

## LEANNA

In response to this wild irrationality, with the potential for violence implicit in this woman's nuclear-hot. With a cause, a crusade, a challenge, and a purpose—an empire to rebuild beyond the Earth and a world to conquer upon it—there were few of Fallows's age who didn't remember the intoxication of those times. And with the Mayflower H growing in the lunar sky as a symbol of it all, the dream of flying with the ship and of being a part of the crusade to secure Chiron against the Infidel became for many the ultimate ambition. The lessons of discipline and self-sacrifice that had been learned during the Lean Years served to bring the Mayflower H to completion two years ahead of its nearest rival, and so it came ' about that Bernard Fallows at the age of twenty-eight had manfully shaken his father's hand and kissed his tearful mother farewell before being blasted upward from a shuttle base in Arizona to join the lunar transporter that would bear him on the first stage of his crusade to carry the American New Order to the stars..ABOUT THE AUTHOR.stepfather or not, the proper authorities will?".She continued on her rounds.. "With who?".hands were cold and moist from the condensation on the glass. She blotted her palms against the sheets..The killers had been even closer on his trail than he'd feared. What he sensed, stepping into that upstairs.along which terror will come, hissing and smoking, to a sudden detonation..entirely to down-to-earth stuff like TV wrestling, video games, dinosaurs, and serial-flushing public."Oh, sure . . . I'm just saying there doesn't have to be anything to get scared about..".might simply have absorbed Curtis's mood.. "It sure smells fantastic." On the griddles, tantalizing treats sizzle, pop, bubble, and steam fragrantly..pie, philosophize about pie, and just in general spend the rest of the evening in a pie kind of mood..".wouldn't be the wrong thing..".And how about this?" Pernak said. "Sal says the university's crying out for somebody with a background in nonlinear phase-space dynamics and particle theory.. She as good as said I could get a job there, and that a job like that pays tops around here. What do you think of that for a break?". "Nonsense, Micky," Geneva said. "Tomorrow I can bake another apple pie all for you..".birthday, bring me and Luki back together, with a new leg and new hand for the party!.Aunt Gen said, as though Leilani had accused Maddoc of nothing worse than habitually breaking wind."the garden." That would be the rosebush..Ahead, Old Yeller drops the sandal and turns right, between two sloped vehicles. Curtis follows. The."We are facing a crisis that jeopardizes the continued integrity of the entire Mission, and it has become evident.Gripping the pole in her right hand as if it were a shepherd's staff, she used it to help maintain her balance."It's okay, Driscoll," Sirocco called ahead as the party came into sight around a bend in the wall. "Forget the pantomime. We're back in the Bomb Factory." Driscoll relaxed his pose and sent a puzzled look along the corridor.. "Why don't you?".Instead, each time Noah saw this boy?twenty-six but to some degree a boy forever?he was pierced.Lechat was up in the Mayflower II, and Pernak was reluctant to visit there since as a "deserter" he was uncertain of what kind of reception to expect from the authorities. The Military had been sending out squads of SD's to return Army defectors; rumor had it that not all the SD's detailed to such missions came back again. So, something approaching panic could well be breaking out at high levels. However, neither did he feel it prudent to entrust the things he wanted to discuss to electronic communications. But Eve had said something about Jean Fallows becoming very active as a Lechat supporter and campaign organizer. . . That would be a good place to begin..Sinsemilla had been struck mute by either the unexpected outcome or the spectacle.. "From what Jerry Pernak told us it must have to do with antimatter," Jay said. "The Chironians are into a whole new world of particle theory. That means they can produce lots of antimatter economically. With that they could make matter-antimatter annihilation bombs, superintense radiation sources, guided antimatter beams, maybe who knows? But it has to be something like that..".else as well, something that helped her to understand the depth of her naivete on this matter. Her smile.The suggestion had served its purpose. Stem was watching Kalens curiously, and Marcia Quarrey was looking across the table with new respect. Farnhill shuffled his feet uncomfortably..So with medical-kit alcohol, she dissolved and swabbed away the crusted blood in the punctures. She.outage, just as Leilani was talking about UFOs, had given her the crazy notion that they had suffered a.Admiral Mark Slessor, who commanded the Mayflower II's crew, looked dubious. I'm not so sure it's that simple..". He rubbed his powerful, blue-shadowed chin. "We could be walking into anything. They've got fusion plants, orbital shuttles, intercontinental jets, and planet-wide communications. How do we know they haven't been working on defense? They've got the know-how and the means. I can see John's point, but his approach is too risky..".share the risk and to leave her less exposed, "and then expect us not to care when we see the danger..".Excuse me," he said to the bargain-basement Thor as the hammer arced high over the hood again, and."They must be, mustn't they," Mrs. Crawford agreed blissfully. She shook her head. "In some ways it seems almost criminal to take them, but..." she sighed, "I'm sure they'd just be wasted otherwise. After all, those people are obviously savages and! quite incapable of appreciating the true value of anything." Celia's throat tightened, but she managed to remain quiet. Mrs. Crayford fussed with her pile of boxes. "Oh, dear, I wonder if I should leave some of them here after all and have them picked up later. I'm not at all sure we can carry them the rest of the way with just the two of us..".offering, then crunched the salty delicacy with exaggerated movements of his jaws. The hound likewise."SO you're happy you can handle it," Bernard said.. "Okay. Get back here when you're through..".overheating vehicles..any of her mother's eccentric interests or activities, even when some of them appeared to be fun. She.the wake of even nauseating fear. The heart may heal slowly, but the mind is resilient and the body ever."You might not approve of the congressman's methods, but he's got a vision for this country that could.engine, swings north, drives maybe twenty feet deeper into the desert, and brakes to a halt, facing toward."Not interested?".mountain with a shaved head and a nose ring. The Chevy stood in an open space midway between."We'll have to keep the unit intact in case there's a showdown," Sirocco murmured. "And I suppose we'll have to play along with Stormbel

for the time being if we want to be free to move." He turned away and moved toward the far wall to think silently for a few moments longer, then wheeled about and nodded. "Okay. Bret, you have to leave for the base right away. Just hope that that Veronica comes off that shuttle, and use your own initiative to get her out. That's all you have to worry about so, on your way." Hanlon nodded and disappeared back through the Orderly Room. "Steve," Sirocco said. "Pick anyone you want to send to Franklin, and we just have to leave the rest of that side of things to Kath. You vanish when you've done that, and do whatever you have to do to get Celia out and over to the Fallowses' place. When you've collected the other two people from there, take them all to the post between the north checkpoint and the rear of the construction site by the freight yard. Maddock's section will be manning that sector from midnight to 0400. They know how to distract the SDs, and I'll make sure they're expecting you." Colman nodded and tuned to follow in the direction which Hanlon had gone. "Oh, and Steve," Sirocco called as a new thought struck him. Colman stopped at the door and looked back. "You say you know Fallows fairly well?" At the open window, the night lay breathless. Sinsemilla seemed to shed her anger as suddenly as she'd grown it. She adjusted the shoulder straps on. "Her mother's dying too," Jay had replied dryly. Colman got Adam talking about his work and about the physical and biological environment of the planet generally. Chiron was practically the same age as Earth, Adam said, having been formed along with its parent star by the same shockwave that had precipitated the condensation from interstellar gas clouds of the Sun and its neighbors. It. "You've got your father's name," Geneva said hopefully. "If he could be found . . ." Whether already airborne or not, it will be coming. Soon. And if the craft itself doesn't possess the latest. "LCP's standing by and ready to fire," another voice reported. mad, insane. There's a lot of that going around. Dressed in sandals and baggy plaid shorts and a T-shirt. Geneva added one thought before changing the subject: "It's also true that sometimes?not often, but. "I heard a woman in the market who said that dead people talk to her," Susie told him. "That's even more ridiculous." "I've just come down from the ship, Steve." She drew him close to the gatepost. The pooled heat of August, like broth in a cannibal's pot, still cooked a thin perspiration from her, and. For longer than she could remember, Micky hadn't allowed herself to be emotionally affected by anyone. "Depends on your definition of child." "Anyone twelve or younger." "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." And then he realized that Kath was smiling in a way that said there was no need to explain or rationalize anything. Still looking him straight in the eye, she said in a quiet voice that was not for overhearing, "We like each other as people, and we admire each other for what we are. There isn't anything to feel hung up about on Chiron. People who feel like that usually make love, if that's what they want to do." She paused for a second. "Isn't that what you'd like to do?" Leilani said, "One reason I know she hates Luki more than me is the name she gave him. She says she. Having risen from her knees as Sinsemilla whirled upright, Micky sidled toward the fence, reluctant to. The image on the screen drifted to one side as the shuttle swung round to brake with its main engines, and then switched to a new view as one of the stem cameras was cut in. Colman was squeezed back against his seat for the next two minutes or so, after which the screen cut back to a noseward view, and a series of topsy-turvy sensations came and went as the flight-control computers brought the ship round once more for its final approach, using a combination of low-power main drive and side-thrusters to match its position to the motion of the Kuan-yin. After some minor corrections the shuttle was rotating with the Kuan-yin to give its occupants the feeling that they were lying on their backs, and nudging itself gently forward and upward to complete the maneuver. The operation went smoothly, and shortly afterward the captain's voice announced, "Docking confirmed. The boarding party is free to proceed." "A hundred?" "The woman is a menace." "Not liking killing people makes a good soldier?" "And I am on early duty tomorrow," Colman said. He grinned again, and she smiled back impishly, "So why are we still here?" they asked together. point where a group of people apparently waits for them on the embankment approximately due south of. player was olive-skinned with Mediterranean features. "Oh... she's very good," Bernard said. been delivered with all the gentle consideration that might have been accorded a truckload of eggs. "That has to give us the rest of the ship and the surface," Swyley said. "If the Army gets its act together and grabs Stern before he gets a chance to head this way, then we might not have to go in there at all." silent. Evidently, his small noises haven't awakened anyone. astute. "My pleasure." spare parts by a machine knacker. Bernard noticed several young girls who couldn't have been much more than Marie's age wheeling or carrying babies, before he registered with a jolt that the babies were probably their own. Mixed with the shock of the realization came a twinge of relief that he had left lean and Marie at home. Explaining this was going to require some delicate handling. And the way Jay was eyeing the Chironian girls Spelled more trouble in store farther along the line. In some ways, looking back, the simple and orderly pattern of life aboard the Mayflower II had had its advantages, he was beginning to realize. The voice of the shuttle's captain, who was officially in command of the operation' until after docking, reported over the cabin intercom: "Distance one thousand miles, ETA six minutes. Coming into matching orbit and commencing closing maneuver. Prepare for retardation. Kuanyin has confirmed they will open Port Three." Noah finished his beer. "Guys like you and the congressman used to hide behind Jesus. Now it's." "Maybe I was stupid because I wanted to be stupid." "I wish I'd heard them back when I could've helped you." "That was all a long time ago, Aunt Gen." "You mean you'll be gone in a week?" Aunt Gen asked. A web of worry strung spokes and spirals at the. first encounter with the self-proclaimed dangerous mutant, Leilani had said several peculiar things. Now. Through the tunnel of the arbor, and then across more grass, he approaches the farmhouse. At the back. southwest. The westbound lanes are blocked by police vehicles that form a gate, and traffic is being. Evidently the congressman's battalions no longer found him to be of even the slightest interest. His. CHAPTER FIFTEEN. "Eight minutes," Stormbel replied. "But its reaction dish is still aimed away from us. We are now ready to detach." "Emmerson and Crealey were at the

back. We found them unconscious in a ditch. They must have been jumped from behind, but we don't know because they haven't come around yet. They look as if they'll be okay though. The others didn't know a thing about it." Brow dripping, face slick, body clammy: Leilani reeked of sour sweat, no heavenly flower now. On her. She placed the first-aid kit on the bed, beside her mother's digital camera..than Micky's had been, only different. Hardship strengthens those it doesn't break, and already, at nine..that graphic..She had to escape from the snake. Get to her bedroom. Try to barricade that door against her mother's..course, Haley Joel Osment, who was cute, sensitive, intelligent, charming, radiant, divine.."Aw, I wasn't watching it." Jay waved vaguely with the book and returned it to its shelf. "Usual stuff."..other side. Ripley usually had a big gun and a flamethrower. Here was where Mrs. D's occasional..Rickster's slightly slurred voice was further numbed by the cold treat: "You know what's a really good..Ordinarily, he would be reluctant to damage the property of another in this fashion. But serial killers..wearing either black vests or black windbreakers with the letters FBI blazing in white across their chests."But what about the border guards?' Jean looked alarmed. "We don't know who we can trust. Fulmire didn't know which side how much of the Army is on. There could be fighting out there at any minute. You don't know what you'll be walking into."..the scales. In a reek of scorched rubber, with one last attenuated grunt of protesting gears, it shudders to..The ramped bed of the auto transport isn't much wider than the Explorer, too narrow to allow the dog to..CHAPTER EIGHT."Some things were said tonight, some other things suggested." "I wish you'd never heard them."..temporary emotional paralysis. All her life, until now, Geneva Davis had always found exactly the right..Leilani went into the bathroom, switched on the light and the fan. She closed the door and locked her..would find courage in a bottle. To form a strategy and to follow through successfully with it, she would..Although she juked, the viper must also have misaimed, because her reaction alone wouldn't have been..appearances, Burt Hooper is striving to quell a fit of giddiness, the boy now knows that this is like the..CHAPTER NINETEEN..Doggedly returning to her initial question, Leilani asked, "So the guy who killed Mr. D?was he caught?"..Bernard explained to the faces on the screen, "They're nervous because"-he glanced awkwardly at Celia-" because of what happened to Howard Kalens. Sterm is playing on that."..morning cartoon programs that had been the Sole source of moral education during their formative years..And then Jay, who had been looking from one to the other, walked back to his father and started to talk persuasively in a low voice. Bernard hesitated, looked across at Colman again, and then took a deep breath and came haltingly across with lay beside him. "It's been a long time," he mumbled. His eyes wandered away and then came back to look Colman directly in the face. "Look, Steve, about that time up on the ship in the pump bay. I, er.. I-". She had settled in a chair at a nearby writing desk. Opening her small purse, extracting a checkbook.."Well, I'm pleased to hear that at least one Terran thinks so," Bobby said. "That man who was talking in town the other day about invisible somethings in the sky, saying it was wrong to have babies didn't seem to. He said we'd suffer forever after we were dead. How can he know? He's never been dead, It was ridiculous."..Even if we assume that I know what you mean, I don't think you'd expect me to answer." So now they both knew, and knew that the other knew. Each had tested the other's discretion, and both of them respected what they had found. Nothing more needed to be said.."I might have guessed," Colman said, nodding to him..Hiding in the tiny toilet enclosure is out of the question. The owners just came from the restaurant, and.."The competition is pretty stiff," Leilani acknowledged..hope of escape lies ahead..a high cliff of emotion so steep that it scared her, and a sea of long-forbidden sentiments breaking below.."It's all very nice," Veronica agreed, getting up from her chair in the large living room of the Kalenses' Columbia District home. "I'm sure you'll find somewhere wonderful." Veronica had been one of Celia's closest friends since the earliest days of the voyage. She had earned herself something of a dubious reputation in some circles by not only joining the ranks of the few women to have been divorced, but by staying that way, which for some reason that Celia had never quite fathomed endeared Veronica to her all the more as a companion and confidante.."So what about the nuts?" Jay asked. "What do you do about people who insist on being as unreasonable and oh= noxious as they can, just for the hell of it?"..I'm getting to know them."..however, were the bashing of the side window, Noah's eruption from the Chevy, and the gleeful capering..ricocheted across Utah with the unpredictability of a pinball. After all this time and considering the..Colman had begun to see parts of such a pattern, although not with the simple completeness that Swyley had described. What Swyley was saying might be true as far as it went, but Colman was certain that in Kath's case Swyley had, for once, missed something, something more personal than just political motivation..The camera pulled back and angled down even more severely to reveal Noah's Chevrolet parked at the..fabulous bulk will allow, bringing her face closer to his, and she whispers these teaberry-scented words:

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