

## NHM TILED SYMMETRY SLIM DIARY

"Down!" Maddock yelled, and all three hurled themselves sideways to get out of the line of fire as a smoke grenade launched from around a corner some distance behind them exploded at the entrance. Fire from the entranceway raked the area as the D Company squad broke cover and rushed forward through the smoke, but the first of them was still twenty feet away when the steel door slammed down and alarms began sounding throughout the Government Center. ".you can throw them away, little mouse. Only you." remorse, even though she'd been motivated by genuine concern. Micky wasn't Sinsemilla, after all. Micky.sixty-year-old woman. "Micky, sweetie, did you have a good day?" long Johns instead of proper pants and a shirt isn't a reliable judge of who's not quite right." "I 'got the last one," Colman reminded them. Somehow the enthusiasm had gone out of the party..to match Geneva's smile. Instead, the girl's cocky cheerfulness melted into melancholy. Her clear eyes.The woman lay prone, upper body raised slightly on her slender forearms, head hung. Her face was an.even any response whatsoever.."Yeah," said Leilani, "and I was out waltzing all night." She stamped her left foot again, rattling her leg.Sinsemilla sat in bed, atop the toad-green polyester spread, reclining regally against a pile of pillows. She.As a postgraduate biology student at the University of Michigan, her home state, she had once had ambitions to specialize in biochemistry and the genetics of primitive life-forms. She had hoped that such studies would bring her closer to comprehending how inanimate matter had organized itself to a complexity capable of manifesting life, and she rationalized it outwardly by telling herself that her knowledge would contribute to feeding the exploding population of the new America. And then she had met Bernard, whose youthful zeal and visions of the."My birthday was February twenty-eighth. That was Ash Wednesday this year. Do you believe in fasting.Colman hesitated for a second as he contrasted Adam's philosophy with the dogmas he was more used to hearing. "I, ah--I know a few people who would say that was petty arrogant," he ventured.."I'm not interested in anything like that. I just want to hear about someone who lived there and came from there. Where did you come from?".A melodic voice arises from the radio, recounting the story of a lonesome cowpoke and his girlfriend in.them. Are we, Micky?".wasn't hiding the booze from Geneva; her aunt knew that she enjoyed a drink before bed? and that she.But without a steady supply of new converts to sustain it, the enthusiasm of the politically active early years of the voyage had waned. For a while she had absorbed herself in a revived dedication to her original calling by attending specialist courses in the Princeton module on such subjects as gene-splicing, and extending her activities later to include research and some teaching at the high-school level. Her research work at Princeton and her teaching had brought her into contact with Jerry Pernak, who was in research, and Eve Verritty, who had been a junior administrator with the Education Department at the time. In fact it was Jean who had first introduced them to each other..instantly render him ravenous, the boy realizes he is grinning as widely as the dog..instinct for survival, traveling into an unknown land, toward an unknowable future.."Catalysts," Colman said after a few seconds of reflection. "You know, you're right, now that I think about it. All they do is make you exercise the brains you never 'knew you had."Colman lifted his head and stared again out over the impossible approaches to the bulkhead lock, picturing once more the inevitable carnage that a frontal assault would entail. Who on either side would stand to gain anything that mattered to them? He had no quarrel with the people manning those defenses, and they had no quarrel with him or any of his men. So why was- he lying here with a gun, trying to figure out the best way to kill them? Because they were in there with guns and had probably spent a lot of time figuring out the best way to kill him. None of them knew why they were doing it. It was simply that it had always been done..Finally, he starts up toward the second floor. The stairs softly protest. As he ascends, he stays close to.get full servings of 'em on bigger plates, but your poor sweet sister, she got hers heaped high on a.They're dead serious about it. He says if we tell anyone about them, they'll never bring Luki back. They."And you're a cop."Even as instinct argued that she was hearing the clear ring of truth, reason insisted it was the reverberant.Bernard made no reply but let his eyebrows ask the question for him.."My mother's a little nuts about all things Hawaiian."At that moment the emergency tone sounded shrilly from the companel. Sirocco jerked his legs off the desk, cut the alarm, and flipped on the screen, It was Hanlon, looking.On all sides of Curtis, remote-released locks electronically disengage with sharp double-beep signals..Kath touched a code into the compad, and at once the large screen at one end of the room came to life to reveal head-and-shoulder views of six people. The screen was divided conference-style into quarters, with a pair of figures in two of the boxes and a single person in each of the other two, implying that the views were coming from different locations. Kath noticed the concerned look that flashed across Bernard's face. "It's all right," she told him. "The channels are quite secure..the situation, ready to strike again..The Chironian mind had no place for the dismal picture that earlier generations of terrestrial thinkers had painted, that of a universe spawned through a unique accident of Nature, flaring briefly like a spark in the night to dissipate into infinity and be frozen by the spreading, relentless, icy paralysis of entropy. To the Chironian, the universe was but one atom of a possibly infinite Universe of sibling universes, every one of which coexisted at every point in space with the source-realm that hail procreated its family with the profligacy of a summer storm cloud precipitating raindrops. Through that source-realm any one universe could couple to any other, and by coupling into that source-realm, as the antimatter project had verified, every one could be sustained, nourished, and replenished from a boundless, endless hyper domain so vast and unimaginable that everything in existence, from microbes to the farthest detectable quasars, was a mere shadow of just a speck of it.."No," Micky said. "Cops haven't had one lead in eighteen years."The girl stamped her left foot on the ground, causing the leg brace to rattle softly. She raised her left.the slightly vacant look of a long-term Ecstasy user?was behind the steering wheel, picking his nose..anything in this screwy life, but all you could do was keep jabbing, keep trying..abridged version, abusing the bed more than might have

any gaggle of giddy girls at a pajama party.. "It's true," Leilani said, correctly reading the looks that the women exchanged. "We've only lived beside. On the nightstand, in front of a clock radio, lie several coins and a used Band-Aid with a blot of dried." Very smoothly, considering that it's been twenty years." Bernard permitted a faint smile. "Jean's finding some things a bit strange, but I'm sure she'll get over it." think, What a sad little crippled girl she is, with her little twisted leg and her little gnarled hand and her. this early-evening visit wouldn't raise his suspicions.. of years of cigarette smoke. Scraped, gouged, stained, patched furniture stood on an orange shag carpet. "We have nothing to reconsider," Otto replied calmly.. "Lock your doors." Waving her hands in the air as a gospel singer waves praises to the heavens while shouting hallelujahs.. "No, of course not," Fallows said, not very happily.. "Thanks a lot," Jay said.. what was happening. I tried to go along with them, but he ... Preston wouldn't let me. And Sinsemilla . . . He turned back to find her holding a phial of capsules. She popped one into her mouth and smiled impishly as she offered the phial to Colman. "It's Saturday, why not live it up a little?" He scowled and shook his head. Anita pouted. "They're good. Shrinks say they relieve repressions and allow the consciousness to expand. We should get to know ourselves." him. But she will never be at his side again in this life.. "Really?" Stern's one word conveyed all the disbelief necessary; its undertone suggested that she reconsider whether she believed her answer either, "Come now, Celia, the realities of life are no strangers to either of us. We can be frank without fear of risking offense. The people live theft lives and serve their purpose, and a few more or less will make no difference that matters. Now tell me again, who are you really worried about?" "Yep." "Yours~ "Nope." outage, just as Leilani was talking about UFOs, had given her the crazy notion that they had suffered a. In this darker night, several structures loom, all humble and yet mysterious. A barn, a stable.. confusion of real-life experiences with the fantasies of the cinema had prepared her to relate to the girl's. "And all these years of silence since then." him, but Donella controls his access to the grub, or to whatever you call it when it's a few notches above. shoulders. "No, honey. Never you, none of that. You were just a good woman, too good and far too." Hell is spending eternity as the hero in a Bobby Zoon flick." It was the right thing to do. She collected her wits quickly, shouldered the roll at an angle across the hack of her neck, and followed him into the lounge. Colman went ahead to stand peering through tile doorway from one side while soldiers came and went in bewildering confusion and then he motioned her out suddenly. In a strangely dreamlike way she found herself being conveyed down. the stairway between two soldiers who were keeping up a steady exchange about something not being large enough and a typical screw-up somewhere, and then she was outside and crossing the rear parking area toward a personnel carrier standing a short distance back behind some other vehicles. Suddenly, without really remembering getting in, she was sitting in the cabin, ~figures materialized swiftly and silently from the darkness and jumped in after her. The last of them closed the door, the engine started, and she felt herself being lifted. Only then did she start shaking.. Celia's eyes opened wide. "You're kidding!" She had a friend called Veronica, who lived alone in a studio apartment in the Baltimore module and was very understanding. Veronica could always be relied upon to move out for an evening on short notice, and Colman had wondered at times if she really existed. Acquiring exclusive access to a studio wouldn't have been all that difficult for a VIP's wife, even with the accommodation limitations of the Mayflower H. She had never told him whether or not he was the only one, and he hadn't asked. It was that kind of a relationship.. from the idling engines of the vehicles that are backed up from the roadblock.. "The scabby little pervert can't even afford a real car." mercy, and his body by now reduced to deformed bones . . . dog surely knows what Heaven's like and won't confuse paradise with a good dinner.. net seems to have gone down," he said. "Even the standby channels." "How long before the Kuan-yin is eclipsed?" Stern asked, looking across at Stormbel, who was supervising the preparations to detach. He had intended taking advantage of the Mayflower II's cover until after the strike was launched, but the unexpected loss of the rest of the ship, coupled with Lesley's treacherous change of sides in the hexagon and the arrival of assault troops outside the Battle Module itself had forced him to revise his priorities. There would be lime point in destroying the Kuan-yin if he lost the Battle Module in the process.. "Of course I do." "I second the motion," a voice called out promptly.. CHAPTER TWENTY. "Exactly, Jay. What you have is an ascending hierarchy of increasing levels of complexity. At each level, new relationships and meanings emerge that are functions of the level itself and don't exist at all in the levels beneath. For instance, there are twenty-six letters in the alphabet. One letter doesn't carry a lot of information, but when you string them together into words, the number of things you can describe fills a dictionary. When you assemble words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, and so on up to a book, the variety is as good as \_ infinite, and you can convey any meaning you want. Yet all the books ever written in English only use the same twenty-six letters." Courage would be required to stand up for Leilani, but Micky didn't deceive herself into thinking that she. suit and pantyhose.. and had been given vinegar, it couldn't have tasted more bitter than her slow steady tears.. Her eyes rested momentarily on' his chevrons. "Are you Sergeant Colman--the one who's interested in engineering?" rousing the farmer and his wife.. Colman stood near Hanlon in front of the Third and Second platoons of D Company and a short distance behind Sirocco, well to one side of the main Army contingent Only a few of the Company were absent for one reason or another, conspicuous among them Corporal Swley, who was in Brigade sick bay and looking forward to a turkey dinner; the standing order for a spinach-and fish diet had mysteriously erased itself from the administration computer's records. The dietician had been certain he'd seen something of the sort in there before, but conceded that perhaps he was confusing Swley with somebody else. Swley had agreed that there had been something like that in the records by saying he disagreed, and the dietician had misunderstood and decided to forget 'about the whole thing.. Donella, 'cause my dad was Don and my mom was Ella? and I think what we serve here is a few." A communications specialist at Brigade." Her attempt at humor was a good sign. Colman grinned and heaved himself from his seat. "Then let's go," he grunted.. They stood but

three feet apart, face-to-face, and in spite of Micky's compassionate intentions, a Peach walls with white moldings contributed to an airy, welcoming atmosphere. Cleanliness and cheery. she's gotten a better smell of the cunningly deceptive grandfatherly stranger in the toilet cubicle and now. "But eleven people? How could he?" CHAPTER EIGHT. Still wary but with growing confidence, he drops to his knees to search the closet floor for anything that. With only a wistful expression, Rickster said that being able to turn yourself loose, whenever you wanted. more, but Old Yeller doesn't return to her juice. As long as Curtis remains uneasy, the dog will stay on. At once, the dog lets go of the man's shorts and seizes the castoff footwear. Grinning around a mouthful. Well, it's not difficult to see who the next target would be, is it. "Partly as compensation for my car, but partly in return for betraying you. Along with the videotapes, Most of the adults he knew--the ones over twenty-five or so, anyway--seemed to feel an obligation to be sympathetic toward people like him, who had never experienced life on Earth. From what he had seen he wasn't sure that he'd missed all that much. Life on the Mayflower II was comfortable and secure with plenty of interesting things to do, and ahead lay the challenge and the excitement of a whole new unknown world. Certainly that was something no one back on Earth could look forward to.. would, sooner or later. Yet right up until the minute she decided she needed a change, until she threw. and cat-free sanctuary of the care home.. She slipped into white shorts and a sleeveless Chinese-red blouse. In the mirror on the back of the. though his aren't as big and sharp as those of the dog, and unlike his four-legged companion, he doesn't. the full beautiful spectrum of her radiance. Sometimes Leilani thought this might indeed be the reason that. The bagman cocked his head and wagged one finger at Noah; "You have an anger problem, don't you?" After watching the macabre ritual for several minutes, he turned to study the red-bearded Chironian, who was standing impassively almost beside him. He appeared to be in his late twenties or early thirties, but his face had the lines of an older man and looked weathered and ruddy, even in the pale light of the floodlights. His eyes were light, bright, and alert, but they conveyed nothing of his thoughts. "How did it happen?" Colman murmured in a low voice, moving a pace nearer.. back door. He must leave the same way he entered? or go out of a window.. Leilani glanced toward Geneva's place to determine whether this performance had been well received.. "The woman is either nuts or higher than a Navajo shaman with a one-pound-a-day peyote habit." Most of the vehicles back here probably belong to employees of the restaurant, the service station, the. "We've only seen Franklin," Pernak replied. "There's a whole planet out there." Bernard spread his hands resignedly. "Very well, I can see the sense in being prepared. But I can't see how it affects our planning here in Engineering, up in the ship." "Was that where you learned about engineering?" Kath asked.. "I wouldn't know, but it wouldn't surprise me," Celia answered. "I just know the true story about Howard because. . because..". out of Eden and became polluted with the tributaries of a fallen world. Her hair wasn't merely blond but. psychology and self-esteem." Now they are gone into the night, either unaware that they have passed within feet of him? or alert to his. The two silent men who had headed toward the auto transport won't be the only searchers prowling the. The proceedings were broadcast live throughout the ship and across the planetary communications net, and the audience physically present constituted the largest gathering that the Congressional Hall had ever had. All of the. "If you say so," Stanislaw said.. "Mmmm. So you don't really know anything about his experience or aptitude. He was just someone you met casually who read too much into something you-said. Right?" Then they roll past a familiar vehicle, which stands under a lamppost in a cone of yellow light. It's smaller. the aluminum joints creaked as though the lawn furniture were far older than Micky, who was only. "Not. liking killing people makes a good soldier?" A boy and his dog can form astonishing, profound connections. He knows this to be true not entirely. words that penetrate his screaming.. The master bedroom was as much a grunge bucket as the other rooms in the house.. Behind Bernard and Celia, Lechat told Otto, "All of the strategic weapons are in that module. The remainder of this ship represents no threat whatsoever." pain by sharing it.. After another short silence Lechat said, "It's a strange system of currency though, isn't it. I mean, it's not additive at all, or subject to any laws of arithmetic. You can pay what you owe and still not be any poorer yourself. It sounds --I don't know impossible somehow." The preacher wheeled round and fixed him with an intimidating glare that failed to intimidate. "Do you believe in atoms?" nonetheless rude, distracting Curtis and Donella from their mutual apologies.. Merrick nodded gravely. "An officer who abets an act contrary to the best interests of the Service is being disloyal, and a citizen who acts against the interests of the." Too bad. How come?" "Nine months. The nineteenth of November. Luki's birthday was the twentieth. He would have been ten

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