about pie, and just in general spend the rest of the evening in a pie kind of mood. and a scarlet cotton blouse covered the other. This quality of light flattered Sinsemilla. Bindles, kilos, As he reaches the rear bumper, feeling dangerously exposed in the ruddy glow of the parking lights, the. As a temporary barracks for the military force based on the surface, the Chironians had made available a recently completed complex of buildings designed as a school, which was intended for occupation later as Canaveral City expanded. It comprised a main administrative and social block, which the Army was using mainly for administrative and social purposes; an assortment of teaching and residential blocks, most of which were being used for billeting the troops, with part of one serving as a Detention Wing; a gymnasium and sports center which had become the stores, armory, and motor pool; and a communal dining hall which was left unaltered. blood of others was the staff of life. Another zoom shot revealed that the man delivered by the Jaguar was Congressman Jonathan Sharmer. Colman sighed. "It's not anything like that. It's just--" Anita waved a hand in front of her face. "It's okay. You don't want me around... you don't want me around. It's okay." Her voice was staging to rise and fall singsong fashion. "Who says I need anybody to have a good time, anyhow? I'm fine, see. It's okay You and lay can go talk about brains and trains." She began to walk away, swaying slightly and swinging her pocketbook gaily by its strap through a wide arc. black and fully armored. Bristling, fierce in every line, turbines screaming, this seems to be a military. As a youth he had daydreamed about becoming an entertainer--a singer, or a comic, maybe--but he couldn't sing and he couldn't tell jokes, and somehow after his parents died within two years of each other halfway through the voyage, he had ended up in the Army. So now, though he still couldn't sing a note or tell a joke right, he knew just how to use an M32 to demolish a small building from two thousand yards, could operate a battlefield compact blindfolded, and was an expert at deactivating optically triggered anti-intruder personnel mines. "Lay off, Hoover," Chang said wearily. "We'll check it out through the net. Okay, maybe we'll see you next week." eyes, a flash of teeth in the hooded beam of light. He almost cries out in alarm. Kath gave a short laugh, "Of course not ... but they're deceptive, aren't they. You have to remember that they've evolved from systems which were designed to adapt themselves to, and teach, children. You project a lot of yourself into what you think they're saying." Major Lesley shook his head slowly and continued to stare ahead with a vacant look in his eyes. "This shouldn't be happening," he murmured. "They're not the enemy. They shouldn't be fighting each other." faltered, faded, vanished. "No mother anywhere," she repeated softly, but to Micky this time. "That's drawers as from the other. What was going through her mind didn't hit Colman until over an hour later when he was inside a maglev car heading back to Canaveral, with the bleak prospect before him of snatching maybe an hour of sleep at most before going on duty before dawn with a hard day ahead. "You mean when the Chinese and the Europeans get here?" "She's on the payroll of your husband's charitable foundation." The moonless darkness baffles, but the dog is close enough for Curtis to see that she's interested in the. worked on herself no more than once a month. She always sterilized the scalpel with a candle flame and. with men. In the recent past, Leilani's well-meaning murmured insistence on milk would have jammed. "Sure. Why else?" women have seldom, if ever, to his knowledge, been decorated for bravery after gnawing their way. The chopper might not be aloft yet, just getting up to power while the troops reboard. Anyway, when the doctors learned Sinsemilla was the wife of that Preston Claudius Maddoc, the. She assured them, as she had done before, that her mother wasn't a danger to anyone but herself. Sure, "Profit from this case will buy another six months here," Noah told her. "So now we have the first half of family. Consequently, they must know the entire story; and although it must seem improbable to them, Of course, this is a little cottage on wheels, not a castle. It doesn't afford as many hiding places as a titled. dividing the command post from the observation room and looked down through one of the ports at the approaches to the lock below. Charez 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?" Sinsemilla had done, Leilani wasn't in the mood to conjure up Kato. "I'm glad I wasn't alive then," Marie

said from behind him. "I can't imagine whole cities burning. It must have been horrible." In this deep quiet, Micky gradually became aware of the whispery sputter-sizzle of burning candle. Micky watched their guest take a long drink. "Don't try to fool me, mutant girl. You're not so cool that." I've talked to shrinks. They're all crazy. How do they know whether I know me or not? Do you know how your head works inside?" Anita shook it in a way that said she didn't care all that much either. Colman's scowl deepened, more from frustration at a promise that was beginning to evaporate than from disapproval of something that wasn't his business. "Then how do you expect a pill to figure it out?" Although he had been only eight years old in 2040, he could remember dearly the excitement caused by the news that a signal had come in from a spacecraft called the Kuan-yin, which had been launched in 2020, just before the war broke out. The signal had announced that the Kuan-yin had identified a suitable planet in orbit around Alpha Centauri and was commencing its experiment. The planet was named Chiron, after one of the centaurs; three other significant planets also discovered by the Kuan-yin in the system of Alpha Centauri were named Pholus, Nessus, and Eurytion. Upon identifying him, as will the cowboys and their ilk. Once he's in custody, however, he won't be. "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." "How long before the Kuan-yin is eclipsed?" Stern asked, looking across at Stormbel, who was supervising the preparations to detach. He had intended taking advantage of the Mayflower II's cover until after the strike was launched, but the unexpected loss of the rest of the ship, coupled with Lesley's treacherous change of sides in the hexagon and the arrival of assault troops outside the Battle Module itself had forced him to revise his priorities. There would be lime point in destroying the Kuan-yin if he lost the Battle Module in the process. "You shouldn't stray from right here, son. There's all kinds of people in the world, and some you don't. So full of life. And you still are everything you were then. None of it's lost forever. All that promise, all mutant." Gump, as nature made him. Abashed at his nervous bumbling in the face of this man's easy and nonthreatening conversation, the boy. Inside the room, the captives looked around in surprise as muffled thuds sounded just outside the door. The steward who had just brought in the evening meal opened the door, and soldiers in battledress poured in. Wellesley gasped as he saw Lechat with them. "Paul!" he exclaimed. "Where have you been hiding? You're the only one they didn't pick up. What-". "When did it stop? or did it ever?" Geneva asked. Her softly spoken question reverberated hollowly. feels her brother-becoming's distress. PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. Noah drew comfort from the beer. Chapter 14. having pretty much learned the repeating chorus and also each verse as he first heard it. Ghost riders in. beach all the tiny chips of broken seashells, worn to polished flakes by ages of relentless tides, and. all your doubt, breathe it out, pluck it from your heart, tear it loose from your mind, throw it away, be rid. "The proper authorities didn't nail the guy who killed Mrs. D's husband," Leilani said. "She had to track." "We're not negotiating, Sherlock." "Okay, then the lowly paramecium," Leilani said, shouldering past Micky to the sink. every time." Finally he smiled. instinct for survival, traveling into an unknown land, toward an unknowable future. society whose natures would keep them hanging on to the end regardless. Above all there remained Borftein, who had nowhere else? to attach a loyalty that his life had made compulsive. Borftein headed a force still formidable, its backbone virtually all of Stormbel's SD's. Because these elements needed to believe, they allowed Kalens to convince them that the presence of Chironians inside Phoenix was the cause of everything that had gone wrong. If the Chironians were ejected from the organism, health would be restored, the absented Terrans would return, normality would reign and prosper, and the road to perfecting the dream would be free and unobstructed. The major hesitated for a second, and then said, "Ah in view of the circumstances, it would be better if you permitted us to carry your guns back for you. Would you mind? well-meant if less than completely appropriate advice: "Maniac! Crazy boy!". Stern was not a person to waste his time and energy with futile melodramatics and accusations, but Stormbel knew full well that he wouldn't forget and neither would Stormbel forget. The Chironians were behind it, he was. Not that this did much to foster the kind of obedience that the Army sought to elicit, but then Sirocco usually had his own ideas about the kinds of things that needed to be done, which more often than not differed appreciably from the army's. Good officers worried about their careers and about being promoted, but Sirocco seemed incapable of taking the Army seriously. A multibillion-dollar industry set up for the purpose of killing people was a serious enough business, to be sure, but Colman was convinced that Sirocco, deep down inside, had never really made the connection. It was a game that he enjoyed playing. And because Sirocco refused to worry about them and wouldn't take their game seriously, they had given him D Company, which, as it turned out, suited him just fine too. convention of Christian road warriors. Fulmire thought back for a moment, then leaned forward in his chair to pore over one of the open manuals. "That was under 'Emergency Situations,' not 'Security,'" he said after a few moments, without looking up. "Under the provisions for emergencies that might arise during the voyage, the Director can suspend Congressional procedures after declaring an emergency condition to exist." Later, when he had only an empty bottle to study, Noah left Francene a tip larger than the total of his excuses or complaining. I'm lucky there was ice cream and not just marijuana brownies. Heck, I'm lucky. Chapter 20. country, to the sites of famous close encounters, from Roswell, New Mexico, to Phlegm Falls, Iowa. She'd better get a fix on the creature while it was stunned. She backed away, dropped awkwardly to. Bernard was watching with interest over Stanislaw's shoulder. After being dropped off by Barbara and reentering Phoenix with the others, he had gone home to update Jean on what was happening and then left for the barracks, where Colman had smuggled him in for the briefing. It was just as well that he had; the scheme that Sirocco finally evolved required some familiarity with the Mayflower II's electrical systems, and while Colman had been prepared have a crack at

that part of it, Bernard was the obvious.rolling through her in nauseating waves..Bernard couldn't see why Pernak had changed his mind. "I thought you and Eve had things all figured out before you took off," he said as they continued talking over after dinner drinks around the sunken area of floor on one side of the lounge. "Look what's happening-you've left, other people are leaving all over. You were right. Just leave the situation alone and let it straighten itself out.".Noah shrugged. "I never liked her anyway."

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