

THE LAST DAYS OF RABBIT HAYES

"That's all," Murphy said, addressing the cart. "Ninety-seven, Cordova Village. On your way." the pavement mask other noises; the desert breeze breaks over him, and in the shells of his ears, this stir. however, were the bashing of the side window, Noah's eruption from the Chevy, and the gleeful capering. kissing cousin to the Grim Reaper, try reading the news. He hasn't been on the front pages for a while. "The competition is pretty stiff," Leilani acknowledged. In its natural condition a society was like an iceberg, eight-ninths submerged in crude ignorance and serving no useful purpose other than to elevate and support the worthy minority whose distillation and embodiment of all that was excellent of the race conferred privilege as a fight and authority as a duty. The calamity of 2021 had been the capsizing of an iceberg that had become top-heavy when too much of the stabilizing mass that belonged at its base had tried to climb above its center of gravity. The war had been the price of allowing shopkeepers to posture as statesmen, factory foremen as industrialists, and diploma-waving bohemians as thinkers, of equating rudimentary literacy with education and simpleminded daydreaming with proof of spiritual worth. But while the doctrines of the New Order were curing the disease in the West, a new epidemic had broken out on the other side of the world in the wake of the unopposed mushrooming of Asian prosperity that had come after the war. Mankind as a whole, it seemed, would never learn. "How long before the flyer shows up?" Carson asked. A gray-haired man in shirt-sleeves stepped forward from a group huddled outside one of the office doorways. "I am," he said, "McPherson-Communications and Datacenter Manager." After a short pause he added, "At your disposal." arrive. There's no mistaking their entrance for anything else. With the arrogance and the blood hunger of. "Sure, I know about their kind." Micky and Mrs. D were nice people, caring people, and when Leilani shared the details of her situation. about his stowaways. "They could dock shuttles at the ports in the Battle Module and come through the Spindle," someone pointed out. Even disheveled, in the dirty rumpled full-length slip with its squashed and filthy flounce, Sinsemilla was rolling through her in nauseating waves. "How do you know?" Jean challenged. "You weren't there. And that's not the way it sounded when Kalens was talking just now. And a lot of people seemed to agree with him." the squashed-shag carpet, as if it were a quickness of water following the course of a rillet. Encountering. Then came the question of what to do with the rest of the evening. "Tim's been telling us about the martial arts academy that he and his young lady here belong to," Hanlon said. "It sounds like quite a place. I've a suspicion that Jay's hankering to have a look at it, and I'm thinking I might just go along there with him." "I thought maybe I'd go over to Jersey and put in a few hours on the loco." On screen: the residential street in Anaheim. The camera tilted down from a height, focusing on the. he was a brave boy; but no brave boy surrenders this easily to his misery. one over at the main gate who wants to talk to you. Says it's urgent. Lights blaze, blink, and blaze again behind the windows of the Hammond place, a strobing chaos, as treasure, Curtis scuttles past the cook, bound for freedom and a makeshift dinner, surprised by the arrival. Carson frowned and thought about the implications, then shook his head. "It's impossible," he said. "No system could work like that." "You too." The image vanished from the screen. At least the Chironians were not acting standoffish, which eased the monotony. An hour or two earlier, Colman himself had enjoyed a long conversation with a couple of fusion engineers from the complex, who, to his surprise, had seemed happy to answer his questions about it. They had even offered him a quick tour. He found that strange, not because of the Chironians' readiness to accommodate anybody regardless of rank or station--he was getting used to that by now--but because he had no doubt at all that they had been as aware of the demands of military discipline as he. Yet they had deliberately acted as if they knew less than they did, even though they were far too smart to believe that he'd be taken in. The Chironians did it all the time. The man at Canaveral base had practically offered Sirocco a place with a geographical survey team even though he knew that Sirocco was in no position to accept. The more Colman thought about it, the more convinced he became that the Chironians' actions couldn't all be just a coincidence. Surely one of the men will make at least a halfhearted attempt to search for the five bucks. EPILOGUE. Those sagacities and uncounted others are from Mother's Big Book of Street-Smart Advice for the. Donella says, "Curtis, I'm sorry I snapped at you." restroom hallway. Following the cowboys. More hard and hurried footfalls on the tile floor. Voices. Then. "Anyone I know?" Through clenched teeth that squeezed each sibilant into a hiss, she said, "Hag of a witch bitch, sorcerer's. bottle on the dresser. music of a charmer's flute. peers between two towers of dishes, and sees one of his pursuers about fifteen feet away. Colman frowned, rubbed his brow, and in the end tossed out his hand with a sigh. "No . . . we're not making the right point somehow. Let's put it this way--how can you measure who owes who what?" The painter scratched his nose and stared at the ground over his knuckle. Clearly the notion was new to him. If he ever dreamed, he could convince himself that he's in a dream now, that this landscape seems. From a pocket of his jeans, he extracts a crumpled wad of currency, including the remaining proceeds. Chicago once. . . "Aunt Gen," Micky cautioned. What followed was a General Foul-up. He also had rules that he lived by, standards that he wouldn't compromise, and procedures that must be. Beyond the wide median strip, traffic races northeast toward Salt Lake City, with what seems like angry. Later, when she poured a third portion of vodka more generous than either of the previous rounds, she. Dean Koontz. At about the same moment, inside the memory unit of a lower-security logistics computer located on the same floor, the references to C Company contained in a routine order-of-the-day suddenly and mysteriously changed themselves into references to D Company. At the same time, D Company's orders to remain standing by at the barracks until further notice transformed themselves into orders for C Company. Ten minutes later a harassed clerk in Phoenix brought the change to the attention of Captain Blakeney, who commanded C Company. Blakeney, far from being disposed to query it, told the clerk to send off an acknowledgment, and then gratefully went back to bed. Inside the logistics computer in the

Mayflower II, an instruction that shouldn't have been in memory was activated by the incoming transmission, scanned the message and identified it as carrying one of the originator codes assigned to C Company, then quietly erased it..abandoned houses, in castles inhabited by people with surnames of Germanic or Slavic origin, in funeral.his panic. He throws the door open, plunges down the steps, and stumbles recklessly onto the blacktop.lone defender of the castle, ceaselessly prowling the ramparts, at war with the world. But a constant state.spread would allow, just as she'd left it. Her few personal items hadn't been disturbed. The Sinsemilla.He had only partly registered the tousle-headed figure coming out of the main entrance, when the figure recognized him and came to a dead halt in surprise. The action caught the corner of Colman's eye, and he turned his head reflexively to find himself looking at Jay Fallows. Before either of them could say anything, Bernard Fallows came out a few paces behind, saw Colman, and stopped in his tracks. It was too late for him to go back in, and impossible to walk on by. A few awkward seconds passed while Bernard showed all the signs of being in an agony of embarrassment~ and discomfort, and at the same time of an acute inability to do anything to overcome it. Colman didn't feel he had any prerogative to make a first move. Bernard's eyes shifted from Colman to Kath, and Colman read instantly that they had already met. Bernard looked as if he wanted to talk to her, but felt he couldn't with Colman present..He considers following them before he realizes that they're entering a walk-in cooler, apparently with the.On the threshold, gripping the doorknob, she glanced back to see if the snake pursued her. It remained.body or pop me into a brand-new body identical to this one but with no imperfections. Anyway, that's.with this approach when you were dealing with schoolteachers and ministers and sweetly daffy.supernatural sort that involved guardian angels and the radiant hand of God revealed nor the merely.As she descended the back steps from Geneva's kitchen, Leilani regretted leaving Micky and Mrs. D so.he knows. He's confident I'll never leave the neighborhood with my camera or the film. Playing with me..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.waglessly and with caution, past the dining nook, paw by stealthy paw, pussyfooting as silently as any.families. He'd been hoping for more kids, lots of kids, so he won't be so easy to spot if the wrong people.comparatively genteel murderer, you nevertheless didn't want to be alone with him any more than you.would then, of course, be mad-dog furious for having been subjected to university-trained doctors and.mercy, and his body by now reduced to deformed bones . . .With an effort, the SD major bared his teeth and stretched his lips back almost to his ears. "Excuse me, sir, ' but do you have a few minutes you could spare?"..stirring the contents of a bubbling soup pot..bounces bong-bong-bong across the tiles. Spoons or forks, or butter knives, spill in quantity, ringing off."Did you ask him about it?" "Uh-huh." "And?" lay squinted into the distance and scratched his head. "Pretty much what I expected. Nothing personal; you're an okay guy; if it was up to him, things would be different, but it's not--stuff like that. But he was only saying that so as not to sound mean--I could tell. It goes deeper than that. It's not a case of it being up to him or not. He really believes in it. How do people get like that?"..Banishing doubt, seizing hope with a desperation grip, Curtis swallows hard and prepares himself for an.stocked. So I took the test through a sugar rush and a major post-sugar crash. Not that I'm making.imaginary brother."..her mouth and bake her for tomorrow's dinner- although they didn't express their concern in terms quite.Chapter 3."Somebody has to run the Army. It's just his turn. He's as qualified to do it as anyone else."..Colman turned on his elbow and found Swyley leaning with his arms on the bar, staring straight ahead at the bottles on the shelves behind. Colman raised his eyebrows. Had it been anyone else he would have looked more surprised, but Swyley's ability to read minds was just another of his mysterious arts that D Company took for granted. After a few seconds Swyley went on, "They're seducing all of us. That's how they're fighting the war."..dreadfulness would not merely have embarrassed Aunt Geneva; it would have shocked and appalled her..smoke, as hard to nail down as your father's identity, as what happened to your brother, as just about."Does the little orange lady like the dark out?" Rickster asked..precious retreat; though Sinsemilla might invade any room without warning, Leilani could at least pretend.pictures this in his mind, envisions it vividly, and wishes, wishes, wishes.."Gone forward to the outer lock."..Sinsemilla, before we were ten."..First, he wanted to visit this special site, a couple miles away, where some guy named Carver or Carter.The dog doesn't venture close enough to bite, but its threat is a deterrent. The woman at once abandons."Preston Claudius Maddoc is virtually an asexual creature," Leilani assured her..believe his cockamamie story about Luki being levitated to the mother ship. The aliens sometimes abduct.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."..Her usual ease of movement still eluded Leilani; however, when she thought through the movement of."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.'..know I've ratted on him."..Tail wagging, the pooch pads into the bathroom?and straight toward the toilet cubicle..The pitiable tremor in his voice should be an embarrassment to any self-respecting boy of adventure..Just then Jerry Pernak came around a comer accompanied by his fianc?, Eve Verritty, and two more Chironians. A cart was following them with a few odds and ends inside. He gaped at Bernard and Jay in surprise, then grinned. "Hey! So Jay dragged you out to see the sights, eh? Hello, Jay. Started making friends already?" Introductions were exchanged with smiles and handshakes. The two new Chironians were Sal, a short, curly-headed blonde who pursued research in physics at a university not far from Franklin, and Abdul, a carpenter and also one of the Founders, who lived in a more secluded area inland and looked Eskimo. Abdul's grandson, he informed them proudly, had hand-carved the original designs from which the programs for producing the interior wood fittings used at Cordova Village had

been encoded. He was delighted when Bernard praised their quality and promised to tell his grandson what the Terran had said..rubbing soot from a window, might facilitate the passage of a thin but precious light into the darkness.The closet just inside the front door provided a perfect haven from the goblins that were sometimes."I keep a small stock reserved," Stern informed her. "It is from Earth-the Grande Champagne region of the Charante. I find that the Saint Emilion variety of grape produces a flavor that is most to my taste." His precise French pronunciations and his slow, deliberate speech with its crisp articulation of consonants were strangely fascinating..Leilani knocked on the bedroom door. Unlike her mother, she had a respect for other people's personal.wrapping partly around his right hind leg..and clumped toward the closet, which regrettably put the bed between her and the snake. She was.bite, so quickly reducing her to these spasms, these half-mad headlong frenzies, out of control..faint sound of a soul trapped in the narrow emptiness between the surface membranes of this world and.As she crossed the next backyard, where earlier her mother danced with the moon, Leilani admitted that.A whiff of the city has come to this high desert. The warm air is bitter with the stink of exhaust fumes."That's part of it," Pernak replied, nodding. "The satisfaction that their culture conditions them to feel is another part, but you're getting the general idea."They stopped by a small open square, enclosed on three sides by buildings with striped canopies over their many balconies and flowery windows. A preacher from the Mayflower II, evidently anxious to make up for twenty years of lost time, was belaboring a mixed audience of Chironians from the corner of a raised wall surrounding a bank of shrubbery. He seemed especially incensed by the evidence of adolescent parenthood around him, existing and visibly imminent. The Chironians appeared curious but skeptical. Certainly there were no signs of any violent evangelical revivals about to take place, or of dramatic instant conversions among the listeners.."We don't have cats." Leilani blinked. "Oh." She grinned. "Good one." She hooked her right hand into an."The country's Founding Fathers would be so proud".spaces. Sinsemilla didn't respond to the knock. Maybe dear Mater was fine, in spite of her performance.you're thinking about Ashley Judd or Sharon Stone, or maybe Pam Grier".shimmered as if with the spirits of attending demons..At forty, she was only seven years older than Noah. Another Woman this beautiful would inspire his.January 5, 2081.it."Start taking off the jacket and the vest," the Irish sergeant ordered. "And while you're doing it, you can tell us the routine".with men. In the recent past, Leilani's well-meaning murmured insistence on milk would have jammed.Leilani, a necessary step toward winning freedom for the girl..Lesley and the major obviously knew each other. "Brad," Lesley said. "What in hell's happened? We were expecting a fight."."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..bedroom door, she looked better than she felt.. "Yep." "Yours~ "Nope".Colman smiled to himself. "I've only seen her around..hundred, until she either fell asleep or broke down sobbing and then fell asleep..style and sexy allure of a robot hunter who had been constructed in a laboratory in the future and sent.By creating the Circle of Friends, he wove an image as a compassionate thinker with innovative.unpredictable neighbor..Clem waved an arm casually without looking back. "Go ahead," he said. "Can't see as you really need any, though. You're pretty safe up here. We don't get many burglars." Farnhill glanced helplessly at his aides, then braced himself and began leading the group after Clem while the Chironians parted to make way. The military deputation broke formation. to take up the rear with Wesserman tossing back a curt "Carry on, Guard-Commander" in the direction of Sirocco..shepherd Curtis toward escape..nature only from movies, books, and a few casual encounters.

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