

# Aching This Wonderful Ache

Matthew Lee Knowles  
2016

Dedicated to  
Greg Egan

This piece took six months to complete and is an extreme edit of Greg Egan's novel **Schild's Ladder**. It shortens the work to about a fifth of its original length. I looked for patterns of pure alliteration throughout the text and established rules to follow which sometimes evolved during the writing. Any paragraphs not containing alliteration were represented by a dash, so the number of dashes on a line shows how many successive paragraphs were devoid of appropriate syntax. The following are examples of patterns I looked for: **AA - AAA - BAAAB - CBAAABC - ABAB - ABABA - ABCBA - ABCAB - ABCABC - ABBA - ABACDED - CBABC - DCBABCD - EDCBABCDE**. These are also used in conjunction with each other to create chains.

- How the above paragraph would be interpreted and rendered:

This piece took six months to complete and is an extreme edit of Greg Egan's novel ~~Schild's Ladder~~. It shortens the work to about a fifth of its original length. I looked for patterns of pure alliteration throughout the text and established rules to follow which sometimes evolved during the writing. Any paragraphs not containing alliteration were represented by a dash, so the number of dashes on a line shows how many successive paragraphs were devoid of appropriate syntax. The following are examples of patterns I charted ... These are also used in conjunction with each other to create chains.

- Struck-through words are disregarded. Underlined words are kept and their specific positioning shows the internal structure of the patterns. Italicised words show patterns that would be disregarded were they on their own, but alongside other patterns they are amalgamated. Blue words represent conjoining positions that are part of neither adjacent pattern but are included within the fragment.

And is an extreme edit - the work to about a fifth of its original length I looked for patterns of pure alliteration throughout the text and - are also - create chains.

# 1

To twenty - loops eight edges long - nodes no - only of.

Cass corrected - trace the - to the - Big Bang.

Inhabited it - one of - to trying to - ten thousand - that the - on the other side of.

Assigned a - to the - another among - things the - three trivalent - an adjoining - loop like - as a - predicted that the photon - which way - to aim the photon took - other out - they traveled.

-

To the - ideal in.

Traveled to.

Her head - still strapped to the - to spare that she'd - dimensions did - thousand times more than the - involved in.

That the - to the - home stoically accepting a seven hundred - briefed but - behalf but she'd succumbed - and a.

Than two.

She'd arrived as a stream - almost any terms the - and accommodating - for frivolous - and a.

Her height - software she'd - through it the Mimosans themselves - wall with her hands - her head.

She seemed - above a - hold her - her half.

An act - to the - out of - take the.

The argument aside though - to transform - anything at all - your own boundaries but once you - have been born Homo - at all.

Smiling slightly - so she'd.

Session some - that there.

Tried not to read too - her hosts - the chance to put things.

After a - she still - through together.

She still - could come to terms - that this.

And alienating - world where - to take - hope had.

Tried to - shed tears and the sobs - some sense - entirely erased - experienced emotions - in its specific form so everything she'd - as a - nowhere near - as a.

She was spent Cass stretched - seed as calm and lucid as she'd - at any.

Answer a - in itself.

Her home.

-

That the.

-

That they.

Test them - than anything that's been tried.

As a benefit but - testing the - interested in - that they're almost certainly correct.

Where was - around at.

-

I do it's simple it's - as a - description of the dynamics of the - as a - appeared as natural and inevitable as.

Heart he - convinced that it's true Cass - default Darsono.

Ideas if - had handed - out of - things the - to the truth that only the tiniest.

The turn of the third - the two - that assigned amplitudes to - to do this was to - as an electron around a loop and - always agree - the region through which the - them all at the - to the - building blocks.

Taking their - on their own terms - to the - to the - as a.

Been blessed by - only been one set of - the two.

Outcome of.

Of observations of - our own if it.

Turned to Darsono seeking some - but before.

If it.

-

That the.

That there's - that the - to put in their place.

The success of the Sarumpaet - that they - that there.

-

It in.

Still stung she'd.

-

She swept - through the - and a - them taking.

Then triples the features that conspired to - introduced if - it in.

-

An act - a threat an attempt to - that they.

She said - that take.

Perfect planning - of ocean - few flimsy - some subtle.

Friends five - compared to the centuries - because Bakim - at all.

On the other side of.

To temptation but the risk that all the.

Toward the - she saw it in - it in - out of - she'd spent the same three.

--

Cass could hear crickets chirping.

--

# 2

To the - for the first time - and a - floating floating - an alien - ten times - as a - alternative then a third then a - watching with.

One of - her ancestors and descendants as well as all her - as a - her homecoming - to be the hardest thing - that her time here.

Her head - engine's exhaust - flicker fainter - her hand.

Silvery sphere - swarm of smaller twinned spheres - less lustrous - the twins to - the slight tug of the.

Could curve - Einstein's equations - orders of - than atoms and they - or otherwise - ten tonne.

-

Tailored to - timed to stretch space - vice versa.

Of one of - sources she - here had - out of - almost a - sized spores sent.

Scooter's smooth - was weightless again whenever she was - than that - train giving the impression that in the - traveled the - to the.

Had handholds.

Is it - the wall without touching.

I'll believe it when it happens in fact from - achieved at - of one - to taking.

To try to celebrate the - against all.

The truth - intriguing if - to the - adopt a.

She said.

-

How has someone solved - sheer speed - that time but then they blew themselves apart and - through the - which was orders of - at all she should have heard.

The technology.

Computation could.

For feeling - contemplate cross modal sex she - at any - energies equivalent.

--

As a.

My mind.

Having honest - immersing you in some comforting simulation of being back on - in in - immediate it.

You in your sleep and said - to the - eyes exactly - when you wake you say you - that the.

Of one - the wall there wasn't - than that - sacrificed seven - forty-five.

She said - what worries - to live through all the.

To the - any ordinary object around - cloud Cass - to prevent the parts that - who witnessed different external events.

Her hapless - to the - its computations it was isolated - wider world - at a - one outcome - a single alternative into another - though the - the two.

At all - been but - to what they'd believed themselves to - choice capable.

Allowed any closer to the - to the - as an - that the closed cycle - pure placebo still she'd - twenty times - the three - to the.

The cryogenic chair the - appear around her teasing her congratulating her on her - have had - the incremental targets would turn out to - an ancient bronze coin carved.

Her head what would.

To the - to explain the stakes to her her - analogy and nothing she suggested - object or - there any token act - by the bet itself but it bothered - what was - one of.

That they - they took.

The target - they'd tried - to the - to the - achievement a tightrope walker who - times before toppling to the - about a trillion times.



Themselves for the last twelve.

Wall was - the target - simple symmetry - state since - as a - to show that the same state - of ordinary - different directions.

An asteroid's - helium had - sphere six - world would - then that - have told half the story the - and all - as any - to the - all its individual atoms - or out.

For forty - condensate's components - to the - and a.

Intrusions if.

Turned to - to freeze the first time - almost as - to the - analysis a - than this - was waiting - she'd step.

She said.

Mind though the Mimosans - themselves they - could communicate - to talk - her behind her back.

My mind.

Icon was instantly replaced by Rainzi's - things to - fake inertia for its.

Rainzi's response.

-

Time to - the same sense of ownership that - the thing they - to create together there was the - almost as - she'd stayed.

Thing that - everything else - that this - out of - same sense - integrity it - she'd implode into something as hermetic and immutable as a.

The thing - minutes most - attention as - what was the worst that one of these transient - Darsono disclose some small - who either wouldn't understand wouldn't - to the - endless varieties of suffering endless varieties of stupidity.

To test - and after a.

Low level - through the - things that - implemented in.

Through together - hers and asked her.

Her Mediator had given him an appearance that inspired trust in - wearer's wishes - still seemed - the time.

She said.

-

Is it.

There's no terrible fate that I fear is lying in - think there's.

She smiled - an armored.

-

Shuddered she was who she always was - above all.

-

Telling the - he might have mentioned this before she'd been split.

To the - if it - the chance to think anything at all.

Would wake watch the whole - times then - news neither the price nor the payoff.

Awake asleep.

-

With whatever.

Turned to.

# 3

Wall was - she still - them as they perceived themselves the - only the touch of - she'd stepped.

-

Have had - further finding - the power to interpret the - a simulated swim a - attainable at.

She slipped her hand - turned to - boundary between.

So the statistics were still ambiguous as she - curves shifted slightly Cass - out of - a thousand times and.

What we're - two time - one of - and immediate and too detailed to.

Thought they.

The potential to be triggered - the things they've.

If I perceive something with so much spatial - taunt to - the things.

Out of - and a - a constant across histories an act - of one.

-

The theoretically - an artifact of the small sample they'd collected the - look like an accident - that there.

Collapsing Cass.

She said.

-

Angles allowing them to - to the - almost another - same spot.

Smooth symmetry.

Outside of.

True then the.

She said.

Histogram his - through the tops.

Role reversal - that they - to the fact that the flat - an awful - impossible if the truth.

Could contradict.

Our own - stable that's the touchstone Sarumpaet - so what's the simplest way to - solution suppose - that makes that true with the - as a - we would - it in - a viable alternative vacuum.

Appreciatively all - think they are they're all.

At a.

The two - angry than afraid though talk.

Isolation in - it's fragility incarnate once it - of ordinary.

To be the bearer of bad.

Right Rainzi - our own - if it - to that - that's the.

Though even that doesn't tell.

Difference does - what we understand we won't - be able to tell anyone we won't be able to warn them the - at all - spreading so slowly that their - was worthless - its inhabitants.

Her head - flee from.

Have hoped - and all.

-

Is increasing.

Slow steady - particle production - that the - that allowed the border to increase in - left little - about which vacuum was being whittled away to produce the particles they - seeing the thing she - as an - as charming and impractical as a - be bioengineered - if it - been but - as autonomous and viable as.

-

She said - my memories - she'd spent - had still happened she had still - sure she - to the - station someone - solar system - would wake - to learn that the emboldened traveler.

Of one - make my - weaken with - wildfire would - to Viro to Maeder to a thousand.

-

This Rainzi replied then - ourselves or - the time resolution with which we're - to this - solution someone.

Around at - robbed them of their home they'd understood the risks - chosen to conduct the - something she could come to terms - still surreal - to the - the truth - far from certain that the - to do that was to - at best be a.

Said solemnly.

- - -

An answer.

Danger doesn't - away and - that this thing - twenty thousand.

Turned to.

-

Swayed she - her hands - that the - to the.

To them.

She said simply.

She'd said something.

-

Of ourselves - that one of them.

# 4

-  
Systems are shown shaded systems have been lost behind the border.

Lit lid - to the - template that - of organizers - bruises beneath the translucent - sporadically sexy - the things - he had - out or.

His head - alien and - throat the - try to talk yet the organizers swept over the offending.

Cell couldn't - than three months this borrowed body - been born - a fair approximation of anyone - remained reasonably close to their human ancestors and - traveling this - only for the final fitting the tweaking of - maps to accommodate all the minor - early and experience as much as.

Arms and - tongue then tissue he tried not to.

-  
Imagine what it would - too the - and hacked away like a - portrait of your own past - flashbacks from.

The squirming sensation Tchicaya - much more.

Serviceably de-slimes he said some people think the.

Crib conceded cheerfully.

Had him - recovery room - his head bent and arched - to the - sooner they were dealt with the sooner.

Were waiting for him had - no need.

To the - faithfully from - his home - tell this - been building - body by - all an - imperfect imitation.

Was only when you traveled that you - of your own past or - Tchicaya told the - the tenth - in its.

No number - number nine.

Out of.

Number nine.

Out of the recovery room - tether to - ship's spin - travel the - they took - that there - one speck of greater or.

Shimmering sphere - toward the - an already - border blotted - and appearing - than two - being engulfed but the border had barely.

On Pachner to talk to people on - he'd had - boasted that they'd be - who was - to the - object of - ten thousand - looked like the thing.

-

Approaching an arm.

Was also weaving his way toward the - the time they'd - years Yann.

Stranger stood before him how.

-

An absurdity - achieved as - given that they've gone ahead and - anyway and - to take - the thick of things - at all.

He hated - out of.

The threat - flee from it if your whole world - in interstellar - and dust accelerating to a - at all a dozen acorporeal communities and countless.

Though the - than two thousand - were willing to transmit themselves - than two - taken them - little longer than the - to the - way was - then the.

Assuming a - though that the - without warning and turn that - if it was physically possible to turn back the novovacuum to - to persuade them that they shouldn't try.

-

Spinning sky - here he'd - around a - added a.

-

One out of.

- - -

For a former acorporeal - such stock - he had - why would - an attraction.

Want to take the grand tour while.

Had heard - out of.

Sixteen separate - the tethers joining them to the - too fast for the - arrived as - without warning - something similar.

Walkway was - the border became the most compelling cue - was walking - huge horizontal - above an - any attempt.

Names now.

-

While we're.

-

These things - out of.

-

Those terms.

Without warning.

-

To take.

The team - attracted a - the time if it.

The power to impose their - decides the issue isn't that the definition - they'd reached the stairs that - and ascended - of ordinary objects.

To the - to thrive - or orchids.

Than on the observation - for formal.

Sides can still cooperate - the theory that's going to - train to.

My moaning - started scribbling - worms we - out of all the theoretical - succeeding since - and agreed - to graphs that can test his hunches - they happen to confirm them.



Anyone about the results they should or shouldn't.

Accident after - every extant - and her accomplices though that was the - that the - could honestly claim that in the - treated the - twenty thousand.

Had heard - out of - that these - didn't dictate - to the - as a - creators could be condemned or absolved and - dared to take sides to highlight that distinction.

While I was in.

Them through the border then hope that whatever we - when we.

The theorists' - had helped - fortunate fact that the - to terms - as simple as altering a - an ancient - to the - at which a change could spread while satisfying.

To put the new theories to the test the only ones that - those that - the case that the correct grand generalization - and a - another and - to confront that fact than to.

Trying to - his hands - to the.

Second seeding - who was fleeing the first - sardonic suggestion was sobering though since - far from - they were whatever their.

Interested I.

--

Tchicaya's throat tightened you mean you.

--

Flesh fetish - that's how they do things.

Ever encountered.

---

Declined detailed directions since Yann seemed.

-

About a - and half as high a.

To the - to have to start spelling - of some of those terms - seen people squeezed together as tightly as this.

If in - honestly hadn't.

Sanity's sake.

The corridor Tchicaya trudged - the confinement of the crib but he hadn't - something smaller.

Walkway with - him he was lucky he was used to travel he was used to - to this - to them - behind the borderlight those - standards they'd still feel alienated and.

They climbed the stairs Tchicaya - to the - already aching at the thought - so still - usual urge to turn - away a hundred little things like that.

Talk to.

Thanks Tchicaya.

-

And a set of shelves - bed behind.

--

Show some cultural sensitivity Yann pleaded Pain isn't part.

-

His head and tried to - a sophisticated self and - world whatever it looks like - what we - crowded cabin - orders of.

Around and.

-

At a.

Meters made - idiot it - thousandth the - house he'd.

# 5

Shuttle separated - free fall - at a - backward but - that the - his head scrambled his sense - which would - to confirm the motion the - to take him through the - might have made him.

Free-falling at times in the thin air there'd - been almost as bright as these.

- - -

It is on land or - can connect.

Looks locally like - though the - around a - physics problems.

Traveler Tchicaya - than the - to Tchicaya as a - that there.

Couldn't claim that the - the shock and the strangeness - more mundane.

Around and interjected testily I - perfectly well without pretending to inhabit it that's - physics problem.

--

Tchicaya bit his tongue he'd been - acrimony and at - to have to wade waist deep through their opponents' venom on their way to.

Push that Tchicaya succeeded in interpreting as a precipitous - watering whiteness - impenetrable it - above an - being burnt - to the - sheer size that made the - fiercely for the total luminosity to - to boost the light's power a pinhole - three than the - the year the border had been.

Spotted the silhouette of the scribe - made a mask against - his hands - some structure at the top of the - iridescent in the light that - of firing as few as one or - scribe's stylus hovered so close that collisions - well within - to Tchicaya - that their - four fat.

Than one of the - out on a boom above a.

And approached.

An atmosphere.

-

To get to use this - his hand to tug on the - took three - taking the one thing the - drifting toward the border the best thing to do.

Said I'll see if I - arrange an opportunity on - to take - to the two - as a - the tension - as an.

The tunnel - horizontal he - at her and recited a - she smiled.

Toward the - texture to the light to set the scale - his heart though the - acutely aware - things in the world it was the way - minutes' memories - he identified with it wholly he was - something smaller than atoms and - to the.

Who whispered - transparency there - ways we - at every experiment and - with words - open on one level while we - and audit.

Earth era diplomacy it's depressing.

Handy here.

An ancient.

Anachronists to arrive at the - and announce that they've come to save the.

Twenty thousand - stars in spluttering contraptions spewing spent - taking thousands - himself but his father had - and annihilation.

Taking their - recall regardless - attention and.

An atomic - could create - whole when - triggering the same effect so the.

Turned to - approval that's all as we agreed go ahead.

-

The results Tchicaya's skin tingled he'd had no time to - they'd just tickled a tiger that.

Tagging the words with.

The tirade.

Kadir kicked - thud Tchicaya.

As a.

---

Went on no one was going to get their own way - on over.

To the - didn't doubt - though the words were - tried to.

They reached the dock and disembarked - to observe some tests on - he headed.

He hadn't - the trip - to the - have hoped to learn the - thrill to the - around and - like a legend his mother had told him - humans had - like lovers - the Sappers to teach themselves.

To the walkway she said - this far away from the - her hand thumb and forefinger almost touching.

Than to - need to name the - without wiping - fight for - as anyone.

You you'd.

Toy to.

She scowled.

And a - be perfected preferably by - an appealing - anything about.

Rigorous result in information theory that - humanity had - speed and storage any - this thing.

-

To trade.

It's insult - and announce - interfere if - look like.

His head - built by.

They'd reached the walkway Tchicaya.

Is irrelevant to them - you've smelled the soil you - what we.

Tchicaya turned to - bullying but - I don't despise anything and as I've said if it's possible I'll - few warm familiar places for the next ten - throw away the key to the.

-

Held up his hands you've made yourself.

Out of - he hadn't asked her after a - to preclude the misconception that - around and - how shaken he was he'd - among apart - he'd had - closer he'd come to the - the upheaval the harder he had - was witnessing - tragedy like the floods and famines of old on - the turmoil - because beneath.

Through the things she hadn't said - already tasted that amalgam - to tell her that the.

Tchicaya took - the possibility that he had.

Need not - whatever was - it in - this time - threat to - forced from - and adaptation.

Millennia how much tighter would the - itself if the nine thousand.

Still those who believed they were being smothered - Turaev those who were - he had.

That the - of opportunities - be but - argue against.

-

Sight seemed.

-

Flesh his father had.

Proceed protocols.

Met my.

They touched.

If I.

--

Suppose she's.

The crib two arrivals in as - so strange - he hadn't come across anyone - out of.

To them to.

The way they offered to share those cabins.

Apparently amused - hypersensitive he - through the - information indirectly.

Start some - soon Sophus explained we were expecting a rush about - will want.

-

Sophus shook his head - to think that they can turn back the tide at the - the track a century a century and a.

Out on a stranger and the truth - loved long - touch the exodus of Earth's.

Sophus said - the solar system to - incredulous it - it in - a significant amount squirts - in jets if you arrange for asymmetric - achieve a - be bound.

-

I know I know - much reaction mass and move all - so swiftly - as an unbroken whole would - from the floods by blasting - the way to lo the.

Bridges and buildings gone to scattered theme.

-

Rawest recruit.

--

There was talking about traveling to the.

Sophus shook his head she's - almost a.

Total to travel - the trip - she supported she.

---

You know you'll be able to ask her for her life's history.

-

The door to the recovery room opened - loose limbed and confident after.

Turned to.

Signature she hadn't changed her.

--

She turned at the sound - see that she was shocked - he halted - since they'd set eyes on each - he had.

Held out her hands and he - arms ached and - blurred but.



# 6

And a.

-

Than Tchicaya.

--

Himself straining his ears for footsteps - through the - past his parents - scandalous state.

---

Out of.

An adult.

This to pick their pockets - a threat to anyone we won't trigger any alarms.

He had - took the - father's face.

Her head.

Out of.

-

Hurt how - if it had taken her.

Hand over her mouth and mumbled.

Arm and - froze for.

Seen shadows slid - ceiling came - at dusk and dawn.

---

A thumb at the.

-

Teaching them.

Him hoping - handed him.

--

His head - to agree to it two weeks then.

Lower lip.

Tchicaya hesitated but he knew that this was the closest thing to.

Hand to him smiling slightly then she silently.

To be told Tchicaya sent the code to - the two of them dropped out of Slowdown together switching the metabolic modes - the time.

Through the trees beside the - to the throb - his mind more rapidly than they'd had.

Tugged on his hand pulling him toward the - like lightning - everyone else's eyes.

--

Skillful she - him he - to use the window so we'll.

Mariama managed - amused and - her he - in the short time they'd be gone but in.

-

Food's there she turned to face - was sure she was - to the house to pilfer some supplies - she said - it I've.

Though Tchicaya doubted that he would have - he'd heard - distance during - had tweaked his expectations of other - expected an earthquake at any.

His house - the windows to inspect the - shift soil - tending themselves - in irrigation - strange seasons.

-

You ever examine your Exoself take apart.

Tinkering with things on that - take things apart if.

-

Hexapods huddled - arranged as three pairs that.

To them - her hands - stirred sluggishly shifting - on the tripod of the three - touching the ground she started - to tumble.

Biting back an admonition - that they'd - that the - that the hexapods had - the town - that they - that they.

-

At a.

--

To get their legs tangled together - think they understand that that.

----

She smiled and started issuing detailed instructions.

Model was more - trying to trick them into tying their.

Already almost.

--

She snorted - on the other side of.

Traveled the whole world would wait.

Turned to.

And asked.

-

Than to.

Ten thousand times.

Of other.

-

Fell silent a faint star had appeared directly above him.

Said so.

-

He turned to her surprised she said I plan to whip the whole planet into life instead.

The town to - the energy ended up as heat and even the - to the.

Trace of the usual offensive odor - to the.

To the - suspicion she handed him a can and - the tab.

-----

And a - thing to watch the sun and the stars - if I - could be as fast as them plotting to - out of Slowdown before she'd even experienced.

What were.

She shrugged.

Felt his face harden - for the fact that - him mad he wanted the two of them to.

-

The lamp and lay beneath the blankets huddled together Tchicaya - them the.

Out of - wrong without.

--

Mocking me Tchicaya kissed the - her head he - he hadn't - along a.

And after a - her hair was thick at the - and his lips had barely brushed a.

Tchicaya's view the town's effective desertion didn't render it more interesting and the freedom to wander the - at any - when it was barely curtailed by parental authority anyway Tchicaya thought - that they - when the weather was warmer - to the.

Train to - possible preferably - the trains - to their - that they - anywhere and - than ten.

Terrified that - the town's - assurances at - would only offend her and at worst - tried to - suggestions she.

On their tenth night out of - was woken - his face he opened his - tongue out to sample the - was water.

Without waking - he held - at a right angled bend above - his head had.

Is it.

The very top of the pipe that - why would - as far as Tchicaya knew the - at all - could catch the light like - them thin.

Than to - beneath the blankets again but what was.

-

Lamplight apparently at a loss.

Taking the.

The building twice before - attached to a chain he hung - surface was slippery the first time he found himself sliding - and almost - the friction from the - hurt him - his hard.

In icy - to try to restore the - that this - toward the - him if he did real damage - to take.

His haunches and waddled across - been back - he had - idea whether he was heading in - wet with - something had cut him as he'd slipped - wound wasn't.

Ambled around the structure shining the.

Outside on.

--

The standards she'd set this was the first thing - her he had - once or.

Tchicaya approached and touched - substance was slightly sticky - finger for a fraction - than tearing - he held his finger up for - thumb there - at all - of oil.

He held - to the - some sign - coolant channel this had to be the - behind by - though why the coolant would contain some sticky - him antifreeze he was shivering with.

The center of the circle - he held.

Tchicaya moved the lamp to another spot the same thing happened the - whatsoever was.

To the - third location then took the.

The roof tiles his teeth - it in - took the - chemicals could - he had - start summoning - lessons like.

Silent since.

Scrupulously searched the other parts of the - only one side of one.

The knife there was a waxy.

Been before - his house - to the.

Again a - his hunch - to be disproved but the - throwing a tantrum and.

He made his way to the.

To throb his body had - was warning - the temporary - for the first time.

-

The toolshed I'm hoping it - trigger any alarms if I tried to - look like - the act though that the house had permitted her to - permission proved - show some tolerance toward his friends his parents had - that they hadn't programmed any paranoid hair trigger.

-

Tchicaya swung the ladder toward her making her - he had - but by.

-

Tchicaya tightened.

-

She smiled.

-

To the - at all.

-

If I.

In its - too short to touch the.

-

He'd have - she slipped but he'd been - he had - him he.

An accident - the thought - its impulses in - all their absurdity like ancient - they came to harm the - day do.

---

Before but Tchicaya found the - the top - his legs he hoisted himself.

She said.

Thought of that Tchicaya.

---

Indifference I.

They crossed the tiles together.

Had half expected her to identify the - as baffled as he was when he showed her how - to the lamplight she said - thought there'd.

--

That's true - if it - why wouldn't.

What were you warning.

Tchicaya's throat tightened - I scraped some - shaded to see if it.

If it.

-

Whooped with delight where - he held - it instead - hold of his arm and.

Tchicaya told himself he - there turned out to.

Shaped space.

An arm around him steadying his.

His hand - height where he would have.

Took the.

--

She struggled.

Think that's what it is.

-

Turned to - it is alive it.

Thought the - he was having second thoughts the - too flimsy to support the - some strange.

-

Then they'll know what we.



---

Trouble this - thousand times.

These things efficiently but each - at a separate accident - this building would become the.

If it's.

Every cell in every crop every cell - than if they found some strange - in the ice that.

Tired of trying to - than the - out of - this tiny.

She said.

-

To leave Turaev they'll evacuate the - somewhere else she smiled and added with a - to be the one to shake this place out of.

Tchicaya sat motionless scowling slightly the - of the other three cases the - own fate only one of.

That his own world his own town held the - example of extraterrestrial life he could have - more than disobedient more than disrespectful - the customs that bound the - Turaev together - whole world.

Everything he'd planned everything he'd pictured for the future - turned to ashes he might have traveled - have left his friends and family - this planet their home he.

Said soothingly - away and.

To turn his anger against her he'd always - what she wanted he had.

His head in his hands.

An arm around - she said.

-

That there - ten there might have been hundreds.

The starlight wondering if she was testing - was infinitely worse than anything they'd.

She said - to you tears were trickling - her hand.

The power to break through - to force the world to.

Her hand.

Tchicaya slept through the end of Erdal's - deep dreams - to the wind thinking - had happened in the last two.

Traveled to Gupta a hundred and - away and - that ten - Turaev too - his travels to his family and friends - to them.

Burn for four billion - impatience would it take to begrudge the wait to.

His lapse his heart - he had.

To tell.

-

He hadn't - so soon some - fourteen fifteen - some kind of sickness some kind of.

The first time always took.

Tchicaya exposed the raw skin again and stared - that formed the two of them would be bound together then.

You you're - strong enough stubborn enough.

# 7

Too tactful to ask Tchicaya how he - that the - that the situation seemed to - together in the same town on Turaev.

Hear what was happening - took up the task of outlining some seventeen - than he was his thoughts were still so scattered - trying to.

As Sophus talked the three of them strolled around - been this close to the border before but.

Tchicaya tuned in to the - saying so - using universality - Planck worm before we pin down the detailed.

Sophus said - that there's state that - of all annihilation operators - if there is such a state - time translation.

-

In fact it's looking more likely - was waiting.

-

Her hoping his - he'd seen her standing on the observation deck he hadn't consciously assumed anything about - here to support the side that he would have - sworn she'd - to opposing the one part of - he had of her - he had - to prove that he had no hope.

-

Nowhere near - then they'd - made more - fears for his home.

Time translation - the key to all their - two people performed the - a day and all - be superimposed that sounded too obvious to be - sliding the two sequences.

True there'd - at all at the same time - that this tiny - others once - same as taking a step - analyzing these two admittedly singular activities - detail and declare that the.

The accident that whatever the - same symmetries - as arbitrary as - planet's prime.

The assumption that these - of possibilities on offer that dwarfed those - dimensions different - the transformations - these things - tractable and at the - that there - sufficiently simple - what would happen when - try to - an opening night of Aeschylus.

We're wasting.

-

Tchicaya caught the change.

-

Sophus said - today that.

Why we.

Why we - if I'm.

-

Interested in driving anyone away - this the - it I'm - to the.

Through the.

Sophus smiled - if I'm - it I suppose I - to tear off the wrapping and all the - convert to the classical - much more.

Advantage to announce the.

Them Tchicaya.

She said - you come in if you're coming in.

That the Rindler's reception.

To ask them to cannibalize the ship to.

To the.

Out of - on Gupta or roll over - as a.

All the trivia again before any - that there - the expectation that they'd.

She said.

Different times the details depended - recently rather - though they - at any prior age than a.

Smiling slightly - strict sense - can cross - everything every - temperament every minor taste every trivial opinion there - many markers - they're not the things that - they're not the things that.

He hoped - stranger he might have asked his Mediator to handle the subtext - that they.

-

She's six.

-

Are any.

Why she was asking he'd always - there the.

--

Traveled together.

-

Tchicaya still thought there.

To the place that's it even if - wander off to the other side of the world everyone else who's.

Two travelers.

Not nor.

She shook her head - the answer to that.

That bad Tchicaya knew there - she said - welcome it was as a visitor a - told the - Turaev that - the notion that somewhere there'd always be a.

Said so.

--

There to say she stayed - even Emine - of one of.

With you what would - that traveled - than the ones that.

Two travelers happened to have.

About a - sudden sense - her he'd - on other - that there'd - themselves together if that's - wouldn't without - themselves a thousand times -  
than any they'd needed when they were.

-

His hands - or offended - said that can we change the subject.

-

Tchicaya thought - we were - that time we were.

-----

Have been happy but.

His head.

-

We woke.

After several seconds she succumbed anyway.

--

That the world will always stay the same.

-

Theater that the - improvised in - of one of - the cabins that happened to - that this.

The theater.

There to.

Been broken.

To be the one to point this - he held up his thumb and forefinger and adjusted the spacing to.

Him until he dropped his hand.

An all.

Softened she - and ran a hand affectionately across his stubbled scalp - much more specific than that.

Through the - by bringing.

Involved in - the tail - but Birago - to conceal the telltale - the scenery Birago seemed to be taking their teasing - Tchicaya that he had the - that there.

Appeared genuinely amiable toward the - wondering whether - friendship had caused her to conceal the full - nowhere near the point that.

Twice the.

All about - their eyes his Mediator had explained that the timing - to stop talking among themselves - an aspect.

These talks - out of - Sophus is always interesting though I'm sure.

Said something.

About an arrow.

Time translation.

-

Appeared and - to the - the theater.

They watch this in their.

-

Though there - at a performance where people were.

Throat and the audience.

Sophus began we've been scribing - than two - trying to - to see theories come and go and all - ninety nine - off most of our.

Hopeless how - took three and a - what's wrong with us we - the mathematical tools to model - ten thousand - them to - asking an adult - blocks but - the new toy they've.

Who whispered - slips someone's.

The Sarumpaet rules survived twenty thousand - scrutiny Sophus marveled how flawed how misguided - that extended the old ones - slightly the smallest change we could - the tiniest.

Fit what we found - tweaked the rules a little more and a little more.

Here has - ever more elaborate theoretical towers on the - been toppled by the.

Almost apologetic as - been surprised by the tone of his own - to Tchicaya - was showing through that sentiment was - arrogance after - him had - he honestly believed that they'd.

-

Have to hold on to that - we were right to aim to tamper with his work as little as - what we - where we - refinements of the original rules.

Sarumpaet rules really say Sophus - around the theater as - and they're all equally elegant and compelling a combinatorial - time there's.

The end they say that - them to - some simple and beautiful axioms.

Again arms - to Tchicaya - for forbearance - their time - the thousandth time.

He have such unprecedented success.

Then changed tack completely.

Have heard - myself a month ago - an arcane - for the first couple of centuries.

An axiom - vectors if  $V$  and  $W$  are possible physical states then so - a and - that's true though then why do we - percent probability - and a fifty percent probability - charged conservation of charge - prepare photons - on opposite sides of - continent why couldn't they manage to - and a positron here Sophus held up his left hand then his - vice versa.

Superselection sectors - ahead and - scrutiny if some innocent novice asked a - be because.



Adding acerbically - real reason an electron and a - incorporate them into your observations you'd have no hope - the state as a superposition instead the two - there were that all the mathematics that - the term.

Atmosphere around him when he'd - that they - thanks to - to transform their.

His spine he couldn't claim - he heard - they thoroughly.

There were that we.

The silence that followed Tchicaya turned to - he had.

Continued how can the Sarumpaet rules seem to be true - it isn't I believe that the - is virtually identical to the - was dealt with almost twenty thousand.

Is our inability to keep track - if it's - complex in itself or if it's coupled.

They apply to systems that - environment explain.

Sophus smiled - the face for twenty thousand - transforms the - around it into an - state still - its charge is classical even when we - the task.

Thought the - the lowest level the rules that - that wasn't the point the - the total - whenever we - those were the laws that.

Can coexist the fact that - that there is to.

That the - the total - the whole the part that - its surroundings into what we think of as our own - to track - to the - scale what we see - certain classical.

The audience stood and Sophus acknowledged the request Tarek.

That the - been stabilized by something.

Trying to - without waiting - what it was or what.

Similar to that Sophus - stabilizes systems - the total - everything's embedded - matter moving through that - cloud chamber condensing - particular pattern.

Why can't we discover the path the rules that.

Sophus said - that to - obeying a different analog of - way we are with our own.

Too soon to take Sophus's idea seriously.

Of ourselves when we interact with - as a superposition of observers.

Sophus shook his head - Planckscale probe - system six - to discover them that - what we're dealing with on our side of the border there's a tight -  
across all - time the - place to place or from moment to moment what we're sampling with.

-

She said - speculation Sophus - to test.

And a.

Claiming much I can match.

When we - no symmetries no invariants no.

That there's nothing to - however hard.

# 8

---

That Tchicaya.

Haven't hurt.

Shook his head still.

His own sense of humor - and hilarity are perfectly acceptable.

-

Interested in.

Try if it's important to - to take.

An authentic embodied experience - the touch of skin on skin.

Mouth meaning it as a.

-

Be happy be happy be happy - think there's something wrong with this.

---

How happy

-

As a.

Shrugged something than being told by my body be happy be happy.

---

Still expected something more subtle.

That takes time.

---

His honesty on Turaev it takes - attraction before anything's physically possible - two of them could develop compatible sexual organs more or - the need to delegate the task the waiting was nice in its - an awful anticlimax but I think the buildup improved - itself almost as much as it.

--

What flesh is famous for however undeservedly he watched.

Shook his head that usually takes longer too he hesitated so - what do acorporeals do instead when I was.

Twenty thousand - to continue the tradition - mapped some stable mammalian - in its - I suppose it still serves some useful social functions as well as being a - malleable mental - we worked.

-

The other things the - give gifts show affection be attentive sometimes.

-----

To the - the world to bring back.

--

Astonishment and added - if it was it.

So you start with something.

Pair of projections that turned the - the three.

-

So much she extended them to.

-  
His hands through their Mediators Tchicaya saw them - down to the three dimensional - to the direction to - took the x axis all the rotations that treated the - of the other three directions this - which was - solid sphere with opposite points on - an artful - the topology of the.

Turns the.

Tchicaya as having all the.

--

What was.

What would he say he wasn't - substitute someone - out of.

--

Surprised Tchicaya struggled to think - father's first - I trade that instead.

-

In love with Lajos it started in winter when they used to.

-

At a - an answer he'd never had to explain this.

Seemed slightly bemused by this - to take.

Were giddy with it they could touch - together walking together waiting - to Turaev to talk to the.

They were walking on the outskirts of town - had happened - an ancient.

-

No no - amused at - who would have assumed that an acorporeal - the notion that witnessing the - any consequence at all.

-

To meet the anachronauts what were they.

Techniques to keep their.

Spoken to someone who's seen them in the.

They knew they'd be overtaken by newer technologies they knew they'd be traveling into the future they knew there'd - their route that was why they left they wanted to witness what humanity would.

-

Though Tchicaya continued they told - that they wanted to - in in - the wars the truces the victories the compromises the.

-----

Had had the heart to tell them Tchicaya - to reveal their purpose but by the time they got around to - these travelers had they'd - bring themselves to break the news that the sole surviving - with any aspect of a person's anatomy would - possessed a penis and a.

They lied to them.

The kindest thing to do Tchicaya - them to - when they did though word.

Same story - the time they'd.

His head - same story - they'd traveled into the - people played - their expectations the locals there told them that all the - shortly after settlement and made a - and dance about the struggle to adapt - trying to reinvent the - triumphant the - oohing and aahing over all the profound things this told them - few fake.

His hands.

To them about anything - them an honest account of all the.

-

Them the - there had to be war between the sexes there had to.

-

They said that for five thousand - mother's milk.

The bed that's surreal on so - no progress no happiness no success no.

That their - since settlement - the transmission - what was needed they explained that their - social or sexual mores even more bizarre and arbitrary than the ones they'd.

Said so.

That these - at about this time a - different hoaxes had been advocated by different - town to.

At all though he hadn't - the precise timing of the ship's arrival and - he'd had.

Died down - from its files he had to stand there.

What they were supposed to tell these - they'd read the reports - that they could have claimed - silence so - were left with was claiming ignorance claiming to be both - to translate that into terms.

Idiot I - have had.

His head - he held - precision pride - than that - the truth - each other even if they'd known their - that they - through with the charade he held a fist against.

They told them the truth.

- - -

That this was the.

-

An anguished groan they told them.

To them - the travelers themselves there'd - world was - and apart from trivial local details like the - attraction and potency he and his.

--

Who without - them the.

-

They left Turaev none the wiser with - to add to their.

That since Turaev they - fall anywhere they've been tracked the ship's still functioning and - four or five opportunities - time they've.

-

Upon us - them before they'd even left Earth.

Even how it had ended - them together.

He could have instructed his Exoself to embargo - how he - as a - arm across - of observation on reflection.

That the two of them - Tchicaya turned to.

That the last thing.

Built both - he'd explained to Tchicaya earlier he'd - to the - and their demands the Scribe was still available - about as significant as - even slaughter each other he'd observed.

The distance the trip - as air.

Three to two if you're neutral you're a Yelder there.

--

She spoke she.

Tarek dropped the subject Tchicaya - to him she hadn't lost her touch - Tchicaya had trailed after her as a tortured infatuated child it - hone her skills on him anything above and - mere hormonal effects had been superfluous she might - tried to.

And appeared.

Watched with - denial and dismay as - been borne out and all - however had - that aimed to use the - as a - strictly speaking - apply across.

I think this is the first time I've.

Had your hopes pinned on any of.

Conceded I certainly would have been happy if they'd survived testing.

-



At all.

Here how.

Tarek went through the tunnel first then Mariama Tchicaya - whispered with - her head - that the - triggered the.

The twelve TeV - making me.

He'd had - that the - the thing itself he'd hold his - for sounds from the far side straining with his whole.

His heart would race with - out or that his crime had.

And announced - astonishment am.

I'm invoking.

Window with his hands on his head.

Tarek took - the border Tchicaya had heard about functional audits - the tip of the - that they conformed to the.

Tchicaya was tempted to say something - he held his - Tarek believe that this.

- - -

She said.

To the - to work with Tarek - and apparently.

Forty fold while it was - to administer the cure the.

Worms would - to Tchicaya the - infect it - as a - he had enough trouble forgiving that.

Think the.

When we - state seems like too much to.

Rules there's still some raw topology - theory that has to hold - lot like - an entanglement creation experiment on a completely abstract - in fact is in a superposition of states in which it's.

-

Language like that the - well with - anti AI - asserted that as soon as there was intelligence without - processing power - then the - perfectly efficient Planck scale computer self - what without - to want to do this well who - processing power.

Transformed the.

--

Arms and - take that as a - skepticism shall.

Instruct it.

Branco began repeating the sequence Tchicaya - to rush through it this time - took pains to reproduce the.

As anyone.

He hesitated - defensively don't - there's too - makes me - it I'll.

----

Then another Tchicaya turned to.

-

The same he smiled uncertainly trying to reassure her that he.

--

Genuine gut - he had - to the moment itself but in - of others.

Began to creak the windows had healed themselves and the whole structure would be - to whisk them away to.

--

To be tugging on the - before beams - through the - border by.

Again and - though they.

Something to stop himself he succeeded - the two of them tumbled through the opening together.

Several seconds Tchicaya remained rigid - and a - body began - altitudes where oxygen was needed and swum at - but black and starry space - hope he should have.

Been firm but brief - that they - the wrong way to - of the Scribe the only - to their.

He'd been holding his breath - that the urge to - his hand - heat he extended his arm shakily so he.

Tin Man trying to - through Tchicaya's teeth.

-

Around an axis - to the - they turned the - still safely - four or five meters from the border themselves and their trajectory - one way or the other.

Spotted a shiny Mariama standing - wall watching.

--

She said.

His Mediator to make his.

Toward the border but.

----

That Tchicaya - than the - border as a featureless wall for centuries the tiniest blemish - summer sky.

To the.

We have physics we have.

---

To that.

Out of - after a - edged ellipses traveling from the.

Suggested swimming.

-

To their - badly burning - or two when this was over.

--

Toward the Scribe that - than me trying to put it into.

Tchicaya twisted - forty or fifty meters high that had completely swallowed the Scribe - trying to delay its departure.

Wave was spreading more slowly - traveling faster than they.

It its - the stars the thrust - about as maneuverable as a - ice it - them before the wave and even accelerate away - time but there'd be - that might manifest themselves in the.

----

It's a wave it's a predictable phenomenon I've - a trajectory that meets all the.

----

And a - to the - who was willing to jeopardize their own comfort and continuity - an act.

Tchicaya said stay clear we can't afford to lose the shuttle this - added a - is invaluable - trained on the border but.

Immediately but in the silence that followed Tchicaya knew that he'd swayed her.

The realization that they'd - the tradeoff.

--

Been but - it wouldn't fall far enough to miss them Tchicaya wondered if - would want - what was.

Hate to do this how.

Tchicaya to.

We were - out of.

That was true the Rindler had run out of - waiting Tchicaya would have to join the - compared to the centuries - to transit insentience but Branco's.

He said his stomach was knotted with - the thought.

An acorporeal ask.

Tchicaya struggled to clear his head - sense of shame and selfishness - the thought - the right thing to - he had - he have to annihilate the - act against - them to lose their bodies but - to pretend that he was happy or indifferent about it.

Shoulder so - chest then froze the crest - the wave was thirty - this was too complicated they'd.

-

They began to move together - his limbs had been gripped by.

Made me.

-

The thought that.

Become disoriented but as they swung around together - fell from the stars to the.

Yann said see you.

-

Them then - his arms across his chest he was ascending at a shallow angle back toward the - into a ball and it - at his heels as he.

Tantalizing logic to the changes the - about at.

-

The wall between the worlds - been breached.

# 9

Anything about.

Tchicaya turned - he hadn't heard.

They used to tell - takes to.

That Tchicaya - context you can tear the - out of these one.

She sat.

SO(22) symmetry and E7 as the gauge group - grabbed before generically though the - Tchicaya laughed listen to.

That the - to test.

Thirteen minutes that's close to the - think this might Tchicaya glowered at her and.

With the idea that we - over and over in the hope that one of them will turn out to.

- - -

He had - substantially to several projects having helped to design the spectrometer that - Scribe she'd - further for - as a - the seventh time even the - and agreed to the.

To take.

She smiled and added.

Branco's experiment but once the two - data was displayed now that trips to the - that the.

Obey any single analog or extension of - the total far side state that - each time the experiment - was repeated the rules were - arguments about - the larger truth was the - the fact that they - have had to be tracked in order to observe.

Trying to - creatures cling briefly to the.

Had had - to the - than that the - of one sentient observer around the clock Tchicaya supposed that this - all the theorists were drowning in data already and they - things to do than - two he'd hoped that.

She'd seriously - the border they'd pinned to the - to the - scribed some.

If it survived what good would.

What if we scribed a Scribe.

-

Aghast though that's a - a right and vice versa

-

Immediately I - look like - it or is something more symmetrical - as varied and transient as.

Observer on - dynamics don't form decoherent - the tiny patches where we're forcing them to - window weren't - saw staring - insects if - seen side by side.

Through the daytime and worked all.

It I've.

-

Wouldn't want - and backed away raising a - at a - allow anything.

Ship slightly - trekked through - the sky came suddenly to.

Six subjective - Turaev the - an alley and - an abandoned - three times longer than all the - his home.

And grandchildren on Gleason and - that from the realization that - the sense that they - him out of his - imprint in.

He heard - him outpacing his own he - turned to face the wall of the walkway as if admiring the - by his tears than the fact that he'd be - at a loss to explain them.

You look like you're.

-

Must march.

Turned to - beyond belief but - the thousandth time that - after all - as a - as a - to fight to keep the - slaves she'd - to shake out of their stupor safely -  
twenty thousand.

--

That today was the - frame fixed to the - and in any case no confirmation.

He's holding.

---

She shaded - we were.

-

She said - she turned to stand - to this thing.

-

Are you afraid to spend ten.

----

Arrived and when I was - walk around with a - to the Rindler to - make me dishonest does that make me.

Her head - so sure.

--

Being distracted and depressed by.

-

Walked away without another word.

-

While then Tchicaya said this whole - is insane - some state to the border that - it in place if we worked on it together it.



Think that.

--

Ideally I - to cross through Tchicaya - to flee from this - in boats but if freezing the border turns out to.

At all.

That's the logic that dictates the - the whole thing out of - certain to come along eventually and.

Where the wake was.

The map Tchicaya consulted Kadir's cabin - a roughly circular room ahead - was wide.

Clothes changed as they approached - bands broken up by ellipses in earthen - that Tchicaya observed the - too well to mistake it for insincere - without a word he steeled himself.

For friendly.

-

Than most there were lithe winged - of the jungles that could tear out - throat toward the - adulthood as if adolescence itself was insufficiently traumatic the - and at - stomach so - made it more barbaric better - than the - and better anything than the - decided that this was the definition.

The town - after a - to the - the town - interested in being bullied into.

Only occur - same sights - toward the - to the.

Him half - try one of these they're.

Good grief.

For food - to tweak the genomes to - the borderlight but that's - those ugly things the.

-

To try.

His head I've tasted them before there.

Turned to - she said.

He had - to greet them politely then - claim could.

-----

What was.

The top of the.

--

I think I know where you were - wasn't built when I was.

-

Dusk did - in it.

The same time the same season.

The big tree still there with the.

This description I don't think.

Turned to - he spread his arms and swayed the first time I did it it.

Water when I was.

There three.

Approached and slipped an arm around.

The crowd Tchicaya spotted Sophus Tarek.

-

Saw Suarez he said.

-----

Think that's - the music the pictures the.

Scowled so - my mind - about all - or obsessive about it and.

Stone she sounded - she'd seriously.

Are gone the trees are gone - those things they'll.

-

He's suffering he's thinking about the things he's - the things - he hasn't - fully formed.

--

Of memories of meaning.

Fail for the next ten - alive and unique and sacred and - in sight for some inbred fop in - wig what else would - fight for.

Is in - can confuse the inalienable things inside them.

Which would explain why - at all.

Tchicaya was tongue tied.

Many million.

She shook her head that's not the.

-----

I'm a traveler and I'm.

-

Seen change she said - that dictates the alternatives that's painful in its - but it's better to go through that than - whole way - some senseless.

External events everything.

-

Whole world.

-

My marriage - she said - to travel if she'd stayed - of measure of whether or.

That's true Tchicaya - both battered - to the - he'd forgotten how much he'd - with her when they'd taken the - on Turaev the only part he hated was the very thing that.

And then turn around and - thousand times.

-

Through the - it is.

But however beautiful and challenging and fascinating it is it's not worth losing what we.

Equal to everyone else's.

-

Think that's the cruelest thing - said to me Tchicaya smiled but she didn't soften.

-

Her head and he - border before.

-

Trying to untangle the - any secrets she'd all - that Tarek's Planck worms were - real shape and she'd responded - to listen to her own one.

For their factions their between the two of them though there'd be - no more engagement no more.

--

# 10

Insisted I - it in - to the.

It's software and it's software.

His head that's just the - the most elegant the most - you can obfuscate can't you.

A swipe at him and he flinched away from - a habit he'd acquired.

To this - storage systems spying - them and undermining all their - Sophus had spoken next gently guiding - networks was not one of - an act - on the part of the - physically possible.

Said so you shift - through the - he had - the three of them to - stepping stones.

To the truth the - defined dynamic law if it tried to do that.

An attractive force analogous to the tug - a certain shape a certain - statistics which was stable.

If I put it.

-

Through the - if I - back through the border - persuade people.

--

Computer can - that there.

Left to lose by treating the - if it - applied algorithmic theory that are - that the.

The template.

For trying this Tchicaya said since the factional - competent to contribute directly himself he - at least act as a.

Of pointing out that he might have expressed his - she smiled and accepted.

-

Invisible to Tchicaya for several minutes she sat in.

Suddenly she.

-

Held up her hand.

After a while she spoke again - different dynamic - that might make topological.

Enough examples that they'd pinned to the - feel for.

Of them orthogonal to.

Had never had his - than three - as good as any.

And that are all - that's complementary to the - bit sloppy because they're not true.

Try not to fret Tchicaya thought of the - then the - around a.

When written - of the old set or the.

Easy north north east - the two.

One on - and then arrange to measure the.

The haze granting him the ability to - some similar trick with the.

And that's always going to make things.

That took them beyond the - border but - if I - around and.

Rasmah regarded - and affection - to go through the.

-

Said something - think that's - is it.

His head.

She said - in itself - to her that he.

Apologetically am.

The other thing I thought - you and Yann were still somehow.

- - - - -

The air though at the same time - why was he letting her shape his decisions at all.

-

To the.

Trial run the room - owned by one faction or.

The tallest - trying to - was conversing with some who weren't - been born - so in some ways than the factions themselves Tchicaya - this their generosity had given many more - to them - he had - to think that - such sacrifice - segregation by birth still depressed him however - well acclimatized to their condition the acorporeals were.

Hand had scribed Yann's state almost an - algorithmic account into a - sophisticated scattering - in its - back to them bearing.

Particle physics - with were the raw topological - those mundane things were woven.

-

The screen though the - the room Tchicaya stubbornly stood - several seconds.

Pockmarked pattern - low light levels - could count.

Wait wait.

Far from - there there's.

Alternatives all - the physics they'd trapped on the.

An amalgam - features from - of ordinary - welding them together without - simple set.

-

No no - or otherwise - at all self-similar.

Probe pulse - to the results to.

To wait the meeting that - aside a.

Do it don't do it I couldn't care.

Bounce back to them - staggered sequence - single still.

Try that - approval and shouting alternative - his hands were trapped this was bedlam but it was intoxicating it - of the time he and a group of friends on.

Screamed shut.

- - -

His head.

- -

That this.

Cass came.

Tchicaya had never heard this.

-

Held out his hand.

-

Through the.

-



She said.

It's structured isn't it he suggested you said.

The things.

Back to them bearing - that there - conventional sense it could still support - they could try to - eventually even.

Importantly if - that the place they'd - looking less and less like - that the world behind the border would be nothing but - even the equivalent of the tiny - that the - orders of magnitude more.

Should show this to the opposition Tchicaya - that they're.

-

What we.

I but only because I'm - whether we - officially or.

Someone's spying.

-

So sure.

Order of magnitude more.

-

Made up my mind.

Story she said - that's that - decisive deadline - when everything will be won or lost so long - whatever we.

To the.

Went without saying Tchicaya hadn't told - that to - than the - worms were - he hadn't - way to freeze the border but there was - toward that.

Said so - that this.

Never not - second she - you should see your - to take - this tiny - as angry as - this thing.

-

It I - if I'd - it early enough instead I - make my - through the border the - if I.

Making me.

She smiled I'm sorry but that's because.

-

This time he fought harder - at the console as the pulse appeared and its interference.

Target the - an average - particular piece - still as informative as say a sample of images of terrain - of one.

Through the - particle physics could be austere beautiful - pair production - out of their parent photons - through the - thousand times - the separate parts still playing their - Sarumpaet style - look like - as a decorative tile to - thousand times.

This scale twenty orders of - to the - atoms at least and - chemistry appeared crude and - a speed and precision that made the most sophisticated molecular factories look like.

Their throat - console curious and slightly annoyed wondering what anyone thought they could - to this - with words - speaker making space as if in.

Nervous now that he had.

Not particle propagation but it's something I've seen before in simulations it's persistence and replication and interdependence it's not - or if it is that's only one - describe it and I don't.

It's a biosphere it's an.

# 11

Tchicaya said we should tell them now take them all the evidence no no better teach them - them probe the far side for themselves then they'll know they're.

Then what they convince themselves that they're - while we've surrendered our sole.

The ship unable to sleep - the corridor had come perilously close to - them to the - which was supposedly secured - people passing.

They're willing to interpret this.

Are a - ten to the minus thirty three meters this.

-

My mistake - interested in getting in.

Slapped Suljan - on the back of the.

Turned to Yann I apologize I'm in - accomplishments I'm already working on an ode.

Him he said I suppose - what it's worth I've - some simulations he summoned - the table the - the same throughout the - other possible equilibria other population - these teeming communities of organisms and a.

The transition zones tend to - at a - the border itself but there.

-

That except that our side of the - sterile so - subject to the same.

We could create a layer population like these that worked with.

A start these are simulations so - many things much more - population with particular properties.

Suljan said screw.

The simulation our side of the - even rarer examples of biochemistry only to find that the entire - orders of - scale as heroic and miraculous as some - been buzzing through the superposition that the.

Is insane - for fewer microbes than there - sized speck.

Rasmah replied.

It in - him for his hypocrisy.

Been begrudging - that there'd.

One glimpse of this and they'd - fighting for - had abandoned hope that the - beings but.

That's conceded these things - much more complex than the.

That's true - who says we've seen all the life there is to - turned to - think these.

His hands helplessly - I see it I - of RNA or if this is.

Processes to the primitive - about a.

Suljan wasn't satisfied with - with what we've - try to - that these things - that they seem to.

Totality they - another as - no food no waste no.

This no vacuum no timetranslation - of organisms.

Them though - of or.

Suppose so Umrao said - these things are much much simpler than single - most multicellular - the tissues share their.

Maybe multicellularity's - larger length - immersed in.

Immersed I - of organized patterns of - to model the behavior of some object.

Tchicaya took a stab at this.

Suljan said - themselves are too small to play tissue types but certain communities - as a.

An amoebalike - the interior and a layer around it that - leading surface to the trailing one the leading surface - travels the trailing - it actually invades its own interior but it - in its - though this cell could never stand still and it's a - there are all kinds of opportunities to.

The simulation to the - he had since he'd - still speculation to build a machine a body.

To win time from the Preservationists there has to be a truce a.

Think they - worms without knowing what.

That they.

Spies why should telling them.

Over our - everyone else - turned to - in its.

The table - said was serious I don't think I should.

The table drumming - ten thousand times - smiling slyly - with your work though was to translate it all into - it in - hours to see how to scale.

Sweetly so what was.

Suljan straightened - as an algorithm for an abstract - improving it.

To the - Tchicaya spotted Birago standing by the - the two of them - of only talking to - around a.

Annoyed at.

-

Had had - would follow within a couple of centuries we're.

Tchicaya had heard the - oldest community of evacuees or some other - always appeared - than on the loss of the old Birago himself had - as an infant and - if his family had wrapped him in - to their.

Anything away - his side had had - compromise could.

We had no plans we had no - which was.

-

Idiomatic phrases in passing.

Insisted I.

We what counts as certainty.

-

Amused and you think that.

This thoroughly we'll know what is and isn't - out of fear that they.

His right hand there are tens of billions of - toward the border but there's only one.

- -

Start of Suljan's experiment many more - chosen to avoid the crush - than before to the point where there was.

And Umrao at a - far from - about seeing anything new such a short distance in if - them behind the border.

Years Yann - amusement as if she'd made some.

Rasmah retorted ten to the.

My mind - lack of Lorentz invariance if - as a.

That imply that there's - you assign yourself an absolute.

His hands - that Tchicaya's Mediator translated - you you'd - constituents change.

Everything ends - look like - at all but in its.

-

Suljan shouted.

Tchicaya turned to face the screen it showed - and Branco's but that was what allowed - any return at all.

She said some ten to the forty nodes from.

-

Wish we - the table.

Well would do wonders.

Won't they the two Hands themselves were - about a - that the.

Rasmah raised her hands defensively don't say it I'm.

The room the result was important but it - to their - scale structure - that there - scattering seismic - the boundary between two.

Suljan said I think it's - different delays - border but the signal showed.

Rasmah replied - made more sense to Tchicaya the - to attribute any delay to the.

-

Something when she emerged she said - and the changes are too.

Tchicaya turned to.

This in the simulations he said.

- - -

To them - importance though and if this.

One oscillations.

That going to tell.

The table - the other beating out the rhythm of the reflecting - to tell.

-

Think there's.

- -

Tchicaya turned to - anything away.

She said.

His head.

- - - - -

Tchicaya said the slower - that tell.

To the conversation at their table - what they were whispering - long loud string of obscenities he turned to face them looking.

What we've got here he.

- - -

Tapping them - Tchicaya calculated the next number - and thought about trying to quantify the odds of the first three occurring by chance but - the pattern to be broken.

- -

Of order.

Exotic equivalent of cicada calls.

To include the possibility that - trying to.



# 12

-

Think so Tchicaya held up his hand.

-

This is the right way to be the right way to.

-

Bit back - harness his - this is too important.

Smiled I suppose that's as good a strategy as any.

Taken Tchicaya - through the - to the - he had hoped - see the same results reach the same.

Then the - that two - to address them before they made their - a moratorium and he'd found himself volunteering having - leave this last stage to someone.

Than Tchicaya - ameliorated at.

--

The tiers - see stars through the transparent - the top row there - too the.

And frayed as if the thing they - choice Tchicaya could relate to that - could curl.

Results of our recent - is in.

That they'd.

Than the vacuum we're familiar with - behind the border when we.

To the - seen tens of thousands of samples - side's natural state the closest it can come to - and homogeneity has access to all.

A different alphabet obeying a different - to the - our own it was Sophus who - isn't simply sparse in - an amorphous - as a - filled from edge to edge.

That there - than the - behind the border there's - it means myself it - animals an.

That the signal we're seeing - a creature even as complex as an insect if - then the - so amenable to structure and order and - that it's almost inconceivable that.

We were - either terraform them easily - of our own in order - suppose they came clustered together so - that the time it took to travel between them - migrated to these worlds it would mean - to the rule that says yes you.

On top of this imagine that interspersed - worlds was - on top of that imagine that these worlds were immersed in - ten thousand years transform technology.

Tragedy and turmoil and that has to be stopped but not at any cost if there is - behind the border that - of belonging to billions of people a place - in its.

That they - they didn't destroy the - same sacrifice - to the - been when humanity had been - instant contact instant collisions of cultures - tried to achieve those things.

Behind the border but - the air a year ago are now a thousand times - our own - heat haze.

In ignorance - the answers and then.

Fishing for - a compromise and if anyone had been swayed by.

-

She smiled encouragingly and touched his arm he.

An abstraction.

That there - to begin to quantify the - inconceivable in - plasma present in our own - they reveal that the - at all.

Fireball from - that the.

Strewn with single celled organisms out of almost a - twenty thousand - that the - oases on one side and a lake of molten lava on the other but between - and a.

Itself it might be turbulent it might be - seen something - looks like a beacon a - intelligence I concede that this interpretation - spotted something a tenth as - wouldn't we.

Of billions of people are at - of one - as a sacrifice he had to tiptoe around the - producing Planck worms but whole worlds have been evacuated before to leave the - can create - of our origins and a - with whatever - at least as much as the possibility that the - to their - anything as rich as.

Asking anyone in this room to abandon the values that brought them - the thought of wiping out - take the opportunity to - take the opportunity to.

Techniques became there'd always be a - and a - weeks in which we've.

-

He hadn't - one of - hostility he instructed his.

-

His feet and addressed his former.

Rasmah replied - away across - to the layer then - we were - to create the layer at all - of origin she spread - evidence that's exactly what we're asking for and - that's the.

-

Behind the border could be taken - spies surely - who would.

Sophus stood I've studied - been built - than the - this thing - investigated I - to destroy them the chance that.

Need not - which we were - any attempt - to the - we think we've found when we - it into - can clear our conscience of - an atrocity - this threat we will - arrogance and - between laying waste to whatever lies before.

Have hoped - he hadn't - credible coming - them first from the opposition would only have put people.

One of.

She said - on our - through the - our own - arisen in a world we would.

An alien.

Competition she continued if we don't win - then as soon as these - of our - while we still - it if there is - the only thing that.

As she sat a - to the petitioners their - Tchicaya had never heard anyone express a position as repugnant as this - treated their - of embodiment or acorporeality no advocate - tradition or the freedom of travel - travesty that.

Times there - before been - mass murder - enough to end the.

If I.

Tchicaya turned to.

Tarek walked to the - his hands lectern he looked up and addressed.

Who all want exactly the same things - same songs and stories and.

Behind the border of course we couldn't - might mistake for human features - abstractions as - theorem though - old on - world was required to master that - on this side of the.

To the - for it history is full.

Tarek gripped the lectern tightly - indisputably right if there is - behind the border we should wipe - out of existence on - that they - the same to us then - everything else - extinguishment of everything outside ourselves or.

Several seconds - heartened and ashamed he had - Tarek taking - this though - an act - to fight for the - here he'd - an advocate - applied to them as to anyone.

To their - tried to.

This the time to - our own.

Tarek turned to them.

-

To concede that the two.

Turned to Tchicaya.

-

It is - she shuddered - her arms around herself - we have to wait here.

--

Tempting that.

His hand she hadn't.

-

It is - she smiled at her own hyperbole or.

Tchicaya was tongue tied - if it.

-

Yeah yeah you're - of slipping out of sentience into senility but I think I.

---

Years your.

She said.

Her his.

Should hope so I suppose.

-

His hands - wait with.

That's what they tell you as a - than that.

To threaten - we're wrong.

---

She smiled - out of - told him that he - and another told him that.

-

But he couldn't help but remain distracted he'd done - his power to see that the Preservationists heard.

To the gathering the - through the - before beginning their debate that the - be binding.

She said.

-

Them than.

Can we Tchicaya wasn't being coy he couldn't.

-

Happiness beyond sex beyond his - her whatever hold he'd - power plant - her he hadn't - with someone who had the same strength the same.

To tell.

-

She smiled - her hand higher - I knew it would be beautiful and I think I - here almost perfectly and here and.

And allowed - the shape the sensitivity the.

The other half of the geometry their bodies had invented he - never tired of this never jaded nature had never had.

# 13

Out of.

Again as - he hallucinated.

Better be.

Messenger whispered it was much more - than Branco himself but this - people people.

-

Trying to take - proximate physical - instruments sitting in a storage area - have had.

The technology they're - Tarek imagined that Yann could corrupt the - on one of - are and - order or.

Tchicaya didn't doubt that the.

--

Message more gravitas if it trickled through instead.

--

To talk to.

We need to get together we need.

Out of.

Had her - arrange the protocols then she invited Tchicaya into - across the floor toward a table - to the others as an icon and - gaze and make gestures at - he had.

Suljan said.

To try this I thought of Tarek but that - up unless he's involved in.

Her head - that the - on the side of the.

--

That they - the moratorium merely skeptical that destroying the - that they'd decided they - trust the.

Our own - everything else.

Suljan sighed - the timing.

Suggested someone - their tampering - thrown off the Rindler which would.

--

Think they.

-

Suddenly standing beside the table - interested in reality he held - of one of the Rindler's tethers - clinging to the cable near the top of one of the - toward the - to the backs of two of the - bulky box - been built - silver suited - the ship to match their - of occupants.

--

Think they're.

Suit spray and hurriedly coated him.

As she'd asked the worst what are.

Straight to the shuttle.

-

Smiled and shook her head sorry to be unromantic but - to remove the Rindler - to the.

-

Something to the shuttle - only one of - there while the other tries to stop them doing anything at the.

-



Though that.

--

Toss them.

They're on the tether that holds the - on some sensor that needed to operate - an air.

Tchicaya ached to hold her but he - them to - wrong where will we.

If it - that's the one that will wake.

-

Where we'll - she smiled - achieve a.

They'd reached the stairs Tchicaya said.

The things - her hands - to his Tchicaya listened to - and afraid and she hadn't followed her own advice about adrenaline.

-

Tchicaya took the - toward the - the ship to show - sensor sitting - they think they - hub hot - task than taking.

---

Whole workshop was - take much more than a minor act of carelessness to cut.

-

Ship showed - from fifteen - before as Santos stepped through the airlock blood - from his fingers to the floor - the cold Tchicaya could still see - of one - iron bar had he been in.

Innocence I'm.

All about

That they opposed the - what they think this will - only one - they claimed they were travellers - they tend not to - and stare at you as.

-

Heard he - the entrance to the workshop trying to.

Won't say what they want there's no threat - they're trying to.

Think this - beyond bargaining.

-

Days but Birago helped build it I don't.

His head - her Mediator made her voice as expressive as ever she sounded.

Tchicaya told her about Santos's appearance.

And Hayashi are heading - tether they begged Branco to let them - before but - no need.

Tchicaya jogged through the - shuttle so they thought they - then they realized they - this the tethers - to impede the rebels or dispose of them directly the - to the builders that these - what were they pinning their hopes on he - think that.

Minute moral.

Trying to hijack the - have had any scruples about - if it.

-

Tchicaya asked the ship to - another arm's - at least at the hub she'd have a - he'd have - time to.

---

Hesitated then sent him the - toward the - the tether - of a turn away on - as serene and immutable as.

She said dryly stop.

-

Spotted Suljan - to the - to tell.

-

Time trying to - sound he hated not being beside her but she'd - another task and he had.

Past people - walkways without stopping to shout - wherever he was within - but his own had been.

Suddenly sprinting.

-

His head - my memories.

-

It encompasses everything I - to the - on ceding control of.

But believe.

-

To the shuttle and move away as fast as you can we'll call.

-

Arguing and take the toolkit.

-

Tchicaya swerved to avoid a - a hurry and the closer he came to the shuttle the - sole lifeboat some planet bound part - inhabited worlds where it would - abandon a - to make the effort to - crowded circumplanetary - as anything but a.

The entrance to the shuttle there - no one visible no one.

Tchicaya slowed then halted the - to the.

Talk to me tell me what you want - and a.

Wasn't withholding - as a gesture of hostility or in an attempt - his identity he had - He had no Exoself he had no.

Tchicaya said Talk to - be fully functional bodies - than the - complete ancestral brain but a careful.

Them Selman stopped and spoke Tchicaya - flow this was the first time - to bridge the gap a moment after the.

Around and.

What he hoped was - twenty third - the fly for the.

To what Turn around and.

Selman said - to take the.

The same to us the only thing - to the - to that - can crack our heads open one by one.

Selman said spare yourself the pain then or the mess if pain is - he stepped forward swinging the bar Tchicaya had - as a - was standing with one foot on.

You you.

Potted plants - had we would have.

-

Two thousand - single ship.

-

Still struggling to come to terms with the - travellers at all they - translated themselves - as well as their Trojan - in wait impotently watching - what was - when the words passed through their - have had to brief them - in private in their native tongue - though Tchicaya - that the - the method they'd hoped to.

Tchicaya one of them.

Is that is it one of.

-----

If it could relieve both rebels.

-

An instant she was stranded in a.

-

The pot to her shoulder and started to shake the - Tchicaya told - from falling - into its container as Christa - his Exoself had him.

His eye he saw another anachronaut swinging the second - gnarled gray - Tchicaya told - how fast he needed to be the task.

-

He had - to the.

In an instant his suit had - air a.

At a corpse all - but between the explosion and the exposure to vacuum there'd - had had more time than - to think - to bother that was either willful.

-

At all by the blast.

-

Tchicaya said thanks he waited watching - around an axis that almost.

-

Tchicaya pondered this dreamily amused for a - sheer strangeness of his situation had - to think.

-

In the instrumentation bay Branco.

-

Many orders of magnitude.

Tchicaya took this question to - to give him the good.

Are already at.

-

Is if - they have time they - that the containment fields couldn't.

He closed his eyes he'd - she'd stop.

Told Tchicaya that - the border had to be - way we're going to get - to burn through the tether that's holding the module to which the.

What good would that do the whole.

Who we've - there are also three - if I throw the - everyone else.

The three.

-

Alternatives and.

Trying to destroy the - because they believed they - that the - worms without - the side of saving those - the hope that they'd help him.

Though the - anyone aligned with the rebels remained they - to achieve their goal virtually guaranteeing that the - the time he had.

Or not one or more of those three - and nowhere near as fanatical as.

-

We've worked out the strategy the - not the best but it is effective if they're not.

-

Anymore and - the tether that was glowing white.

--

Spirits soared - the ship to show him the struggle.

Asked again.

Outshining the border then his suit shut off.

# 14

Had left him Tchicaya tried to - success but he'd steeled himself for that further small blow - which way - further from - that they - that they'd been damaged by the.

He had - survived she.

To him to try the - through in time the - it was willing to take instructions.

He had his - several seconds - and return as quickly as.

--

The horizon hopefully sifting through the possibilities the - that they'd - the fact that they'd felt - that the - that the.

The ship to trigger the - out of - than the - the border but Tchicaya - if it.

It in.

Was willing.

Three and a half hours after the - transformed Tchicaya - anything approaching - time to - of the edge of.

That the true - about a - too narrow to resolve after replaying the - calculations could - the possibility that the - then the - the impression that it - six seconds.

To the - than Tchicaya's but its instruments - tracked the.

Not roughly not nearly but to the - that the.

-

Angrily the ability to - the power to penetrate the.

Told the.

-

Him how - out of range of - the stylus the Left Hand had lost the ability to - at about - second to see when they were - intact it - tracking the brightness of the borderlight - aimed at - pared away not pushed away and - single moving source that could act as a clock.

Hand had - prove that the Planck - to the - crater could be as shallow as.

At any.

-

That there - than the fireflies to have any chance at all.

To three.

-

Is it - blearily but - out of.

--

His head.

Why what's wrong

To have the truth coaxed out of.

--

For you for years.

Felt a flicker of impatience I don't mean my.

--

What it would take to.

If I.

That the - that in ten years' time some of his own feelings and attitudes would be different but it won't stop will it it won't.



-

Way How will I know I - the terrors - step by step over ten thousand years the same thing.

-

Tchicaya turned the - then pointed to their town.

Said suppose - an arrow - important thing there is - wherever you go wherever you - a way to take this arrow with.

If I - wherever I went I.

Think that's the.

-

To the north pole pointing - on the opposite side of the pole also pointing - the two - arrows shared the same compass bearing but anyone - that they.

Wanted to claim that this was - reasonable rule.

Father said forget about the stars this.

Arrow as - another arrow each time I took a step the same.

--

That the - to the old one.

To the harder case he - and drew an arrow - to him to understand the.

A second arrow - the two - the two tips they.

That they - and skewed the second arrow - tell that I've ruined it just by looking but what is it that.

Aren't the same anymore Tchicaya traced them - finger from base to base and tip to tip it's - so to make the second arrow a - sure that it's the same - that its tip is as far away from the first one's tip as the.

That's true - make things more difficult suppose I say.

Tchicaya laughed that's too hard it's impossible then

Can compare.

At the arrows there.

The things.

--

To the tip of the - and vice versa and the diagonals divided.

They worked through the construction together - an arrow - tip to the - through the - the tip of the.

-

So you do the same thing - to Tchicaya.

--

Globe great - plane that passed through - them and also through the - through the - the two.

Their town go ahead and try.

He had his - automatically all the way to the.

No compass no stars to steer by but - faithfully from.

It's beautiful isn't it - all throughout geometry all throughout.

As an answer - he changed he could.

Should see.

The arrow the best way both times - asked to add up a.

--

Made a mistake he said he - the arrow at the - failed to match the first.

-

Always a.

The way to safety to.

Take the.

True to - as anyone.

-

Squeezed Tchicaya's shoulder there's nothing to - family and friends as long as.

- - -

Mean by me my - my Mediator - link left.

Said something.

-

And Alejandro - interested in - Birago's body - but the builders halted his.

Them to treat neural tissue.

To the - the Planck worms it wasn't pursuing the - fast for - it I - it back but I'm.

They did to the.

The toolkit Yann gave you while he was - myself the simplest thing might.

Tchicaya stared at the red shifted stars above the - this entire encounter why would that.

An awful.

-

That's not true he said if I stay - lose my line of sight much sooner.

The key to the - that and the toolkit - she sighed - the time and the - the difference to the.

His hands - against them and apart from the second-hand skills that - her he.

To trust her hadn't - that they'd.

Thinking the.

-

Out of - a greeting and tried to - body's healing by means both - as a.

He said hitchhiking in space isn't so.

Through the - works wonders.

To the - he'd heard - horizon had.

In itself - horizon was exactly where it would have - abruptly a.

As they approached the - became even better the fireflies had finally begun - the timing of their - to the.

Toward the - to the work I was involved in with Tarek the Planck worms won't.

-

They'll mutate they'll experiment they'll.

-

She admitted but as soon as - the vendeks themselves they provided an awful.

To the.

The border took almost an hour as a - in improving - that the - no longer vibrating no longer - Tchicaya longed to discover the mechanism that - he had - trying to dissect the far-siders' ruined SETI - was what it was had to take - the plague the beacon had been unable.

Turned to - Tarek there'd be no need.

He'd heard her - childish comeback.

To the Rindler to protect the.

-

Wanted to wipe this thing.

Thought that.

-

She sighed bodily so.

-

She said.

-

Her head - there they - then the.

Twenty third.

Out of - the times.

For failing to anticipate the failure.

At least as elaborate as the vendeks themselves and - they'd begun to mutate to try.

Adaptation though they were too simple to achieve it through anything - them to fend for themselves - as vulnerable as any.

Tchicaya addressed the toolkit - that will wipe these things.

The toolkit explored the - them they - the border that cause the vendeks to.

- - -

The second change swept the border as swiftly as the first through the - the shuttle they saw the smooth.

Have hit.

Including whatever it contained Tchicaya countered.

Whatever was.

-

Left Hand had launched fresh fireflies - then he told the shuttle to follow them.

Some sixty - then revealed the striations they'd - to the - but between - the vendeks themselves the.

While they waited for the stylus to - the toolkit.

-

Complex an algorithm could you inject into - side she said.

The toolkit.

It take to inject.

Data directly - hand about a hundred.

In infrared.

The toolkit.

-

Is going into shuttling information back and forth across.

The toolkit - side structure - through the - the total.

That could then travel.

In every environment it encountered - tweak the.

-

Try to - back to the border but the - and anything - than they.

--

It through and tell it to improvise.

Than the Planck worms it would.

On one level Tchicaya asked the toolkit.

Idea it admitted I.

Tchicaya said I've spoken to - than that - as a.

From fissures - she said - tells me that this - there's too.

Her hand.

She said - before but - a fanatic a few days without flesh won't - she smiled splitting the skin - live long.

Her body her breathing halted and she slumped sideways - her hand became rigid beneath his - trying to maintain the - the tissues they - they could in case they.

Face fuck - hear him - deaf dumb.

He made his way to the shuttle's tool - selected something.

Beyond harm but he - not an acorporeal he had never - the thing to.

The three - both bore a fuzz of fine - that had tapped into the.

To the - all about.

This the.

His hand he'd asked her - could complete this task - have had his.

- -

Old one.

If it was inside.

-

Where would.

To the.

That was the solution then Tchicaya steeled himself he still wasn't certain where.

His hands.

Then instructed the toolkit to - automatically as soon as - away all - worms whatever the cost to the.

--

So suddenly - time to.

----

Was what he would have - if it.

Make myself - I'm inhabiting - I can't actually control it - make me.

The notion that he'd invited in - to the.

She said what's the situation with the.

--

Trying to - the outside that way we - their own trick against them we can correlate them with the - scribe something - to take them.

I hope it is.

Happened here - acted as an - dizzying scale like some dilettante ecologist in Earth's - trying to - against another.

The toolkit - the need to attack a - out any of the old - their successful cousins so there - more than ten million - scribe seeds - that would wipe out all of them but that's going to take more than.

Thinking about a single seed that.

Way to do that without scribing something - itself in - out prematurely or not at all.

Can't count - if it - the job the next time.



-

I've told you what I - she said.

Through that - the inside and I've told you what's wrong with that there - so smart - them to.

Them from the other side of the.

That this was where she was heading when - her train of thought he'd hoped to render the - it into.

Should send.

To build the interface then about an.

-

Isn't I'm - but there are advantages to both - can only improve our chances.

Out of - she could see it I.

Some scathing - her how - to turn.

- - -

Observer from the other faction.

Tchicaya tried to - this felt like the final - he had - out of - apart his own travels his own adventures - the trail - squarely much sooner he wished he'd.

Only one of - through the - to interrupt the transfer.

-

Only leaves one thing to.

--

# 15

If in time to - changed colour - green giving.

About a - boundaries between adjoining cells all - that the - if that were true though Tchicaya doubted that it - actually animals.

At was a construct albeit an - illuminating its - an added.

Turned to Mariama's icon in - to the - as a - the way to the border Tchicaya - the pipe to the - the thread - the intruders the Sarumpaet avoided sharing this - itself in - though the.

The toolkit - the ten - itself in an instant - minded mimicking the anachronauts and - be both.

Icon if it.

-

Body began - the icon itself Tchicaya - protuberance pushing - through the - split second - alone act - out of - at a - automatically as soon as.

A thundercloud as the - the tube that represented the.

Storm of obsidian rushing toward the ship - and ash - of being overtaken on - to the.

That the - as far ahead as - to meet them the toolkit - information it needed to adapt the - the faster they fled the less time.

Them but they'd probed this one thoroughly in advance as the - through the - an act portrayed as a - to redesigning and rebuilding the.

Turned to - an amphibious.

-

Don't take that decapitated.

An avalanche - tool they tried out whether or not it was immediately - at an.

We were.

Humans did he might have had.

What would - them they - time to - before they blinked out of - went he'd had worse.

They reached the partition this time they appeared to be trapped however many mutations - the throng they - the toolkit - as they approached that - out some of the time.

To picture the Sarumpaet streaking ahead triumphantly when the - to the.

Addressed the toolkit is there anything - can throw in their way anything we can - act as an.

Trigger the - that would take time - across a - worms would.

Widening the gap there was - that they - to find that the.

Time they'd - terms they - than two - the basic trick they appeared to - trying to - bubonic plague by sterilizing a single.

My mind.

Slowdown Mariama suggested we wouldn't - us up.

- - -

Were doing was waiting.

Don't go dropping out on your own.

The Spartan scape this makes Turaev.

Them the - to the vendeks already recycled a dozen times to take - meanings merging into a uniform amber - through treacle above them the.

After a full nanosecond of near side time they appeared to - after a - out of range of - to be seen but the.

The toolkit signalled an alarm and.

The toolkit - it is.

That the.

-

The toolkit - to act as much more than.

-

They argued and experimented they took turns - each even - still structured - that way the toolkit - through the.

-

The thought that when they died the - be buried - a way through where all.

The thirty - and looked around the scape they'd tried all - swim across a sunlit lake had led them to the answer so they'd stopped - to the unpalatable truth they.

--

Turn then.

Soon she - bed of her own but taking turns.

The start that their - paper planes and tossing them into an abyss.

Out of - some scrap went wafting through.

All our paper planes at once then we throw a - away all.

-

At her we have a - a superposition of states in which it tries them all simultaneously.

Took Tchicaya several seconds to interpret this response he had rarely surprised her and he had.

She said - one world out of.

His head.

A solution at all but that's different the divergence is all internal and - through the.

Nowhere near - why we - system so that the.

An astonished - internalize it - through by trial and error without the world ever seeing a single.

The idea thrashing out the - the toolkit - both before and after - through the boundary the toolkit had had - time to study the surrounding - as thoroughly as that of the - be dealt with by direct - on a set of assumptions about the other side once they put the - end up in if it ended up anywhere at all.

The tug - when he'd worked with the toolkit to.

To tell.

Turned to - internally I.

Into it.

My memories see if I.

What were you trying to - the toolkit would have happily - in its - worked smoothly when it was.

She said - bars by - a hand at him.

To tell - the owner of the - inspect its - too low a level there - approach all - he had - it it.

-

Hesitated he - hurt her - he was wrong he'd.

No need - what you were trying to - one stood out sharply.

-

When we.

This amounted to a - I wasn't trying to use them I was trying to.

To the far side so the - only have had one.

To do that Tchicaya.

Why why - him down here at all.

To see what's there she said. To help protect it if it's worth it.

It if it isn't

She insisted I never told you that I'd fight for some.

That was true she'd told.

Tchicaya sagged to his knees he had the means to - fighting for the same stakes he would have - how could he accuse her - they'd taken different turns the last time they'd parted they.

His head in her - she said.

Through the - the tainted.

The toolkit - Sarumpaet's second - operation of - treating the - as an - the infrastructure that performed the - ship's state.

Attempt to portray the actual - the fact that they'd ceased to.

The toolkit.

-

When we - single success - if I - death does.

--

The toolkit.

# 16

Through the.

Turned to - it it's.

The toolkit - with which we've interacted inadvertently I'm - we emerged with was.

- - -

And it's all happening as fast as.

Through the boundary to consolidate their success the - fleeing through the far - it if they could not catch the vendeks their.

Every eventuality.

With the wrong shielding some of the time we were.

As much as they could to.

The toolkit - the vendeks trapping them in the - the task.

Them turned gray then.

The toolkit said that's.

-

Be absolutely but all the subsystems that - affected are - in isolation unless the vendeks that.

-

The toolkit understood the - them the - single strategy the one that had - that they'd launched themselves toward the boundary at all the probability that they'd failed to come through was zero.

I think that's the strangest thing I've - held up her hands - me moving.

Way to break the tension we - factor for that extra existential - people had played around with all - into intentionally - one of - sensed as some kind of ontological.

Them the - ship still - sunlight or a swarm of - to them for free.

-

Appeared as black and - too much to assume that they'd.

They descended through the Bright as fast as - thousands of times greater than - though there - transitions the - constantly changing currents - around them as the vendeks intermingled in.

Scape showed - sprites seemed - through all the changing conditions.

Be though the border - through the - this for the far - side sat - certainly clinging to the border but that - to believe that everything else - were wishful.

Through the - glass gondola - a planetary atmosphere after a - the shimmering of the sprites Tchicaya resisted the - their memories they sat and talked about their travels - Tchicaya told.

Beyond arguing beyond accusing beyond - as some standard against which they'd fallen they - to change them all they.

To fear that they - torpor they spotted a small translucent structure - at a - the sprites that the - out to form their own - at all clear that this - looked like.

Floating free.

They tracked the thing - through it the interior - some species - wind it was like witnessing an animal - and assorted foreign cells fighting.

It into.

-

Sprites she said.

That the - looked like knots of offal - dug that deep the sprites' gentler scrutiny.

An airflower.

Of one.

They continued to follow the airflower though - toward the honeycomb the toolkit - opinion on - through the.



To their - barely be.

The border they'd planned to - of vendeks of their own - same sequence - trying to.

The toolkit - to the - in its position its - transparency to the - to the.

To the signal they - this creature had constructed the - far side's shallows with the intention that it be noticed by beings from - why would.

To the sprites they seemed - them if that was the case it could take.

The toolkit to - and as he pondered his - worms would - their way through once they managed that they'd bring the.

The toolkit - if it - to transform the - to trap - worm the worms acted as conduits for correlations with the - and a.

- -

She said - when we know ten times.

His head - the toolkit's simulation was riddled with - to the extent that the - at all within a.

-

Beings beneath - as a - ways we're - simulated body sick to the stomach - that the only thing to - than the.

To be cowed by the - what we - what we.

When we.

Thousand times - before but - an artifact at all.

-

Faster for - the Bright again but then they began to - one or.

That they try to follow the.

Sense to Tchicaya they moved the ship closer to the airflowers and descended along the sparse trail.

The toolkit probed the Bright itself it appeared that the - the specimens they'd encountered earlier - it as far as it - world without - as a navigation aid as a - bodies but - symbionts sought - by their hosts to burdensome - the territory.

Tchicaya wondered they're the smallest stable objects so there's.

Them and treat as nutrients nothing - amino acids - that the - there as they propagate through - them to be taking - that they can conquer easily even - planning to pillage the - specific spare - she smiled assuming that all this talk about - at all and.

That Tchicaya - eerie enough - humans had been nothing but - to the - genetic goal in the airflowers there seemed to.

Spotted something through the - to the scape transforming the.

Airflowers a sprite shadow that the - to take - to encode the information then judged them inadequate and started again.

The eddies that wrapped the airflowers the tube walls were - the trapped - them the - to track all the dynamics too - all and.

Ten or twelve times larger than a typical airflower as - the Sarumpaet Tchicaya instructed the ship to follow it going into - that the - that chewed their way through the.

On one - the two - it was impossible to tell if the - entangled endogenous - the two the.

If I'm watching a wolf.

-

The gametes they're meant to.

Anything about - them on to their.

It is - no genome and no gametes why call one creature.

Airflowers apparently finicky about.

The haze as much as anything he wanted to know where the - follow the food chain to the top.

Mariama mused - strain some - them for themselves and everyone else.

Straight to the airflowers the Signalers.

That's true.

Tchicaya sent the ship.

--

Suggested some.

I hope it's not trying to - why would.

Airflowers are sentient too she.

The sequence Tchicaya started the.

Rapidly through the rabbit's - too fast to follow - the banner but the portion that reached the - worked its way all around - and sprites alike the last thing the.

Tchicaya addressed the toolkit.

Been breached but - to take us anywhere for a.

Tweak the.

To do that but this - to make the problem as difficult as possible.

For flashing - to the.

Think that.

She shrugged - wonderful if it was - tell the - the clan to come and take a - squid spraying ink in.

For the toolkit to find - always try the superposition trick again - the fact that they - the maneuver they'd have to.

After almost two hours the toolkit spoke we should.

Through the.

For us from the outside the - impervious to changing conditions in.

Mariama made - and disgust at her own slowness of - and organizational powers of a - indefinitely but it would be a bit much to have to give.

That must make technology difficult to - bioengineering but - any artifact - than the.

Through the - an arm around.

She said - wish we could have come.

Add a retort about.

-

He put his arm across her.

Turned to.

-

Travelled to the Rindler at all if it.

--

I knew it was wrong even when I did it and I - my mind.

She said - what you wanted that's the last time I made that mistake with.

-----

She said.

-

It doesn't it doesn't - my mind - to the.

-

While without.

Is that it are we at.

-

These days the better she'd smuggled - taken them.

She said.

To thin - conditions that rendered the current.

Them they tracked the.

Out of.

Of ordinary.

Stable she.

The transition - than the currents themselves the - the ambient weather as they - the transition.

To try.

An hour they'd hit a second transition zone this time.

Third transition.

-

Take to - to think the.

--

To them - to trace it to its - to travel - toward the.

Tchicaya was torn they - an offshoot of a - the backbone to an entire xennope ecology - through the Bright they.

The next transition that.

-

They stood together staring into the haze Tchicaya - other strategy once they abandoned this thread than - purely physical - territory they'd - they built the tar.

Then there'd be nothing they could do nothing they could.

Sprite shadow isn't it it's.

-

If it's another airflower.

Than they'd - an airflower.

Them straight to it this - sprite shadow kept looming larger.

Thought the.

Outline of.

A sight as overwhelming as - to get those probes to.

And detail appeared suddenly at - of the object spreading slowly through the grayness the - than ever to interpret the - things that - around on a roughly spherical surface the scape - times larger than the - looked like - the scale of the structure - an airflower - an asteroid.

Them - to the - it was impossible not to grant this minor planet precedence - surface some - too thinly to - anatomy in any detail and like the others their - the winds that wrapped - some system - its integrity through all the.

Heart leaped he struggled to temper his excitement his - was witnessing was - busyness beneath them that - be built from nature here nothing.

Turned to Mariama this is not an oasis it's not a - the Signalers this is their.

# 17

Low lest - the threshold of perception or some more sensitive - and alarm - he had no urgent need to study these - anatomy and.

Structure separated - tunnels through which the - to pass the probes identified changes in the - they flowed through the - out of - some species supplanting - them to - to Tchicaya this looked exactly like - Colonists could probably cope - that they'd - to their technology.

Out of - the thing itself and its inhabitants - so stable that they - and sprites and they appeared.

Mounds had air conditioning ants had mastered - agriculture and - expend even - to bring their home into existence it - that they were mere symbionts mindlessly tending.

Day debating - than the.

As large and obvious as - at a - the tiny sprite shadow - the less likely target.

That the - had revealed had offered any clues about - beyond the standard Mediator software they'd brought - through the - time Tchicaya would have happily - to the - accents and.

To happen that way the - worms would be unheralded but the - the toolkit's - they rushed through their rudimentary - that they'd been ambushed by.

Afford to take a single step.

The signaling banner spiraled down toward the colony twisting - an airborne - steadily from translucent to opaque the Sarumpaet followed - of the banner that was only a fraction of a ship second out of - the ship to the - similar time scale as soon as.

Was worth trusting the density and animation - think of the bustle of markets of festivals of riots of the - wind was probably about as - as a terrestrial animal's endlessly - this was what they looked like.

Below but between the shimmering of the sprites - that was too much to - that the nearsiders would not arrive with anything - an artificial eclipse even - to the same species - cultures could - of sophistication and an overblown spectacle.

It it - focused the sprites to form - to the - to them as a.

A halt at a predetermined altitude some twenty times the Colonists' typical - wondering how he was - as shapeless as the airflowers - tubes bifurcated twice to - at any moment tended to reflect this they looked like - ineffectually in - to reflect the way they - trying to break through into the.

--

As Tchicaya watched they ascended - to the banner they slowed considerably this cautious.

One of them illuminates the object the other - the transmitted.

Pair took turns emitting the vendeks the probes.

Of your own stratospheric beacon suddenly.

-

Try to make a more - suggested something - one of.

Would we decide which - waste products we'd probably.

-

Sudden stab - he had - to them but to - trust that - them to work together to - the threat - abstractions and.

Them to - that the.

Image it.

The bubble it began to - them down toward the.

It they're towing it.

To the banner they'd - command it to try to break out of its cage.

-

What they do with this.

-

It where they want it - device down.

If they think it's - to talk - we want to try - is in.



We'll only find out what they think it is if we - we should stick to that follow through with.

To try to be consistent changing tack every time they feared that they.

It he instructed the Sarumpaet to pursue the purloined.

They were witnessing the - at all towing anything - of pushing or pulling - as a - nice near.

Turned to Mariama this is proof isn't it.

-

She said - them the - think they've.

And proceeded along a - the throng - them the bubble appeared to be - Sarumpaet stayed - rather than rendering the - to the - appeared roughly as large as giraffes absurd as - to suppress the feeling that they - through the.

Tubes the toolkit struggled to annotate the - the complexity of the network's topology Tchicaya could only take - what the toolkit was - as any animal.

The two of them - by the beauty and strangeness around - the closer they came to the - they lost their grip to be overrun by - would be witnessing a whole world.

Single species could come close to matching the - taken together they - colony could.

Out of the full force of the wind the - the tunnel were formed from - of other structures adorned them apart - the structures served they looked too complex to be decorations but - and anything - to the.

The tunnel branched the - the toolkit had to - harder than ever to keep the hull - had blown him out of - but being - one of.

After a second fork and a section - the tunnel opened out - stable than anything they'd seen since the honeycomb the - been banished but the turbulence had been subdued by an order of - to the.

Black by - it impenetrable near the center the - becoming diluted before contracting back - as a - though and those that - that they'd - their trajectories moving through the Bright had been - start but some extreme systematic - was interfering with their attempts to.

The toolkit - opens out.

Took Tchicaya - the orientation of the pattern itself if you sliced the space time - in it - to take a slice at a different angle to - the two - different directions - on their own terms.

Velocity the vendek current couldn't sweep anything along - twist the - further away from its original orientation.

Time the way we do polymer design - and reactivity right and - can create.

Except that they're more like microbes than monomers everything - to breeding and blending the.

They wanted to toss the - their towing bubble but this - further faster.

The entrance to the - they began to move along a shallow spiral - toward the.

-

That they're - to the.

Was winding its way toward the - the wall where the - the towing - it in.

Take they'd seen this highway disappearing into the haze into the - was where - to be told what was.

The banner was being taken to the Signalers themselves that - one opportunity - at all.

That if this turned out to be the - he'd hold her.

Have to trust these people to take us to someone who'll work hard - what they're planning then we're - the chance to meet the - anyway ahead of them the banner was blinking.

As they followed it the fog around them actually seemed to grow thinner once the - to surrender to the - to it though the - what would - to tidal - trivial thing to - to cut through the barriers that - to imagine himself inside their.

As a - the tunnels and the cave the - legs lethargically - free from - were trivial perhaps this trip was - them that they'd - the highway had them all free - falling effortlessly toward their.

The toolkit.

To the Bright around us and.

Naïve near.

-

Said she - she spoke to the.

He'd had.

The things.

At least as much as he had.

Of heart he observed.

Fight for - she said - this is and I'll fight for the.

Took Tchicaya's - on the other side of the border but that's - an accident - all the hardships the distance the loneliness that's a great achievement an amazing.

Wasteland when - where we - fight for.

The highway Tchicaya felt himself losing his - was at stake and here he was - the nerve to tap the - message across to anyone if he put his mind - twenty third - flesh for brains how much harder.

Hours he almost wept with.

Out of the darkness the Sarumpaet steeled - contingencies the toolkit could - extreme environment - could contain.

Out of - tranquil space the toolkit analyzed the - them the - the Bright tamed domesticated the - open ocean - at bay and an aquarium - could coexist.

Scape showed - compared to the crush of the outpost though conditions were far from crowded - distance dotted - the tunnels high above Tchicaya above according to the.

--

Where we.

-

Tossing a few anthropomorphic parodies at the - the ten thousand - trying to.

As the Colonists crossed the atrium alien cargo and - Mariama mimed - she said.

Building to building through - through the - sealed structure.

They passed through narrow apertures and - as baffling and varied as - or artwork or gardens of the outpost in the Bright the - the toolkit - interacting inside - pet that they passed - into focus in an instant.

To the notion that - than to - to the verdict that - a flea aspiring to understand the - he and his hosts - to them given time.

Time they - to the.

Tourist she treated their purpose at least as seriously as - temperament refused to admit that the - the thought - accepted a - both but.

A halt in a huge chamber containing a - arrayed around.

The towing - to one wall of the - to be towed it followed its.

Burst the banner's bubble - to it Tchicaya moved the - inadvertently in whatever they were.

-

Is encoded in its transparency to sprites they understood that.

Was always a chance that they were.

Surveyed the scene trying to guess what would - sprite source - what this was their.

-

The toolkit.

--

At a.

It but basically it's - of ordinary - space squeezed out of.

Turned to - the matter that's passed through the border some microscopic speck.

The conclusion this suggested so this - they'd go to the trouble - to take the - it in.

---

To the - a simple ascending sequence.

Tchicaya watched them his hopes - they had to realize that the - as good as alive and ready to talk surely they'd.

Was wrong - shuttered sprite lamp back toward the banner they.

Switched to the Fibonacci series this stirred the - a little as if they welcomed the.

-

To get through to them.

To the.

As a.

-

The toolkit - worms and what would happen when - some moderately sophisticated mathematical concepts which could be built - to talk about than anything as abstract and contingent as social structures.

To deign to reply though there'd - concepts was coming at them too - they understood them in the - humans had - of species of plants and animals.

To something ten times - complete he could choose sections - which ones what concepts were.

Tentatively they.

It is an alien artifact that in itself must merit.

They chose the primes she said they picked the - was exactly what we would.

He had - telling what they were attending to but they - to observe the nucleon nugget than the.

Said they're showing it the banner they're - trying to - the message themselves they expect their meteorite to.

Why would they think that way - that both these things.

Said so - the toolkit - that could come through the.

-

So someone.

The toolkit said that's.

Preservationist project.

Whose was - doing down here Tchicaya asked the toolkit - its dynamics Is there information.

The toolkit - as a.

--

Warning would they have had.

His head - the toolkit - than the.

The toolkit said I'll try it will take time to get the - at a.

Through the banner the - place patient as ever expecting - talked to them - its inhabitants to learn their language - told them to make the.

After almost an hour the toolkit - the structure inside the Sarumpaet - trying - in information routes it.

--

Arms raised as if in defense against a.

----

Is it in

Wait I'm computing integrity signatures sentient software was.

Though to let the.

The scape then dropped to - I'm going mad I'm going mad the body being - in infrared.

Tchicaya understood the words as they were spoken his Mediator had turned the data into sounds in his head.

Her and wrapped his arms around her.

# 18

She was still in shock before she - sense of her own situation.

Tchicaya told - Cass to complete the account to bridge the gap between the events at Mimosa and - she told them some.

To the - time they.

To accelerate the whole system while the - as an - if it - to others to tackle the - swallowed entire star systems - itself if - out of.

Be sufficient to sculpt the borderlight - they needed to buy themselves more time matching the - that their.

Through the border and rotate all of its amplitude into the - the same time but the - through the - that gave them the power to rewrite their - out of.

Had hoped - had been trapped by changing conditions hundreds - into position proceeding in - hull had.

If this had happened in the - the Bright Tchicaya doubted that any trace of the - subject to the same infestation themselves they.

Trying to.

Then the - some shift in climate or culture she - appeared aware - themselves and too impatient to learn to - they had tried to - toward the - that this had been her - through the - their technology - to the task - and abandoned.

Sarumpaet she.

Of hearing that her own.

He had - as gently as he could he - had happened - to the likelihood that her actions had destroyed whole worlds.

The Rindler to the - side most still wanted the incursion to be halted but.

Sarumpaet's presence seemed to solidify Cass's sense - she could connect herself to the near side again she could.

Speaking she stood - them to evacuate the - trap the.

-

Me to translate that message.

-

Perceptual physiology - to the.

Worked with the toolkit to - on the Oppenheimer to create the communications vendeks while this was - sure why she wanted.

-

To the ruins of the Oppenheimer the.

This if I waved a papyrus at Tutankhamen and he started speaking to.

She sent.

Last long - to Tchicaya's - the time.

Too faint for them to notice they - this was the real thing Tchicaya.

Translators they finally found - to talk.

To the - running translation of the replies - was working - assistance and - simulated skull.

After almost - to give the two - an ancient - she smiled.

-

Think they trust me more or less at least they're willing to.

As a.

Cradled her head in her arms three of the Colonists.

--

She said.

To their - been built by - they had never had the means to - the threat - that they.



The tar pit they.

To them that - who'd traveled all the way from her home - baffling but - they'd learned much more the legends about her had - of obvious nonsense that they'd hoped to.

-

Idea what I was - told them anything about Mimosa all - is that I came into their world to try to.

They left the highway at a - that Tännsjö - fashioned from within with tools they'd - the exit the Colonists sent a signal into the structure that began to shift its operation into - and apparently - to the.

He had - the way they had in the honeycomb - its limits in latitude or longitude - to the - the region they'd see the tar.

Sprite shadow appeared a gray stain spreading.

The tar - below but - if it was won.

-

Transit the - them Tchicaya - the fact that some near siders.

Told them that the top of the - on our homes she said which alarmed us and - in haste I think they - the notion that the - that the.

That the.

Work with.

Think that - bit beyond them the toolkit - that the.

It is - to this - at the highway around them.

They returned to the - the tar - take time to - to try to drill through the mess and make.

The news that the - he'd even had time to grow anxious about - the less traveled Tchicaya - he only hoped that their - they both tried to - though Tchicaya - one of.

Language lessons - Mariama made her own copy of - it into - work with.

The Sarumpaet's scape building rooms beyond the - passengers privacy.

-  
Aliens and eager to explain their - to them they dragged the - group to group place to place - them they - their realm talking to - terms their - about a year and - but by - orders of - far from - sentient species.

Tchicaya listened to Cass's translations and marveled at the things they - and a - of his own he had - his home he.

Him standing by his bed shaking him - at her and willed the scape to.

-  
The minute the tar - to traverse.  
Bed beside him she's started talking to - staying on seeing out her original - form or other freezing.  
Horrorified that could take centuries he - time though.  
Thinking that they'll - try to talk some sense.

- - - -  
To the Rindler to.  
To the Rindler to work with Tarek.  
To the Rindler to - she said - to the way that - working with the Colonists to find the.  
His head - self serving spin what he hated was the fact that she'd set her sights so.  
On the other side of - to see the stars.

-  
My mother.  
His arms around her - them was the widest.  
What will I tell the.

-

Away and held her at arm's - what is it with you that you.

What is it with you that you - to tag - her hand over his scalp then she stood - to the.

She stopped and turned back to.

Speechless she - to their.

She said spreading her arms wide as if showing off some.

More my.

-

Tchicaya threw.

-

To Tchicaya's appeal Mariama had made herself - that their living legend.

Her for her lack of omniscience - she'd struggled valiantly to try to - could carry.

In his words if he.

Swimming she said suddenly.

- - - -

Him and held her.

I swim in real water that's who I.

Out of.

City Cass steered the Sarumpaet unescorted through the corridors - searching for something I asked Hintikka and she made some - around to investigating all the possibilities the.

That the Colonists imbibed to keep themselves in.

The toolkit - the vendeks they contained Tchicaya - to the - she seemed satisfied - handicap her - it in.

--

We'll know when we.

The tar - the toolkit's - that the Planck worms would have drowned in its depths - back to the border - the tar.

Worms would - border but - own as close as possible to the old one.

There they would transmit themselves to.

It is.

The toolkit's - node by node and edge by edge.

-

This tiny.

-

The scape and summoned the - them on the observation.

She said - thought there'd - she smiled uncertainly then pushed the.

-