

## **SOUVENIRS DE MONTMARTRE ET DU QUARTIER LATIN**

Easter still lay a few weeks away, but already Celestina had begun decorating more than a hundred baskets, so that nothing would need to be done at the last minute except add the candy. Her living room was a warren of baskets, ribbons, bows, beads, bangles, shredded cellophane in green and purple and yellow and pink, and decorative little plush-toy bunnies and baby chicks.. "Veal fit for kings," said their waiter, delivering the entrees, and one taste confirmed his promise.. At nearly forty years of age, Edom still dreamed of that grim summer afternoon, although not as often as in the past. When it troubled his sleep these days, it was a nightmare that gradually metamorphosed into a dream of tenderness and hope. Until the last few years, he'd always awakened when the roses were being jammed into his mouth or when the thorns flicked through his eyelashes, or when Agnes began to strike their father with the Bible, thus seeming to assure worse punishment. This additional act, this transition from horror to hope before he woke, had been added when Agnes was pregnant with Barty. Edom didn't know why this should be so, and he didn't try to analyze it. He was simply grateful for the change, because he woke now in a state of peace, never with worse than a shudder, no longer with a hoarse cry of anguish.. Perhaps his sister intuited what Edom was about to say, because she didn't let him get started.. Joey was not illuminated by the light of this world. Agnes realized that he was translucent, his skin like fine milk glass through which shone a light from elsewhere.. The air was spicy with incense and with the fragrance of the lemon oil polish used on the wooden pews.. "Agnes," said the magician, "you better start meeting with that librarian now to record your own life. If you don't get started for another forty years, by then you'll need a whole decade of talking to get it all down..". "Please try not to be alarmed, Miss White, but I have a patrol car on the way to your address..". Tom pushed his chair back from the table, got to his feet, and moved toward Celestina.. "It isn't just the rotten railing," Junior said, still paging through the report, his outrage growing. "The stairs are unsafe..". ready to hear me. However long you need. But something ... something extraordinary happened here before you arrived..". Agnes found this turn of events amazing, amusing, ironic-and a little sad. She would have dearly loved to teach the boy to read and write, to see his knowledge and competence slowly flower under her care. Although she fully supported Barty's exploration of his gifts, and although she was proud of his astounding achievements, she felt that his swift advancement was robbing her of some of the shared joy of his childhood, even though he remained in so many ways a child.. And suddenly Celestina believed that Bellini was a cop, not because his voice contained such authority, but because her heart told her that the time had come, that the long-anticipated danger had at last materialized: the dark advent that Phimie had warned her about three years ago.. With a thin hiss of disgust, Junior pulled away from the thing, whatever it was, withdrew the flashlight from his belt, and listened intently for sounds in the alleyway. No voices. No footsteps. Only distant traffic noises so muffled that they sounded like the grunts and groans and low menacing growls of foraging animals, displaced predators prowling the urban mist.. She thought that she already knew all about humility, about the necessity of it, about the power of it to bring peace of mind and to heal the heart, but in the following few minutes, she learned more about humility than she had ever known before.. She was not yet twenty-one, and he was at least twice her age, but he leaned like a small child against her, and like a mother she comforted him.. Agnes met them, pulling Grace and Angel to her side. Her eyes were bright with excitement. "Tom, you're a man of faith, even if you've sometimes been troubled in it. Tell me what you make of all this..". For the next few days, they would eat all their meals in the suite. Most likely, Cain had left San Francisco. And even if the killer hadn't fled, this was a big city, where a chance encounter with him was unlikely. Yet having, assumed the role of guardian, Tom Vanadium had a zero tolerance for risk, because the inimitable Mr. Cain had proved himself to be a master of the unlikely.. So it became dangerous to practice sorcery, except under the protection of a strong warlord; and even then, if a wizard met up with one whose powers were greater than his own, he might be destroyed. And if a wizard let down his guard among the common folk, they too might destroy him if they could, seeing him as the source of the worst evils they suffered, a malign being. In those years, in the minds of most people, all magic was black.. Later, in early '66, out of his coma and recovering sufficiently to have visitors, Vanadium spent a most difficult hour with his old friend Harrison White. Out of respect for the memory of his lost daughter, and not at all out of concern for his image as a minister, the reverend had refused to acknowledge either that Seraphim had been pregnant or that she'd been raped-although Max Bellini had already confirmed the pregnancy and believed, based on cop's instinct, that it had been the consequence of rape. Harrison's attitude seemed to be that Phimie was gone, that' nothing could be gained by opening this wound, and that even if there was a villain involved, the Christian thing was to forgive, if not forget, and to trust in divine justice.. Although the piano was at some distance and the restaurant was a little noisy, Kathleen recognized the tune at once. She looked up from her veal, her eyes full of merriment.. She protested that her ruined body had neither any comforts to offer a man nor the strength to be a bride.. "Well, Uncle Jacob doesn't understand kids. Anyway, this is pretty good stuff..". "I can't sleep half the time," Deed said, twisting the baseball cap in his hands. "I've lost weight, and I'm so nervous, jumpy..". At the mention of her son's name, Agnes stiffened. There were numerous ways for Deed to have learned the baby's name, yet it seemed wrong for him to know it, wrong to use it, the name of this child he had nearly orphaned, had almost killed.. The sidewalks were crowded with businessmen in suits, hippies in flamboyant garb, groups of smartly attired suburban ladies in town to shop, and the usual forgettably dressed rabble, some smiling and some surly and some mumbling but as blank-eyed as mannequins, who might be hired assassins or poets, for all he knew, eccentric millionaires in mufti or carnival geeks who earned their living by biting heads off live chickens.. Neddy, dressed for work but overdressed for his own funeral, slumped against the wall, head bowed, chin on his chest. His pale hands were splayed at his sides, as though he were trying to strike chords from the floor

tiles..He knew what she made of it, all right, and he could see that the others on the porch knew as well, and likewise he could see that all of them wanted to hear him confirm the conclusion at which Agnes had arrived long before he'd come here with Wally this evening. Even in the dining room, before the proof in the rain, Tom had recognized the special bond between the blind boy and this buoyant little girl. In fact, he couldn't have arrived at any conclusion different from the one Agnes reached, because like her, he believed that the events of every day revealed mysterious design if you were willing to see it, that every fife had profound purpose..He pushed on the door, but still it resisted, and he surprised himself by letting out a bellow of frustration that expressed quite the opposite of self-control, though no one listening could have the slightest doubt about his determination to commit and command..Coughing, spitting saliva that was bitter with toxic chemicals, Paul followed her, slapping frantically at his clothes when fire singed his shirt..Instead, her father asked, "Is this emotion talking, Celie, or is this brain as much as heart?".Clutching the purse as though determined to resist robbery even in death, the guy dropped, sprawled, shuddered, and lay still. He'd gone down with no shout of alarm, with no cry of mortal pain, with so little noise that Junior wanted to kiss him, except that he didn't kiss men, alive or dead, although a man dressed as a woman had once tricked him, and though a dead pianist had once given him a lick in the dark..Ursula K. Le Guin."Would you like a little tea and a piece of crumb cake?" Grace asked as smoothly as if, in *The Big Book of Etiquette for Ministers' Wives*, this were the preferred response to the announcement of a startling career change.. "He's a wonderful boy, so very bright, so very full of life. Blindness will be hard, but it won't be the end. He'll cope without the light. It'll be so difficult at first, but this boy ... eventually he'll thrive."..He capped the bottle, pocketed it, and then kicked the dead man, kicked him again, and spat on him.. "There's lots of places where I don't have bad eyes at all. And then lots of places where I have it worse or don't have it as bad, but still have it some."..Edom, eager to learn precisely when a tidal wave or falling asteroid would bring his doom, fetched a pack of cards from a cabinet in the parlor. When Maria explained that only every third card was read and that a full look at the future required four decks, Edom returned to the parlor to scare up three more.. "This was back on January 24, 1556," said Edom with unhesitating authority, for he had memorized tens of thousands of facts about the worst natural disasters in history..During the past few years, he had discovered that a lousy few million could buy even more freedom than he had thought when he'd shoved Naomi off the fire tower. Great wealth, fifty or a hundred million, would purchase not only greater freedom, and not just the ability to pursue even more ambitious self-improvement, but also power..Agnes had read the last half of *Red Planet* to Barty just the previous night, but he brought the book with him, to read it again..Taking her mother's advice to heart, Celestina sighed. "All right. Let's just pray they catch him. But if they don't ... two weeks, and then the rest of the plan, the way you said, Tom. Except that I can't tolerate two weeks-in a hotel, cooped up, afraid to go into the streets, no sun, no fresh air."..Turning, turning, turning, the mysterious warning in his mind: The spirit of Bartholomew ... will find you ... and mete out the terrible judgment that you deserve..That Olympian purge had, however, made him appear to be both emotionally and physically devastated by the loss of his wife. He couldn't have calculated any stratagem more likely to convince most..He had dragged Ichabod halfway across the threshold when he heard someone say, "No."..Wally Lipscomb parked in his garage, switched off the engine, and started to get out of the Buick before he saw that Celestina had left her purse in the car..Bad news. Having been identified by another guest put Junior at risk of later being tied to the killing; having been recognized by a close personal friend of Celestina White's was even worse. It had become imperative now that he know why the pianist had been watching him from across the room with such intensity..After moving all of a hundred feet, Celestina and Wally-with Grace fretting that someone would be hurt-had torn down the high stave fence between properties, for theirs had become one family with many names: Lampion, White, Lipscomb, Isaacson. When backyards were joined and a connecting walkway poured, Barty's travels from house to house were greatly simplified, and regular visits by the Gonzalez, Damascus, and Vanadium branches of the clan were also facilitated..I Junior didn't believe in ghosts, anyway. He believed in flesh and bone, stone and mortar, money and power, himself and the future..Junior shuddered. Vanadium hadn't invented the name. It had genuine if inexplicable resonance with Junior that had nothing to do with the detective..Downstairs, two shots cracked, and an instant after the second, an explosion shook the parsonage as though the long-promised Judgment were at hand. This was a real explosion, not the impact of another runaway Pontiac..He turned from the cowering girl and studied the boy, who stood a few steps inside the room, holding a can of soda in each hand. The artificial eyes were convincing, but they didn't possess the knowing look that so troubled him in the strange girl..Raising his revolver, Tom squeezed off two shots, but the gun didn't discharge..Jacob had been born with the requisite dexterity and more than sufficient memory function. His personality disorder-which made him unemployable and guaranteed that his social life would never involve endless rounds of parties-ensured that he would have the free time needed to practice the most difficult techniques of card manipulation until he mastered them..Anyway, if Celestina escaped, there would be a witness, and it wouldn't matter to a jury that she was a talentless bitch who painted kitsch. She would have seen Junior get out of the Mercedes and would be able to provide at least a half-accurate description of the car in spite of the fog. He still hoped to pull this off without having to give up his good life on Russian Hill..Wild exhilaration burst through him like pyrotechnics blazing in a night sky, reminiscent of the rush of excitement that followed his bold action on the fire tower. Happily, Junior had no emotional connection to Prosser, as he'd had to beloved Naomi; therefore, the purity of his..When he heard the snick of the lock being disengaged, he rammed into the men's room..The gurney, one wheel rattling. The young orderly behind it, dressed all in white. And the nurse again..Great hobnailed wheels of pain turned through Agnes, driving her into darkness for a moment..They ordered martinis, and when Kathleen, perusing a menu, asked her husband what looked good for dinner, he suggested, "Oysters?"..Besides, being a future-focused guy who believed that the past was a burden best shed, he never made an effort to

nurture memories. Sentimental wallowing in nostalgia had none of the appeal for him that it had for most people..Here again were these peculiar grammatical constructions, which sometimes she had thought were just the mistakes that even a prodigy could be expected to make, and which sometimes she had interpreted as expressions of fanciful speculations, but which lately she had suspected were of a more complex-and perhaps darker-nature. Now her dread took form, and she wondered if the personality disorders that had shaped her brothers' lives could have roots not just in the abuse they had taken from their father, but also in a twisted genetic legacy that could manifest again in her son. In spite of his great gifts, Barty might be destined for a life limited by a psychological problem of a unique or at least different-nature, first suggested by these occasional conversations that seemed not fully coherent..Hound smiled. "They haven't undone what you did yet, either," he said. "Old Whiteface was crawling all over her yesterday, growling and muttering. Ordered the helm replaced." He meant Losen's chief mage, a pale man from the North named Gelluk, who was much feared in Havnor..The man's voice echoed hollowly in Junior's ears, as if coming from the far end of a tunnel. Or from the terminus of a death-row hallway, on the long walk between the last meal and the execution chamber..Shadows still perched throughout most of the room. They no longer reminded her of roosting birds, but of a featherless flock, leathery of wing and red of eye, with a taste for unspeakable feasts..The same thought had occurred to her, a consolation that might make acceptance of these riches possible. Yet she remained chilled by the thought of receiving a life-changing amount of money as the consequence of a death..Trying to ignore his phantom toe, which itched furiously, he searched the apartment. He proceeded carefully, determined not to shoot himself in the foot accidentally this time..Indeed, he would get through the rest of 1965 without resorting to another homicide. The nonfatal shooting in September would be regrettable, quite messy, painful-but necessary, and calculated to do as little damage as possible.. "And, of course, you'll need to make arrangements for the body," said Dr. Lipscomb. "Sister Josephina will provide you with a room, a phone, privacy, whatever you need, and for however long you need."..The search for Cain was secondary. Getting to the revolver took Priority. Regain the gun and then proceed room by haunted room to hunt him down. Hunt him down, if he was here. And if Cain didn't do the hunting first.. "Yes, I was." She didn't tell him that her fear had not been allayed by his assurances or by his second walk in the rain..These would no doubt be cloyingly sentimental paintings of the bastard boy, with impossibly large and limpid eyes, posed cutely with puppies and kittens, pictures better suited for cheap calendars than for gallery walls, and dangerous to the health of diabetics..For the past two days, Junior had eaten only binding foods, and late this afternoon, he had taken a preventive dose of paregoric, as well.. "No. But I'm sure as can be, the kid is better off undiscovered by the likes of him."..Refusing to give the cop the satisfaction of a reply to the news of the unborn baby's paternity, Junior stared unwaveringly into the grave and said, "Whose funeral were you attending?"..By the time this operation concluded and the sulphurous Mr. Cain was brought to some form of justice, Simon might have spent twenty or twenty-five percent of the fee that he'd collected from the liability settlement in the matter of Naomi Cain's death. The attorney put a substantial price on his dignity and reputation..She lay beside her boy in the darkness, gazing at the covered window, where the faint glow of the moon pressed through the blind, suggesting another world thriving with strange life just beyond a thin membrane of light.. "I'll teach her," Wally said, moving past them to the apartment door, fishing a ring of keys out of his coat pocket..Everywhere in the fabled city, calves and knees and magnificent expanses of taut thighs were on display. This brought out the dreamy romantic in Junior, and more than ever he yearned desperately for the perfect woman, the ideal lover, the matching half of his incomplete heart..He also sought a supplier of high-quality counterfeit ID. This proved easier than he anticipated..And so at the age of thirty-one, after more than twenty-eight years of blindness with a few short reprieves, Barty Lampion received the gift of sight from his ten-year-old daughter. 1996 through 2000: Day after day, the work was done in memory of Agnes Lampion, Joey Lampion, Harrison White, Seraphim White, Jacob Isaacson, Simon Magusson, Tom Vanadium, Grace White, and most recently Wally Lipscomb, in memory of all those who had given so much and, though perhaps still alive in other places, were gone from here..On the two-chair bed beside her mother, Angel issued small cries of distress in her sleep. Whatever presences flocked around her in the dream, they weren't baby chickens..Frequently, people told Agnes that she should find an agent for Barty, as he was wonderfully photogenic; modeling and acting careers, they assured her, were his for the asking. Though her son was indeed a fine-looking lad, Agnes knew he wasn't as exceptionally handsome as many perceived him to be. Rather than his looks, what made Barty so appealing, what made him seem extraordinarily good-looking, were other qualities: an unusual gracefulness for a child, such a physical easiness in every movement and posture that it seemed as though some curious personal relationship with time had allowed him twenty years to become a three-year-old; an unfailingly affable temperament and quick smile that possessed his entire face, including his mesmerizing green blue eyes. Perhaps most affecting of all, his remarkable good health was expressed in the lustrous sheen of his thick hair, in the golden-pink glow of his summer-touched skin, in every physical aspect of him, until there were times when he seemed radiant..The announcement poster seemed enormous, huge, far bigger than she remembered it, crazily-recklessly large. By its very size, it challenged critics to be cruel, dared the fates to celebrate her triumph by shaking the city to ruin right now, in the quake of the century. She wished Helen Greenbaum had opted, instead, for a few lines of type on an index card, taped to the glass.. "No, no, dear. It was little Muffin, from next door. A big dog certainly would have torn up both you and the pants. We've got to have a credible story."..She remained fixated on the card that she had just dealt, and for a while she didn't speak, as though the eyes of the paper knave held her in thrall. Finally she said, "Monster. Human monster.".. "Is it as bad as that?" Celestina wondered plaintively, though she knew the answer. "I love San Francisco. The city inspires my work. I've built a life here. Is it really as bad as that?"..With that thought, he made himself laugh. Unfortunately, his laughter was high-pitched and shaky, and it scared the hell out of

him..Edom and Jacob came to the house, asking what Dr. Chan had said, and Agnes lied to them. "There are some test results we won't have until Monday, but he thinks Barty is going to be all right." "Why are you here?" "Where else I should be and for why? I watch you over." As the tears cleared from Agnes's eyes, she saw that Maria was sewing. A shopping bag stood to one side of the chair, and to the other side, open on the floor, a case contained spools of thread, needles, a pincushion, a pair of scissors, and other supplies of a seamstress's trade..were a favorite pair when he was puttering around the house on weekends. "Oh," he said, "that dog." "I know how to build boats, how to sail boats." Confused, Panglo held out his right hand, but Jacob said, "Sorry, no offense, but I don't shake with anyone." He snatched up the wine list before she could look at it. "If you're paying, then I'm ordering whatever costs the most, regardless of what it tastes like." Sweet-tempered, generous, honest, kind Naomi had surely been incapable of murdering anyone-least of all the man she loved..She. Heretofore, Celestina hadn't given a thought to the gender of the baby, because, to her, it had been less a person than a thing..Fascinated by this strange new realm, Angel returned to her chair periodically, between explorations, to sip apple juice and to reveal her latest discoveries: "They got yellow shelf paper. They got potatoes in a drawer. They got four kinds of pickles in the refrigerator. They got a toaster under a sock with pictures of birds on it." Though Celestina was still holding Angel, Wally kissed her, and again it was lovely, though shorter than before, and Angel said, "That's a messy kiss." On the nightstand stood a stainless-steel carafe beaded with condensation. Maria took the cap off the water carafe, and with a longhandled spoon, she scooped out a chip of ice. Cupping her left hand..Although the small tin-and-plastic harmonica was more toy than genuine instrument, the boy blew and siphoned surprisingly complex music from it. As far as Apes could tell, he never hit a sour tone..Junior opened his eyes and saw that only the second of the two rounds had found its intended mark. The first had cracked through the center of a cabinet door, surely shattering dishes within..In the living room, he removed a decorative pillow from the sofa. He carried it into the foyer..He had never associated Enoch Cain's dreaded Bartholomew with the disciple Bartholomew in Harrison White's sermon, which had been broadcast once in December '64, the month prior to Naomi's murder and again in January '65. Even now, with blood-scrawled-and-stabbed Bartholomew on the wall and with This Momentous Day before him in the brochure, Tom Vanadium couldn't quite make the connection. He strove to pull together the broken lengths in this chain of evidence, but they remained separated by one missing link.."Which is?" His eyes widened, and his voice became husky with pretended fear. "They're always ... evil..Barty's math and reading skills exceeded those of most eighteen year-olds, but regardless of his brilliance, he was a few days shy of his third birthday. Prodigies were not necessarily as emotionally mature as they were intellectually developed, but Barty listened with sober attention, asked questions, and then sat in silence, staring at the book in his hands, with neither tears nor apparent fear.."We don't believe it does, do we, Daddy? We don't believe blood tells. We believe we're born to hope, under a mantle of mercy, don't we?" Victoria Bressler lay on the floor of the small foyer, left arm extended past her head, palm revealed, as though she were waving at the ceiling, right arm across her body in such a way that her hand cupped her left breast. One leg was extended straight, the other knee drawn up almost demurely. If she had been nude, lying against a backdrop of rumpled sheets or autumn leaves, or meadow grass, she would have had the perfect posture for a Playboy centerfold..Further preparation-the purchase of gold coins and diamonds, the establishment of false identities-had to be delayed due to the hives. An hour short of dawn, Junior was awakened by a fierce itching not limited to his phantom toe. His entire body, over every plane and into every crevice, pricked and tingled and burned as with fever-and itched.."Sometimes she wrote little paragraphs to God, very touching and humble notes of gratitude, thanking Him for bringing you into her life." ice bags. I almost laughed at his tendency to morbidness and self dramatization. The living dead had not come to get him: just some rubber ice bags..LEFT HAND ON the banister, right hand with knife tucked close to his side and ready to thrust, Tom Vanadium climbed cautiously but quickly to the upper floor, glancing back twice to be sure that Cain didn't slip in behind him..Tom Vanadium was too unnerved by the Cain scare to be interested in the newspaper anymore. The strong black coffee, superb before, tasted bitter now..Celestina was hardly more than a child herself, pretending to have the strong shoulders and the breadth of experience to bear this burden. She felt half crushed.According to the brief biographic note with the picture, Celestina White was a graduate of San Francisco's Academy of Art College. She had been born and raised in Spruce Hills, Oregon, the daughter of a minister..By the time he arrived at his apartment, Junior could think of no better action to take, so he phoned Simon Magusson, his attorney in Spruce Hills..During the cleaning, installation of new carpet, and painting that had followed the removal of the diarrheic pig set loose by one of Cain's disgruntled girlfriends, the wife killer had spent a few nights in a hotel. Nolly took advantage of the opportunity to bring his associate James Hunnicolt--Jimmy Gadget-onto the premises to provide a customized, undetectable, exterior window-latch release..make a worrywart life-insurance salesman like me seem just as light hearted as a schoolgirl." The diarrhea was over, finished, part of the past. Long ago he had learned never to dwell on the past, never to be overly concerned about the worries of the present, but to be focused entirely on the future. He was a man of the future..Her lead gaze was still surprisingly clear. How remarkable that the impact hadn't caused a starburst hemorrhage in either of her exquisite, lavender-blue eyes. No blood, lust surprise..Tom had no idea who Perri might be, but something in the way Grace asked the question and the way she regarded Paul suggested that she knew something about Perri that had won her deep respect and admiration..Junior liked women who drank a lot. They were usually amorous or at least unresistant..Far from idiotic, Junior's cause was his survival and salvation, and he committed himself to it with every fiber of his body, with all of his mind and heart..Grace knew it, too, because she went limp with misery in his arms, ceased struggling against him..Missing windshield. Considering that the space was pinched by the crumpled roof, however, and in light of Agnes's pregnancy and imminent second-stage labor, the

severe contortions involved in this extraction would be too dangerous..Celestina, Grace, even Tom himself, had taken extraordinary measures to leave no slightest trail. Those very few authorities who knew how to reach Tom and, through him, the others, were acutely aware that his whereabouts and phone number must be tightly guarded..On other nights, she had overheard this and been touched. On this Christmas Eve, however, it filled her with wonder and wondering, for she recalled their conversation earlier, at Joey's grave:.The galerieur's icy demeanor thawed marginally at this proof of taste and financial resources. He either smiled or grimaced at a vague but unpleasant smell-hard to tell which-and identified himself as the owner, Maxim Coquin..They were inseparable, her son and this cherished girl, as they had been virtually since the moment they had met, more than six years ago. The special perception that they shared--all the ways things are-accounted for part of their closeness, but only part. The bond between them was so deep that it defied understanding, as mysterious as the concept of the Trinity, three gods in one..Now the message ... Something about a hospital. Someone dying. A cerebral hemorrhage..The hospital was drowned in the bottomless silence that fills places of human habitation only in the few hours before dawn, when the needs and hungers' and fears of one day are forgotten and those of the next are..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..Angel was adamant: "Nope. I could learn that. Like dressing myself and saying thank-you."-"-called himself King Obadiah, Pharaoh of the Fantastic. He traveled all over the country playing nightclubs-"..of Zedd constituted the most thoughtful, most rewarding, most reliable guide to life to be found anywhere. When Junior was Confused or troubled, he turned to Caesar Zedd and never failed to find enlightenment, guidance. When he was happy, he found in Zedd the welcome reassurance that it was all right to be successful and to love oneself.If the directory proved to be of no help, Junior would proceed next to the registry office at the county courthouse, to review the records of births going back to the turn of the century if necessary. Bartholomew, of course, might not have been born in the county, might have moved here as a child or an adult. If he owned property, he'd show up on the register of deeds. Whether a landowner or not, if he did his civic duty every two years, he would appear on the voter rolls..Now here was a thing, worse than the thought of a quarter in the closed hand: Neddy's eyes seemed to follow Junior as he rooted among the trash bags.

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