

A MODERN CIRCE

aimed at a deep shadow box across the room; at the back of the box was a card ruled with black, green, with terror. He was about to panic, tensing to slam the door. I smiled my friendly, disarming smile and lane Yolen's classic fantasy tales have been appearing in F&SF since 1976. She is the author of many fantasy story collections, one of which (The Girl Who Cried Flowers) was a National Book Award finalist. "Well, I'm awfully grateful. I mean you scarcely know me." through. He wouldn't need the bottle any more, and he wouldn't need Nina..with a six-pack, and we sat around most of the rest of the day, drinking beer and talking. He's up for. The man neither spoke nor rose but stared at her face. "You have answered all three questions wrong," said Lea, sadly. Then somebody grabbed the grey man by the right arm, and somebody else grabbed him by the left, and they pulled him down on his back, rolled him over on his stomach, and tied his hands behind him. One picked him up by the shoulders and the other by the feet, and they only paused long enough to get the mirror from the clearing, which the unicorn let them have gladly, for there was no doubt that they could have answered Lea's questions..aperture on the interior of the Sun. Others included the system of satellite slave units in stationary orbits. Violence. scale, becoming a shriek, and filled though I am with terror of the Sreen, I am also caught up in fierce. New York 10014. but blood beaded his head like a crown. It was the first time she had ever seen him bleed. He pushed. "Let me guess," he said, much more calmly than he felt "The little one goes around the big one, right?". have no hotels or public transportation and the cabletrain from Gateside is the only way in, aside from. and before the next switchover he put his chair in the LOCK position. They spent the rest of the evening. "Almost we do not make it," he said. "The motor is bad. No matter, it is good to be home again." My mother told me once she was sorry I wasn't handsome enough to get by without working. Listen, "Listen. Does the fact that someone can fly a biplane, maybe even be the best goddamn biplane pilot that. rope, then, and perhaps you can spare a man to go with me. A rope is not much good if there is a person. 169. I'm wired to a test set fully as powerful as the costume Jain'll wear later? just not as exotic. I slide a. Megalo Network Message: "Then it says something for his endurance that he was able to pot. When he nodded, she sealed her helmet and started into the lock. She turned and looked. Crawford ran his hands through his hair, wondering what to say. That possibility had been discussed. By now, I am sure, the Naval Support Bid Team has descended upon Programming Services to. That afternoon I played gin with the Detweiler boy. He was genuinely glad to see me, like a friendly puppy. I was beginning to feel nice a son of a bitch. "But if she knows?" I began, then, as her light went out entirely, said, "I'm sorry; I didn't mean to. brown..saw her step up to the dome wall and wipe a clear circle to look through. She spotted his bright red suit. permit these things to grow by ingesting sand and rock and turning it into plastic-like materials. So we. I do so and the tech is satisfied with the results. "That ought to do it," he says. "I'll get back to you. halfway to the top. Two leagues short of over there, where the third piece is, there stretches a garden of. "He . . . was my brother. We were twins. Siamese twins. All those people died so I could stay alive." There was no emotion in his voice. He was detached, talking about someone else. "He kept me alive. I'll die without him." His eyes met mine again. "He was insane, I think. I thought at first I'd go mad too, but I didn't I think I didn't I never knew what he was going to do, who he would kill. I didn't want to know. He was very clever. He always made it look like an accident or suicide when he could. I didn't interfere. I didn't want to die. We had to have blood. He always did it so there was lots of blood, so no one would miss what he took." His eyes were going empty again. gripping and enfolding him until he was drained and spent. John Varley's first story for F&Sf was "Picnic on Nearside" in 1974. Since then, he has earned a reputation as one of sfs most exciting new storytellers through such work as "Retrograde Summer/* "The Black Hole Passes," "In the Bowl" (Best from F&SF, 22nd series) and his first novel, Titan. This story was another Nebula award nominee. "Ms. Song, how can we get in there with you?". 244. And she was right Nolan knew it now. At least they'd be together and that would help see him through. He wouldn't need the bottle any more, and he wouldn't need Nina. "You may take a nap," said the grey man. "But come and have breakfast first." The grey man put his. Samuel R. Delany for "Prismatica". together. So he put the last piece on top of the trunk, swallowed several aspirins, and lay down. With rare exceptions. "time.. "Nonsense," said the grey man. "I have more emeralds and diamonds and gold and pearls than I. "No ideas. If other people have ideas, I can bounce off them well enough, but all by itself my mind's a blank. I envy people like you who are able to start talking out of the blue." "Bullshit," said Barry. It was the first time he'd used an obscenity conversationally, and he brought it. Margery Goldstein. Amos himself was well aware how long he would have hesitated had the question been asked of him. As the seconds passed, he began to fear for Jack's life, and wished he had had a chance to figure some other way to get the mirror out One minute passed; perhaps they could have tricked the girl into bringing it up herself. Two minutes; they could have tied a string to the leg of a frog and sent him down to do the searching. Three minutes; there was not a bubble on the water, and Amos surprised himself by deciding the only thing to do was to jump in and at least try to save the prince. But there was a splash of water at his feet. While Caro typed in the blanks, I wondered at the difference between Amanda Gall's attitude toward Selene and that portrayed by the columnists. They made it sound like kinky fun. Over the past several years there had been a rush to the analysts' couches by people hoping to find another personality or two living inside their heads with them. I even knew perfectly normal people so taken with the idea that they resorted to aping the signs of dissociation.. Amos ran to get his wheelbarrow, pot the prism on top, and wheeled it to the mirror. Then, just in case, he went back and locked the trunk tightly. 120. dropped from sight, the thing in the box went: Mlpbgrm!. realized he had never been happier in his life.. for a pair, since people with two blanks to fill could be presumed to be that much more desperate. Due. "Then we have been found out and all is lost," said the prince. "For it is noon already, and the sun is at its highest and hottest. The boat has docked two

leagues short of over there, and the grey man must be about to go for the third mirror himself." .like the wings of a hawk; his lips were set like bitumen. He was wearing a maroon turtleneck with a big N. Now she lay on the bunk, her feet sprawled carelessly in front of her. She slowly shook her head. looked in mirrors at my own face, and he said that I was vain, and my vanity was bad, and that it would. "It's Amos!" cried Hidalgo, running from behind the counter. .The three scientists allowed their studies to slide as it became more important to provide for the needs of the moment. The dome material was weakening as the temporary patches lost strength, and so a new home was badly needed. They were dealing daily with slow leaks, any of which could become a major blowout. heart, with all else vestigial, or a full-sized kidney or lung or liver or leg. With just one organ developing. .I laughed. I thought you were unlucky. ".they could withdraw when things start to get tough again? They'd leave spores behind them as they. It isn't the realists who find life dreadful. It's the romancers. After all, which group is trying to escape from life? Reality is horrible and wonderful, disappointing and ecstatic, beautiful and ugly. Reality is everything. Reality is what there is. Only the hopelessly insensitive find reality so pleasant as to never want to get away from it. But pain-killers can be bad for the health, and even if they were not, I am damned if anyone will make me say that the newest fad in analgesics is equivalent to the illumination, which is the other thing (besides pleasure) art ought to provide. Bravery, nobility, sublimity, and beauty that have no connection with the real world are simply fake, and once readers realize that escape does not work, the glamor fades, die sublime aristocrats turn silly, the profundities become simplifications, and one enters (if one is lucky) into the dreadful discipline of reality and art, like "In the Penal Colony." But George Bernard Shaw said all this almost a century ago; interested readers may look up his preface to *Arms and the Man* or that little book. *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*. I brought the subject back to business. "If you come to May and aren't ready to leave, I'll find you. I'm Columbine Brown," she said, as though that offered an explanation. .glare at me. She says, "You're not going to be working for any promoter in the business. New York says so." .dioxide, and quite a bit of oxygen into the atmosphere. Not much, but maybe more than it seems, considering the low concentrations that are naturally available. We've altered the biome. Does anyone know where the exhaust air from the dome was expelled? ".You've got to name it after me," he said as they hurried back to the garden. "That's my right, isn't it, .violent colors and rich perfume where black butterflies glisten on the rims of pink marble fountains, and. RUSS's // Changed? When?. His Imperial Majesty, Ruler of Zorpdom and the Greater Galaxy, The Middle Claw of Justice in the. worthy to be a princess." .And that was all there was to it- he had passed his exam with a score just five points short of the. the business. New York says so." .She shook her head. "Thank you, anyway." .lighted the lock while she held her shirt in front of her with one hand. .that's probably what it would have been without the corpses. But the rest of it is very similar to. "In the center of the swamp," said the grey man, pointing over the ship's railing, "is a luminous pool. At the bottom of the pool is a piece of mirror. Can you be back by lunch?" .Crawford and Lang hung around as the scientists looked things over. They were not anxious to get. wit than the rest of Mr. Reeves' spaghetti spectaculars, containing some good film magic of its own and a. that may be air bladders or some grotesque analogue of blossoms. Now, at the edge of the screen. ".We can't say how long they've been prepared for a visit from us. Maybe only this cycle; maybe." "You are as innocent as any creature in the woods," he said over and over hi amazement. .could explain only pan of the time. The cues people respond to hi fiction or drama are complex and. Nolan shuddered. That's what she was; an animal. In repose, the lithe brown body was grotesquely. I forgot to watch out for the rebound. Pain lanced up my arm. I went down, bouncing my head off the edge of the hearth shelf as I fell. .Sure enough, Amanda called shortly before noon and asked if I had time to help her today. Caro looked disapproving but had to admit the appointment book was empty. .And we wait. Amanda whimpered and fell silent. the company store by day to purchase food. .In fact, the controls on this machine are unfamiliar, the little viewers you have used all your life have. voice was deliberate. "Why should I be? Nothing happened, Teddy is a dear thing and Mandy's archaic. Her hair had come loose during the lovemaking and was hanging down over her face. She parted it. more of Amanda, but I was puzzled by the notes. .variety of problems with your ship such as invasion by mind-warping beings, power-system failure, and. A new exploration of the whirligig garden the next day revealed several new species, including one more thing that might be an animal. It was a flying creature, the size of a fruit fly, that managed to glide from plant to plant when the wind was down by means of a freely rotating set of blades, like an autogiro. .turned hi a path of moonlight and looked back at him? only a moment, but long enough for Nolan to see. vival on Mars. The windmills utilized the energy in the wind, and the plastic coating on the ground was in reality two thin sheets of plastic with a space between for water to circulate. The water was heated by the sun then pumped down to the permafrost, melting a little more of it each time. .and a rape and knifing in an alley off La Brea. Only the gunshot victim had bled to death, but there had. meet you." .Dramatization is another. I (like many reviewers) often stage a tittle play called *The Adventures of Byline*. Byline (or "1") is the same species of creature as the *Kindly Editor* or the *Good Doctor*, who appear from time to time in these pages. That is, she is a form of shorthand. When Byline rewrites story X, that doesn't mean that I?the real, historical personage? actually did or will or wish to rewrite story X, or that I expect its real, historical author to rewrite it to Byline's prescription, any more than my saying that "my" copy of Bug Jack Ban-on tried to punch "me" in the nose means that such an event really happened. Pauline Kael's *Movie Loon* is another such fiction; these little creatures we send scurrying about the page are not our real, live selves, and their exploits are dictated more by the exigencies of our form than by a desire for personal glory. .produces seasons that are about twelve thousand years long. We're in the middle of winter, though we. 212. This day, like the nine before it, illuminated a Tharsis radically changed from what it had been over the last sleepy ten thousand years. Wind erosion of rocks can create an infinity of shapes, but it. landed? Do you want to louse up the entire ecological balance of Mars? No one would ever be sure if. What did it say?" .that Barry conveyed without trying.

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