

A CONCORDANCE TO THE WORKS OF HORACE

One of the gifts of power is to know power. Wizard knows wizard, unless the concealment is very skillful. And the boy had no skills at all except in boat-building, of which he was a promising scholar by the age of twelve. About that time the midwife who had helped his mother at his birth came by and said to his parents, "Let Otter come to me in the evenings after work. He should learn the songs and be prepared for his naming day." He felt remarkably well when he arrived home: calm, proud of his quick thinking and stalwart action, pleasantly tired. He hadn't chosen to kill again; this obligation had been thrust on him by fate. Yet he had proven that the boldness he'd shown on the fire tower, rather than being a transient strength, was a deeply rooted quality..When the highway passed through a sunless ravine, he had broken into a sour sweat at the sight of the bloody pulsing reflections of the revolving rooftop beacons on the bracketing cut-shale walls. Now and then, the siren shrieked to clear traffic ahead, and he felt the urge to scream with it, to let loose a wail of terror and anguish and confusion and loss..Four blocks from his office, on a street more upscale than his own, Nolly came to the Tollman Building. Built in the 1930s, it had an Art Deco flair. The public areas featured travertine floors, and a WPA-ers mural extolling the machine age brightened a lobby wall..-Dumpsters and delivery trucks hulked against the building walls. Steam billowed out of street grates. The gray shadows were no longer disturbed by a running shade in a tweed sports jacket..Young boys, however, are not moved by scenery, especially not when their hearts are adventuring on Mars..By the first of November, they moved his mother's bed into the living room, so she could be in the center of things, where always she had been, though they admitted no guests now, only members of their family with its many names..Celestina stood listening until she heard Wally open the outer door and then close it.. "Take care you don't beat evil into him," said his aunt..A cast-bronze figure, fixed to lacquered walnut in want of raw dogwood, suffered above the bed. This crucifix, contrasting starkly with the white walls, reinforced the impression of monastic economy..The wedding reception-big, noisy, and joyous-spread across the three properties without fences. His mother's name was so often mentioned, her presence so strongly felt in all the lives that she had touched, that sometimes it seemed that she was actually there with them..Nicholas Deed was not the knave. He had already brought all the ruin into their lives that he was going to bring..This is, of course, the purpose of art: to disturb you, to leave you uneasy with yourself and wary of the world, to undermine your sense of reality in order to make you reconsider all that you think you know. The finest art should shatter you emotionally, devastate you intellectually, leave you physically ill, and fill you with loathing for those cultural traditions that bind us and weigh us down and drown us in a sea of conformity. Junior had learned this much, already, from his art appreciation course..Paul knelt on one knee beside her wheelchair. "This momentous day, Agnes. This momentous day, with all of its beginnings. Hmmm?".Charmed by the vulnerability of the young, he'd never slept with an older woman. The prospect intrigued him. She would have tricks in her repertoire that younger women were too inexperienced to know..This was better than taking slow deep breaths. Periodically, on the way to Vanadium's house, Junior spat out a string of insults, punctuated by obscenities..Over many proud generations and at least to the extent of second cousins, no one on either side of Celestina's family had skin of this light color. They were without exception medium to dark mahogany, many shades darker than this infant..A stab of horror punctured Celestina as she failed to repress a mental image of a carnival-sideshow monster, half dragon and half insect, coiled in her sister's womb. She hated the rapist's child but was appalled by her hatred, for the baby was blameless.. "As she comes closer to full term," said Dairies, "she's at great risk of preeclampsia developing into full eclampsia." Junior would have liked to pursue spiritual matters with Sklent, but numerous other partyers wanted their time with the great man. In parting, sure that he would give the artist a laugh, Junior withdrew the brochure for "This Momentous Day" from his jacket and coyly asked for an opinion of Celestina White's paintings..His body ached, too, especially his back, from the battering that he had taken. He remembered hitting the floor with his chin, and he supposed that he might have gotten knocked about the face more than he realized or remembered. If so, there would be bruises soon, but bruises would fade with time; in the interim, they might make him even more attractive to women, who would want to console him and kiss away the pain-especially when they discovered that he had sustained his injuries in a brutal fight, while rescuing a neighbor from a would-be rapist..After coffee had been served, when Celestina and Wally were no longer the center of attention, he indicated the array of desserts with his fork, smiled, and said, "I just want you to know, Celie, that these are sweets enough until we're married." And now Cain was aware of her, interested in her. Informed of this development, Harrison would no doubt rethink his position..Barty had never been instructed in the rules of grammar, but had absorbed them as the roots of Edom's roses absorbed nutrients. "Sure. Does and is." He looked up into the eyes of the stocky man with the birthmark. They were gray eyes, hard as nail heads, but clear and surprisingly beautiful in that otherwise unfortunate face..Dr. Zedd's death, just last Thanksgiving, had been a blow to Junior, a loss to the nation, to the entire world. He considered it a tragedy equal to the Kennedy assassination one year previous..Junior needed something in his life, a missing element without which he could never be complete, something more than a heart mate, more than German or French, or karate, and for as long as he could remember, he'd been searching for this mysterious substance, this enigmatic object, this skill, this thingumajigger, this dowhacky, this flumadiddle, this force or person, this insight, but the problem was that he didn't know what he was searching for, and so often when he seemed to have found it, he hadn't found it after all, therefore he worried that if ever he did find it, then he might throw it away, because he would not realize that it was, in fact, the very jigger or gigamaree that he'd been in search of since childhood..Eventually, Junior remembered the quarter. He reached into the right pocket of the thin cotton bathrobe, but the coin wasn't there, as it should have been. The left pocket also was empty.. "And," Joshua cautioned, "you better

prepare for a long day. I'm pretty sure Dr. Chan will want to consult with an oncologist." When Agnes had asked him to deliver the pies, before she had set out with Joey for the hospital the previous day, Edom had wanted to beg off, but he had agreed without hesitation. He was prepared to suffer every viciousness that nature could throw at him in this life, but he could not endure seeing disappointment in his sister's eyes..dent? You do believe that? Because I don't see ... I don't know how could work with someone who thought I was capable of . . . ", Heart jumping like the heart of a fox-stalked rabbit, she ran from the driveway into the yard. She would have cried out if her throat hadn't seized up with terror at the sight of her boy at neck-breaking height. By the time she could speak, she realized that a shout, or even the unexpected sound of her plaintive voice, might unnerve him, cause him to misstep, and bring him caroming down, limb to limb, in a bone snapping plunge..The Benediction service had concluded, and the worshipers had departed. Gone, too, were the priest and the altar boys..After poring through enough sensational newspaper accounts to be convinced that the curse-casting reverend was undeniably dead, Junior had acquired four pieces of surprising information. Three were of vital importance to him..He backed toward the hall door, watching as the fire spread. After lingering until certain that the house would soon be a seething pyre, he finally sprinted along the hall to the front door..He turned the brochure in his hands, to look at the front of it again. Gradually he began to suspect that the title of the exhibition might be what had brought to mind the reverend's unremembered sermon..Tom was aware that something had happened here during the past week, an important development that Celestina mentioned on the phone but that she declined to discuss. He didn't harbor any expectations of what he'd find when she escorted him and Wally into the Lampion dining room, but if he'd tried to imagine the scene awaiting him, he wouldn't have pictured a s?ance..While waiting for inspiration to present him with a better strategy, Junior returned to the telephone book in search of the right Bartholomew. Not the directory for Spruce Hills and the surrounding county, but the one for San Francisco..Junior felt a little lightheaded. He felt strange. He hoped he wasn't coming down with the flu..Turning in Celestina's lap, Angel said, "Smell," and held the index finger of her right hand under her mother's nose..Paul said, "I wanted you ... I don't know ... I just wanted you to see her. I wanted to say ... to say. . .". "And to the north of us," Agnes said, drawing him out, "Janey Carter went off to college last year, and she's their only child." "Our little girl's going to walk backward her whole life if you drive in reverse all the way to the hospital." When Seraphim's bastard baby was dead, evidence of paternity would die with it-and any claim for child support. Even Vanadium's stubborn, selfish, greedy, grubbing, vicious, psychotic, evil spirit would have to recognize that all hope of bringing Junior down was lost, and it would at last either dissipate in frustration or be reincarnated..You have the teeth to do it, Junior thought, but he restrained himself from saying it. "This can't be a dead end."..Never before had she put faith in any form of prognostication. In the whispery falling of those twelve cards, however, she heard the faint voice of truth, not quite a coherent truth, not as clear a message as she might have wished, but a murmur that she couldn't ignore..The nurse led the way, while the orderly pushed the gurney from behind Barty's head.. "If they always go there, smoosh--smoosh, then you're going to wind up with one really fat finger." *."Yes, you did, and it's exactly what experience has no doubt taught you to think. But I'm forty-seven and you're twenty-". He swallowed one capsule and washed it down with water. He returned the pharmacy bottle to the nightstand..She tried to tell him that he was going to make it, that he would be with her for a long time, that the universe was not so cruel as to take him at thirty with all their lives ahead of them, but the truth was here to see, and she could not lie to him..Since he knew where Celestina would be on January 12, there was no point in taking risks to find her sooner. He had plenty of time to prepare for their encounter, time to savor the sweet anticipation..The runt was so out of proportion to his office furniture that he appeared to be a bug perched in the giant leather executive chair, which itself looked like the maw of a Venus's--flytrap about to swallow him for lunch. He allowed such a lengthy silence to follow Junior's question that by the time he answered, his reply was superfluous..Surprisingly, dolls. Quite a few dolls. Apparently the bastard boy was effeminate, a quality he sure as hell hadn't inherited from his father.. "You think I can turn the King's order down? You want to see me sent to row with the slaves in the galley we're building? Use your head, boy!"..Still relishing her little pretense of rejection, Victoria did not touch the rose. "What kind of woman do you think I am?"..Anyway, if Seraphim were still alive, she would be only nineteen now, too young to have graduated from Academy of Art College..She worried that her anxiety would prove contagious, that when her fear infected her boy, he would be less able to fight whatever hateful thing had taken seed in his right eye..Nolly's gums were in great shape, too: firm, pink, no sign of recession, snug to the neck of each tooth..Although she had acutely felt the loss of Joey during the past three years, she had never missed him as much as she missed him now. Marriage is an expression of love and respect and trust and faith in the future, but the union of husband and wife is also an alliance against the challenges and tragedies of life, a promise that with me in your corner, you will never stand alone..Jacob grunted, but probably not because he'd heard what had been said about him, more likely because he'd just turned the page to find a photo of dead cattle piled up like driftwood against the American Legion Hall in some flood-ravaged town in Arkansas..A door slammed, and after the briefest of internal debates about whether to ize or act, Junior left Ichabod straddling the threshold. He must get to Celestina before she reached a telephone, and then he could come back and finish moving the body..They wore out a lot of cards and kept a generous supply of all types of decks on hand..I'll put you in a twilight sleep, you babbling cretin. Where'd you earn your medical degree, you nattering nitwit? Botswana? The Kingdom of Tonga?. Maria said, "It is ... the only thing ... I can do for him now, for you. I be nobody, not." Jacob scares people," Agnes said. "No one would eat a pie that Jacob delivered without having it tested at a lab." "No," said Vanadium, "you only think you know who I am and what I am, but you don't know anything. That's all right. You'll learn."..Outside, he turned to look at the display windows. He expected to see the candlestick, supernaturally apparent only from this side of the glass, but it wasn't there. Throughout the autumn, Junior read book after book

about ghosts, poltergeists, haunted houses, ghost ships, séances, spirit rapping, spirit manifestation, spirit writing, spirit recording, trance speaking, conjuration, exorcism, astral projection, Ouija-board revelation, and needlepoint..their work, tears were followed by reminiscences that brought a smile and soothed, and hope was always found to be the flower that bloomed from every seed of hopelessness.."-and whenever the good Pharaoh was here in San Francisco, a few times each year, he always stopped by St. Anselmo's to entertain the boys--". Then by ambulance to the hospital, whisked into surgery, and for a while, blessed unconsciousness..During Barty's hospitalization, they had graduated from the young adult novels by Robert Heinlein to some of the same author's science fiction for general audiences. Now, pajamaed and in bed, with his sunglasses on the nightstand but his padded eye patches still in place, Barty listened, rapt, to the beginning of Double Star.In the passenger's seat, Barty was cushioned in his mother's arms. At times, the boy cooed or gurgled, or made a wet chording sound..Now, Obadiah produced a pack of playing cards as though from a secret pocket in an invisible coat. "Like to see a little something?".He vanished through some hole, some slit, some tear bigger than anything through which Tom flipped his quarters..As he said cards, the magician turned a knowing look toward Edom, eliciting from him a responding frown of puzzlement.. "Maybe I won't have to try as hard as I think, because you make it so easy, Barty..". "Those were Rowena's affectionate names for the boys when they were babies. Her private nonsense names for them, because she said they were like two beautiful little elves and ought to have elfin names..".dropping on the conversation between Dr. Parkhurst and Vanadium, and later failing and respond to Vanadium's pointed accusations, his deception would inevitably be read as an admission of guilt in the murder.He knew that the only movement in those staring, sightless eyes was the restless reflection of the flashlight beam as he probed the trash with it. He knew he was being irrational, but nevertheless he was reluctant to turn his back on the corpse. Repeatedly in the midst of searching, he snapped his head up, whipping his attention to Neddy, certain that from the corner of his eye, he had seen the dead gaze following him..He moved from a crib to a bed of his own, with guardrails, months ahead of the average toddler. Within a week, he requested that the rails be left down..He pressed the muzzle of the weapon against the girl's forehead and said, "Naomi, Seraphim, you were exquisite lovers, but you've got to be realistic. There's no way we can have a life together..".The crazy bitch wielded it with such ferocity that the force of the impact with the floor, rebounding upon her, must have numbed her arms. She stumbled backward, dragging the chair, temporarily unable to lift it..Yet his curious attraction to these newborns kept him at the window, and he began to believe that unconsciously he had intended to come here from the moment he guided his walker out of his room. He'd been compelled to come. Drawn by some mysterious magnetism..Evidently, her face was knotted with the effort to remember what the child had looked like, for the physician said, "Yes? What's wrong?".Caution discarded, Junior went inside, for the same reason that a dedicated opera aesthete might once a decade attend a country-music concert: to confirm the superiority of his taste and to be amused by what passed for music among the great unwashed. Some might call it slumming..The longer he crouched, head cocked, breathing silently through his open mouth, the more convinced Junior became that he had heard a man approaching. Indeed, the terrible conviction grew that someone was standing immediately in front of the dumpster, head cocked, also breathing through his open mouth, listening for Junior even as Junior listened for him..As early as this evening, here at her son's bedside, Agnes began dimly to sense that certain of these amusing conversations with Barty might not be as fanciful as they seemed, that he was expressing in a childlike way some truth that she had assumed was fantasy.. "Frozen firing pin," Cain said. His smile was venomous. "I worked on it. I hoped you'd get here in time to see the consequences of your stupid games..".After Victoria had departed, Junior lay smiling at the ceiling, floating on Valium and desire. And vanity..Shaking the ravaged khakis at him, she said, "Then what made such a mess of these?.The house was hers, free and clear of mortgages. There were two savings accounts to which Joey had diligently made deposits weekly through nine years of marriage.. "Yes. Sodium chloride will work, too. Common salt. Mix enough of it with water, and it's generally effective..".If he had known that he would break his solemn vow twice before the month was ended-and that neither victim, unfortunately, would be a Hackachak--he might not have fallen asleep so easily. And he might not have dreamed of cleverly stealing hundreds of quarters out of Thomas Vanadium's pockets while the baffled detective searched for them in vain..The rich aromas on the air would have thwarted the will of the most devout monks on a fast of penitence..Celestina smiled distractedly. Since arriving at the hotel an hour ago, she had been openly debating with herself whether to call her parents in Spruce Hills or to wait until later in the afternoon, when she might be able to report not just that she had a fiancé?, and not only that she had a fiancé? who'd been shot and nearly killed, but also that his condition had been upgraded from critical to serious. As she'd explained to Tom, in addition to worrying them with the news about Cain, she'd be stunning them with the announcement that she was going to marry a white man twice her age. "My folks don't have one ounce of prejudice between them, but they sure do have firm ideas about what's appropriate and what's not." This would ring the big bell at the top of the White Family Scale of the Inappropriate. Besides, they were preparing for the funeral of a parishioner, and from personal experience, Celestina knew their day would be full. Nevertheless, at ten minutes past eleven, after picking at her breakfast, she finally decided to call them..If Junior was not discreet, and if gossip about the widower Cain and the sexy nurse began to circulate, Vanadium would be on the case again even if it had been closed. The cop was sick, hateful, driven by unknowable inner demons. Although he might for the moment have been reined in by those in higher office, mere gossip of a spicy nature would be excuse enough for him to open the file again, which he'd surely do without informing his superiors..He decided that he must never again kill so impetuously. Never. In fact, he vowed never again to kill at all, except in self-defense. Soon he would be rich-with much to lose if he was caught. Homicide was a marvelous adventure; sadly, however, it was an entertainment that he could no longer afford..Hers were the most feminine hands he'd ever seen. Slender, soft, prettier than Naomi's. He

had no idea what she was talking about..Seraphim White had come to California to give birth to him in or to spare her parents-and their congregation--embarrassment..After adjusting the hairpin that held her lace mantilla, Maria passed from the narthex into the nave She dipped two fingers in the holy water that glimmered in the marble font, and crossed herself..thickened with the odors of antiseptics and blood, until breathing required an effort..Looking from one to another of his companions, Tom said, "When I think of everything that had to happen to bring us here tonight, the tragedies as well as the happy turns of fortune, when I think of the many ways things might have been, with all of us scattered and some of us never having met, I know we belong here, for we've arrived against all odds." His gaze traveled back to Agnes, and he gave her the answer that he knew she hoped to hear. "This boy and this girl were born to meet, for reasons only time will reveal, and all of us ... we're the instruments of some strange destiny."..Nevertheless, Junior was thrilled to hear the name Bartholomew, and to know that the boy of whom Celestina spoke was the Bartholomew of Bartholomews, the menacing presence in his unremembered dream, the threat to his fortune and future that must be eliminated.. "That won't do it."..Because he kept imagining the stealthy sounds of a dead cop rising in vengeance behind him, Junior switched on the radio. He tuned in a station featuring a Top 40 countdown..Although a cold current crackled along the cable of her spine, Agnes smiled at the card. She was determined to change the dark mood that had descended over them.. "Maybe." In truth, Tom didn't believe that any of this could be learned even by one adept taking instruction from another adept. They were born with the same special perception, but with different and strictly limited abilities to interact with the multiplicity of worlds that they could detect. He wasn't able to explain even to himself how he could send a coin or other small object Elsewhere; it was something he just felt, and each time that the coin vanished, the authenticity of the feeling was proved. He suspected that when Barty walked where the rain wasn't, the boy employed no conscious techniques; he simply decided to walk in a dry world while otherwise remaining in this wet one-and then he did. Woefully incomplete wizards, sorcerers with just a trick or two each, they had no secret tome of enchantments and spells to teach to an apprentice..He briefly considered playing dumb, but he knew she was too smart for that. "Gunsmoke, you mean. Listen, I know you'll do whatever's necessary to keep Angel safe, because you love her so much. Love will give.He already had the pistol he had taken from Frieda Bliss's collection, but it didn't come with a sound-suppressor. He was preparing for all contingencies. Focus..By Thursday, the eruption passed from him. Because he'd had the self-control not to claw his face or hands, he was presentable enough to venture out into the city; although if people in the streets could have Seen the weeping scabs and inflamed scratches that tattooed his body and limbs, they would have fled with the grim certainty that the black.Aside from purchasing the T S. Eliot book, which he hadn't found time to read, Junior was only peripherally aware of current events, because they were, after all, current, while he tried always to focus on the future. The news of the day was but a faint background music to him, like a song on a radio in another apartment..Fathoms of silence flooded the line. Still, she listened. He sensed her there, though as if at a great depth..Looking up at the mirror above the sink, he saw reflected not the self-improved and fully realized man that he'd worked so hard to become, but the pale, round-eyed little boy who had hidden from his mother when she had been in the deepest and darkest end of one of her cocaine-assisted, amphetamine-spiced mood swings, before she traded cold reality for the warm coziness of the asylum. As if some whirlpool of time was spinning him backward into the hateful past, Junior felt his hard-won defenses being stripped away..Once, he had been a superb driver. For the past decade, his performance behind the wheel depended on his mood..2000, the Year of the Dragon, gives way without a roar to the Year of the Snake, and after the Snake comes the Horse. Day by day the work is done, in memory of those who have gone before us, and embarked upon work of her own, young Mary is out there among you. For now, only her family knows how very special she is. On one momentous day, that will change..It was the best he could do in protest against the misuse of good work and a good ship. He was pleased with himself. When the ship was launched (and all seemed well with her, for her fault would not show up until she was out on the open sea) he could not keep from his teachers what he had done, the little circle of old men and midwives, the young hunchback who could speak with the dead, the blind girl who knew the names of things. He told them his trick, and the blind girl laughed, but the old people said, "Look out. Take care. Keep hidden."..After examining Phimie, who was nauseous, Daines prescribed an anticonvulsant, an antiemetic, and a sedative, all intravenously..He groaned. "That just doesn't cut it, Mom. If I gotta be blind, I think I should get to say peed off."..A mutual interest in ballroom dancing had resulted in their introduction when each needed a new partner for a fox-trot and swing competition. Nolly had started taking lessons five years before he had met Kathleen..In Junior's estimation, this was not the way that a normal person lived. This was the home of a deranged loner, a dangerously obsessive man..At home, Agnes had no appetite, but she fixed Barty a cheese sandwich, spooned potato salad into a dish, added a bag of corn chips and a Coke, and served this late dinner on a tray, in his room, where he was already in bed and reading Tunnel in the Sky..Incredibly, Renee came after him, slinky and seductive, trying to calm him and lure him back into an embrace..She didn't hear gunfire this time, either, but the hard crack of splintering wood attested to the passage of at least two more bullets..Turning away from the window, Tom met her gaze. His smoke-gray eyes looked frosted, as though the fog ghosts had passed through the window and possessed him. But then the flame on the table candle flared in a draft; lambent light melted the chill from his eyes, and she saw again the warmth and the beautiful sorrow that had impressed her before..Phimie's stubbornly high blood pressure, the presence of protein in her urine, and other symptoms indicated her preeclampsia wasn't a recent development; she was at increased risk of eclampsia. Her hypertension was gradually coming under control-but only by resort to more aggressive drug therapy than the physician preferred to use..As yet, he hadn't taken either an antiemetic or antihistamine to ward off vomiting and hives, because he wanted to medicate -against those conditions as shortly before the violence as was practical, to ensure maximum protection.

He'd intended to dose himself only after he followed Celestina home from the gallery and could be reasonably certain that he had located the lair of Bartholomew..Junior discovered more tears than could have been found in ten thousand onions. His wife and his unborn baby. He had been willing to sacrifice his beloved Naomi, but maybe he would have found the cost too high if he had known that he was also sacrificing his first-conceived child. This was too much. He was bereft..Yet through the summer of 1966, following this call, he acted like a man who was haunted. A sudden draft, even if warm, chilled him and caused him to turn in circles, seeking the source. In the middle of the night, the most innocent of sounds could scramble him from bed and send him on a search of the apartment, flinching from harmless shadows and twitching at looming invisibilities that he imagined he saw at the edges of his vision.."If her blood pressure stabilizes through the night," Dr. Daines continued, "I want her to undergo a cesarean at seven in the morning. The danger of eclampsia passes entirely after birth. I'd like to refer Phimie to Dr. Aaron Kaltenbach. He's a superb obstetrician."..With a tenderness that surprises and moves Celestina, the tall nurse closes the dead girl's eyes. She opens a fresh, clean sheet and places it over the body, from the feet up, covering the precious face last of all..In fact, though he strained hard to recall their conversations, he could dredge up nothing that Seraphim had said during therapy, as if he'd been stone-deaf in those days. The only things he retained were sensual impressions: the beauty of her face, the texture of her skin, the firmness of her flesh under his ministering hands..For Gammoner, exactly as for Pinchbeck, Google had provided: a driver's license that was actually registered with the California Department of Motor Vehicles, and that would, therefore, stand up to any cop's inspection; a legitimate social-security card; a birth certificate actually on file with the cited courthouse; and an authentic, valid passport..Junior had walked along the big show windows, studying the two White paintings displayed to passersby, appalled by their beauty, when suddenly the door had opened and a gallery employee had invited him to come in. No printed invitation needed, no cool test to pass, no bouncers keeping the gate. Such easy accessibility served as proof, if you needed it, that this was not real art..She was sopping, shivering. Water streamed from her soaked hair, down her face, as she wiped at her beaded eyelashes with one dripping hand..One of the most unnerving aspects of life in southern California was that earthquake weather came in so many varieties. As many days as not, you got out of bed, checked the sky and the barometer, and realized with dismay that conditions were indicative of catastrophe..Beside her, the passenger's door barked and shrieked as though alive as though suffering, and these sounds were uncannily like the cries of torment that only Agnes could hear in the haunted chambers of her heart..As always in uncertainty, she asked herself what her mother would do in this situation. Grace, of infinite grace, unflinchingly did precisely the needed thing, knew exactly the right words to console, to enlighten, to charm a smile out of even the miserable. Often, however, the needed thing involved no words, because in our journey we so often feel abandoned, and we need only to be reassured that we are not alone..Celestina was better equipped to embrace this transcendental experience for what it appeared to be. She was not one of those artists who celebrated chaos and disorder, or who found inspiration in pessimism and despair. Wherever her eyes came to rest, she saw order, purpose, exquisite design, and either the pale flicker or the fierce blaze of a humbling beauty. She perceived the uncanny not merely in old houses where ghosts were said to roam or in eerie experiences like the one Lipscomb had described, but every day in the pattern of a tree's branches, in the rapturous play of a dog with a tennis ball, in the white whirling currents of a snowstorm-in every aspect of the natural world in which insoluble mystery was as fundamental a component as light and darkness, as matter and energy, as time and space..Tom Vanadium's uninflected but curiously hypnotic voice, his pensive manner, his gray eyes so beautiful in that fractured face, his air of measured melancholy, and his evident intelligence gave him a presence that was simultaneously as solid as a great mass of granite and yet otherworldly..Besides, he didn't want the police in San Francisco to know that he'd been suspected, by at least one of their kind, of having killed his wife in Oregon. What if one of the locals was curious enough to request a copy of the case file on Naomi's death, and what if in that file, Vanadium had made reference to Junior waking from a nightmare, fearfully repeating Bartholomew? And then what if Junior eventually located the right Bartholomew and eliminated the little bastard, and then what if the local cop who'd read the case file connected one Bartholomew to the other and started asking questions? Admittedly, that was a stretch. Nevertheless, he hoped to fade from the SFPD's awareness as soon as possible and live henceforth beyond their ken..Toward the front of the house, along a hallway suddenly as dark as a tunnel, toward a vague light in the seething gloom. And here a window at the end of the hall.

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