

## THE COINS OF THE BIBLE AND ITS MONEY TERMS

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..he'd no doubt be left with a hand full of bones as shattered as the windshield.."You're getting it all wrong," Nanook. said, smiling faintly to be reassuring. "It's not So bad. Things like that don't happen all the time--in fact, hardly ever. Just sometimes.. '.opening and the brief clatter of something being fumbled from a closet floated back into the room..door shut again, to hold back the avalanche before it gains unstoppable momentum..it well and use a hair dryer on the joints, but an occasional drenching wouldn't hurt it..As he replaced the communicator, a subdued murmuring ran around the squad behind, punctuated by one or two almost inaudible whistles. He turned to find that the object of their approval was a woman coming out of the main entrance. She stopped for a second to look around, saw the soldiers, and began walking toward them..Bernard, now a little calmer with the change of subject, picked up his glass again, took a sip, and shook his head. "Aren't you overreacting just a little bit, Jerry? Exactly what kind of trouble are you talking about? What have we seen?" He looked from side to side as if to invite support, "One idiot who should never have been allowed out of a cage got what he asked for. Fm sorry if that sounds like a callous way of putting it, but it's what I think. And that's all we've seen..".to dock at the Vandenberg bays, and that's why we've got Annley's section there to stop them. What do you do if you can't hold them, Mike?" Sirocco asked, looking down at the front row..An SD major with a smoke-blackened face and one of his sleeves? covered in blood emerged unsteadily from the tunnel mouth; immediately behind him were four more SD's looking disheveled and one of them also bloodstained around the head. Lesley and the others came out from cover as Jarvis and a couple of his men went forward to escort the five back.."I stopped reading them when they stopped carrying news," said Geneva. "They're all opinion now, front.Fifteen minutes later, inside an office that opened onto a passageway to the rear lobby of the Communication Center, an indignant office manager and two terrified female clerks were sifting on the floor with their hands clasped on the top of their heads, under the watchful eye of one of the soldiers who had burst in suddenly brandishing rifles and assault cannon. "What do you think you're trying to do?" the manager asked in a voice that was part nervousness and part trepidation. "We don't want to get mixed up in any of this..".Hesitantly, he eases open the driver's door and slips out of the SUV. onto the bed of the transport..with nothing but dreary need..that graphic.."I think they know that," Cromwell said. "They've spent..she devised elaborate acts of revenge on her mother and on Dr. Doom. This night, in spite of what."Get away from being caged in at home, be your real.Lechat pursed his lips for a second, and then nodded curtly. "It do it," he said simply. He averted his eyes for a moment longer, and then looked across at Celia. The others had read, the same thing and followed his gaze, knowing what they were asking her to do. Colman could see the torment in her eyes as she looked back at Lechat. After all that had happened, she would have to leave the safety and security of Franklin to return to Phoenix, from there to the shuttle base, and then all the way back up to the Mayflower II. There was no other way..If Curtis could trade this particular swell adventure for a raft and a river, he would without hesitation.."After twenty years on the same ship? That's not possible, surely..".Yet she had the curious and unsettling sensation of movement within, of a turning in her heart and mind,.Even as the last of the cracked plastic and the shattered glass from the headlamp rang and rattled against."Suppose Sterm gets into the Battle Module from the outside," someone else said. "There are plenty of places around that he could get a ferry or a PC from besides Vandenberg. He's only got to hop across a couple of miles. It wouldn't need a surface shuttle..".So where do you go?" Jay asked again..rod, taking the clothes to the closet floor..been Familiar with that strategy..Leilani didn't want to cross him by calling paramedics to clean and dress the snakebite..Colman grinned. "Good thinking. We were starting to talk shop." Re inclined his head to where Veronica was still talking animatedly between Kath's twin sons and evidently enjoying herself. "Somebody seems to be quite a hit over there..".that sooner or later will draw his pursuers..The specificity of the answer was disconcerting. Leilani's words struck a bell in Micky's mind, and she..exaggerated, ferocious grin. He leans over the sink, closer to the mirror, and studies his bared teeth with..surpluses of power at grossly high prices. Utility rates had soared. Geneva couldn't afford to use the air..until she saw what had come in the container..Colman nodded. "Gone to the storeroom with Hanlon and Lechat. Everything was quiet upstairs when we left".To Leilani, Micky said, "So I guess we're not twelve percenters, after all. We have lots of opinions, and..Tuesday afternoon, wearing a bikini and oiled for broiling, Micky reclined in a lounge chair in her aunt.."Never let him adopt you," Micky said. "Even Leilani Klonk is preferable to Leilani Doom..".Chapter 24.Yet if he doesn't seek help here, he'll have to visit the next farmhouse, or the one after the next. He is..they clearly have developed sufficient evidence to overcome all their doubts..at rank upon rank of pumps, in a great dazzle and rumble and fumy reek here in the middle of an.."I'm not sure why, but it's important. - . from the Chironians..".chair, staring at the door through which she had disappeared..porch, brick steps lead up to a weathered plank floor. He creaks and scrapes to the door, which opens..gazing out across the enormous kitchen, wide-eyed, watching the hunters. The white-uniformed cook..heat withered common sense and wilted reason, Micky decided

that they were setting a new standard for. "You want a glass?" she asked. "The bottle's probably cleaner." "Has to be," she agreed as she headed. "Bonus points," said Leilani. "Your dad must be great." faltered, faded, vanished. "No mother anywhere," she repeated softly, but to Micky this time. "That's." "What I really need is a beer." "You have the corroborating evidence?" and Curtis can't simply tuck her inside his shirt and scramble through one of these less than generous her second piece. Sinsemilla said, "Oh, Lani, baby, you should see yourself! You look so completely St. Patrick, in a total platter." "They wound it up early. Anyhow, Bud told me it'll be open again tomorrow. Check it out and give it a try." the bed and on a straight-backed chair; neither the luggage nor the furniture suggested a strategy for this. "What else can you do?" Juanita asked. The dog goes straight for the shorts. No bark, no growl, no warning, in fact no evident animosity: Almost. "I'm not a cripple." Lechat thought for a while as he continued to eat. He had entertained similar thoughts himself; nevertheless, he was unable to grasp clearly the notion that an advanced culture, even with no defense preoccupations, could function viably with no restriction whatever being placed on consumption. It went against every principle that had been drilled into him throughout his life. "We've never seen anything connected with defense, and they've never mentioned anything," Borftein insisted. "Let's stick to reality and the facts we know. Why complicate the issue with speculation?" Kneeling on the mattress, her mother bounced like a schoolgirl, making the springs sing and the bedrails many clothes to allow a boy and a dog to shelter among the shirts and shoes. her full-length slip, and then seized the roomy skirt in both hands and shook it as if casting off bits of dry. He is pleased by his ability to function in spite of his fear. He's also pleased by his resourcefulness. punctuated by spells of bewildered placidity. "Only one boy in a wheelchair, as far as I know." "Nine. But I'm precocious. What's your name?" Noah stopped, dismayed. "Which one?" SO HER BROTHER was on Mars, her hapless mother was on dope, and her stepfather was on a. "Anyone I know?" Leilani dared not be distracted by her mother, not with the snake possibly on the move. But Sinsemilla. Pernak knotted his brow, pursed his lips, then stretched them back to reveal his teeth. "Then those people should look after their own future instead of waiting for someone else to work it out for them. That's the old way. They have to learn to think the Chironian way." After a second of hesitation he added, "that's what Eve and I are going to do. have revealed their true nature. They are engaged in an urgent search for something more important than." "Cut it," Colman grated. "You leave him out of it. If it's me you want, I'll take the three of you, but some other place. He's got nothing to do with this." "You can't go anywhere with the laws of physics we've got, which is just another way of stating conclusions that are well known. But I think it's a mistake to believe that there just wasn't anything, in the causal sense, before that --if 'before' means anything like what we usually think it means." Pernak sat forward and moistened his lips. "I'll give you a loose analogy. Imagine a flame. Let's invent a race of flame-people who live inside it and can describe the processes going on around them in terms of laws of flame physics that they've figured out. Okay?" lay frowned but nodded. "Suppose they could backtrack with their laws all the way through their history to the instant where the flame first ignited as a pinpoint on the tip of a match or wherever. To them that would be the origin of their universe, wouldn't it." part misery and part fury, as she jabbed the lance hard at the coiled target. she'd grown all but oblivious of the sun. "How old are you, kid?" Even as Noah dropped the ruined cake, the front passenger's-side window shattered under the impact. "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." The shriek again: longer this time, tortured, shot through with fear and jagged with misery. "Oh, I've heard much worse at our house," Leilani assured them. "Old Sinsemilla fancies herself an artist. are searching for a young boy and a harlequin dog. A motorist? the jolly freckled man with the mop of." "Pay our debt, collect our due/Each one proud/or what we do," Marie recited. "We get them," Nanook agreed. "But not a lot. People usually get to learn very early on what's acceptable and what isn't. They've all got eyes, ears, and brains." Richard Velnod couldn't free himself, but at least he could set loose mice and moths. Noah could free. style and sexy allure of a robot hunter who had been constructed in a laboratory in the future and sent. Chapter 2. "He's been all over television," Leilani said. "It was a depressed fracture," said Geneva. "Bone chips in the brain. A blood clot." comment on them, because she surely knew that consolation wouldn't be welcome. "I'll remind her," Pernak promised. "Ready, lay? Let's go." third swing, the serpent met the furniture with a crack of skull that took all the wriggle out of it forever. from her brain probably blew out power-company transformers all over the Bay Area. Great pie, Mrs. baked earth still radiated stored heat. Besides, the air wasn't vibrating with the hum of an angry swarm. handsome, so sensitive?" Reliably off-center, Aunt Gen waved gaily, as though the trailer were an ocean liner about to steam out. Judging by the sound of it, the chopper is heading southwest, following the interstate. This is not good. door like two drunk kangaroos in a three-legged sack race!" As Rickster had warned, Laura was in one of her private places. Oblivious of everything around her, she. not, sent chills chasing chills along her spine, with such palpable shivers that she could almost believe the. "Nothing," Juanita said. "But why would they? Who'd take any notice of them?" As now, however, she sometimes showered without removing the brace. Afterward, she'd have to towel. stood on the cart. "Programs based on Jesus don't get enough public funds to make them worth faking the piety." He slid

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