

BOARD OF HEALTH OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

During the past few hours, he had changed his life again, as dramatically as he had changed it on that fire tower almost three years ago. "I hope it will," the physician said, but his emphasis was too solidly on the word hope. The study was the size of a bathroom. The cramped space barely allowed for a battered pine desk, a chair, and one filing cabinet. Although she had slept well and though her hemorrhaging had been successfully arrested, Agnes was too weak to manage breakfast alone. A simple spoon was as heavy and as unwieldy as a shovel. After just twenty-one days, the boy's adaptation to blindness was amazing but clearly the gathered audience stood in anticipation of something more remarkable than his unhalting progress and unerring sense of direction. Junior forgot all about seduction. "And she--what?--She adopted her sister's baby?" He had considered tracking down Celestina and the bastard boy--prior to her exhibition. The alumni office of her college might be one route to her. And further inquiries in the city's fine-arts community would no doubt eventually provide him with her address. "Oh, that's me, all right. I'm on the FBI's most-wanted list for criminal pie jostling." He heard her explain that the title of the exhibition had been inspired by one of her father's sermons, which aired on a nationally syndicated weekly radio program more than three years ago. This wasn't a religious program, per se, but rather one concerned with a search for meaning in life; it usually broadcast interviews with contemporary philosophers as well as speeches by them, but from time to time featured a clergyman. Her father's sermon received the greatest response from listeners of anything aired on the program in twenty years, and three weeks later, it was rerun by popular demand. He had visited the library primarily to confirm that Harrison White was unquestionably dead. He'd shot the man four times. Two bullets in the gas tank of the stolen Pontiac destroyed the parsonage and should have incinerated the reverend. When you were dealing with black magic, however, you could never be too cautious. He opened the solid doors on the bottom of the breakfront, did not find what he was looking for, checked in the sideboard next, and there it was, a small liquor supply. Scotch, gin, vodka. He selected a full bottle of vodka. Her voice as bright as her bed ensemble, spiritual sister to baby chicks everywhere, yellow Angel raised her head from the pillow and said, "Will you have a wedding?" After the amusement park, no hospital for the Pie Lady. With Wally near, she had a doctor all her own, capable of giving her the anticancer drugs and transfusions that she required. While radiation therapy is prescribed for acute lymphoblastic leukemia, it is much less useful to treat myeloblastic cases, and in this instance, it wasn't deemed helpful, which made treatment at home even easier. The old man assumed the solemn and knowing expression of one guarding mysteries, a sphinx without headdress and mane. "If I told you, dear lady, it wouldn't be magic anymore. Merely a trick." Embarrassment flushed her when she realized that the paramedic had cut away the pants of her jogging suit. She was naked from the waist down. "It's what?" asked the detective, for with the exception of his teeth, he was not a self-improved individual. WALLY HAD NOT gone home with Death, but they had definitely been at the dance together. During the past three years, he'd suffered much because of these sisters, including most recently the humiliation in the Dumpster with the dead musician, Celestina's pencil-necked friend with a propensity for postmortem licking. The memory of that horror flared so vividly--every grotesque detail condensed into one intense and devastating flash of recollection--that Junior's bladder suddenly felt swollen and full, although he had taken a long satisfying leak in an alleyway across the street from the restaurant at which the postcard-painting poseur had enjoyed a leisurely dinner with Ichabod. Lined up on the kitchen table were green-grape-and-apple pies. The thick domed crusts, with their deeply fluted edges, were the coppery gold of precious coins. Thereafter, he was repelled at the prospect of kissing her, and their relationship fell apart. Blink, the living room. Turning off Sinatra halfway through "It Gets Lonely Early." He was, in fact, a first-rate driver, with an impeccable record at the age of thirty: no traffic citations, no accidents. He closed his eyes to know the kitchen as Barty knew it. The fine aromas, the musical clink of spoons, the tinny rattle of pans, the liquid swish of a stirring whisk, the heat from the ovens, the women's voices: Gradually, denying himself sight, he was aware of his other senses sharpening. No doubt thinking about the land of the big bugs, into which she had pushed Enoch Cain, which was exactly what Barty had suddenly thought about, Angel said, "Honey, this is amazing, it's wonderful, but you've got to be careful." 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. He wanted an explanation, but no one could give him the one that he needed, because nobody but he himself knew the significance and symbolism of the quarter. "Not that trains are any better. Look at the Bakersfield crash back in '60. Santa Fe Chief, out of San Francisco, smashed into an oil-tank truck. Seventeen people crushed, burned in a river of fire." After the detective returned the box to the nightstand, the coin began to turn again. With a portion of his profits from Tammy Bean's stock picks, Junior had bought a second painting by Sklent. Titled In the Baby's Brain Lies the Parasite of Doom, Version 6, it was so exquisitely repellent that the artist's genius could not be in doubt. One of his favorite gifts for Christmas 1967 was a twelve-hole chromatic harmonica with forty-eight reeds providing a full three-octave range. Even in his little hands, and with the limitations of his small mouth, this more sophisticated instrument enabled him to produce full-bodied versions of any song that appealed to him. Junior couldn't imagine why some Negro stranger would want to intrude. He hoped there wouldn't be trouble. She searched the child's unfocused eyes for some sign of the hateful father's wickedness. Junior tipped his head back and gazed up toward the section of broken-out railing along the high observation deck. In a stolen black Dodge Charger 440 Magnum, Junior Cain shot out of Spruce Hills on as straight a trajectory to Eugene as the winding roads of southern Oregon would allow, staying off Interstate 5, where the policing was more aggressive. When he came to himself, sick and weak from the poison and with an aching skull, he was in a room with

brick walls and bricked-up windows. The door had no bars and no visible lock. But when he tried to get to his feet he felt bonds of sorcery holding his body and mind, resilient, clinging, tightening as he moved. He could stand, but could not take a step towards the door. He could not even reach his hand out. It was a horrible sensation, as if his muscles were not his own. He sat down again and tried to hold still. The spellbonds around his chest kept him from breathing deeply, and his mind felt stifled too, as if his thoughts were crowded into a space too small for them.. "Many claimed Maharion's throne, but none could keep it, and the quarrels of the claimants divided all loyalties. No commonwealth was left and no justice, only the will of the wealthy. Men of noble houses, merchants, and pirates, any who could hire soldiers and wizards called himself a lord, claiming lands and cities as his property. The warlords made those they conquered slaves, and those they hired were in truth slaves, having only their masters to safeguard them from rival warlords seizing the lands, and sea-pirates raiding the ports, and bands and hordes of lawless, miserable men dispossessed of their living, driven by hunger to raid and rob." Edom had noticed them earlier. Now he saw they were in worse condition than he'd thought. Enlarged knuckles, fingers not entirely at natural angles to one another. Perhaps Obadiah had rheumatoid arthritis, like Bill Klefton, though a less crippling case.. "Not so unbelievable," said Jacob. "Forty-five thousand people every year die in automobiles. Cars aren't transportation. They're death machines. Tens of thousands are disfigured, maimed for life." No one could put him in prison because of his dreams. "I can't remember. Those are the worst, when you're not able to remember them-don't you think? They're always so silly when you can recall the details. When you draw a blank ... they seem more threatening." Although the only light on the back porch came from the pale beams that filtered out through the curtains on the kitchen windows, all these faces seemed luminous, almost preternaturally aglow, like the kiln-fired countenances of saints in a dark church, lit solely by the flames of votive candles. The rain-a music of sorts, and the jasmine and incense, and the moment sacred.. After Agnes read the final words on the final page, Barty was drunk on speculation, chattering about what-might-have-happened-next to these characters that had become his friends. He talked nonstop while changing into his pajamas, while peeing, while brushing his teeth, and Agnes wondered how she would wind him down to sleep.. On he went, up he went, trunk to limb, limb to branch, branch to limb, to limb, to trunk. Hand over hand up the vertical parts, gripping with his knees, then standing and walking like a tightrope artist along limbs horizontal to the ground, swinging over empty air and stepping from one woody walkway to another, ever upward toward the highest bower, dwindling as though he were growing younger during the ascent, becoming a smaller and smaller boy. Forty feet, fifty feet, already far higher than the house, striving toward the green citadel at the summit.. Tom proceeded, "is that an infinite number of realities exist, other worlds parallel to ours, which we can't see. For example ... worlds in which, because of the specific decisions and actions of certain people on both sides, Germany won the last great war. And other worlds in which the Union lost the Civil War. And worlds in which a nuclear war has already been fought between the U.S. and Soviets." Orange firelight bloomed in the living room below, a wave of heat washed over Paul, and immediately behind the heat came greasy masses of roiling black smoke, drawn to the stairwell as to a flue.. Grace White was petite, and Paul wasn't. Otherwise he might not have been able to halt her determined rush toward her husband, might not have been able to scoop her off her feet and, carrying her in his arms, spirit her to safety.. sport shirt just for no reason at all, because she thought he'd look nice in it?" Traditional logic argued that an infant, no more than two weeks old, could not be a serious threat to a grown man.. He suspected the blame lay with his exceptional sensitivity to violence, death, and loss. Previously it manifested as an explosive emptying of the stomach, this time as a purging of lower realms.. "Even when I was a young boy," Tom continued, "the world felt a lot different to me from the way it looked to other people. I don't mean I was smarter. I've got maybe a little better than average IQ, but nothing I could brag about. Flunked geography twice and history once. No one would ever confuse me and Einstein. It's just, I felt ... such complexity and mystery that other people didn't appreciate, such layered beauty, layers upon layers like phyllo pastry, each new layer more amazing than the last. I can't explain it to you without sounding like a holy fool, but even as a boy, I wanted to serve the God who had created so much wonder, regardless of how strange and perhaps even beyond all understanding He might be." "Naomi--she popped out of my oven twenty years ago, not out of yours," Sheena continued in a fierce whisper. "If anyone's suffering here, it's me, not you. Who're you, anyway? Some guy who's been boinking her for a couple years, that's all you are. I'm her mother. You can never know my pain. And if you don't stand with this family to make these wankers pay up big-time, I'll personally cut your balls off while you're sleeping and feed them to my cat." For each of them, Agnes put one scoop of vanilla ice cream in a tall glass of root beer, and after changing quickly into their pajamas, they sat together in Barty's bed, enjoying their treats, while she read aloud the last sixty pages of Starman Jones.. After a while, Franklin Chan asked, "Do you want me with you when you tell him?" "Tragic. Her string's been cut too soon. Her music's ended prematurely," Junior said, feeling confident enough to dish a serving of the maniac cop's half-baked theory of life back to him. "There's a discord in the universe now, Detective. No one can know how the vibrations of that discord will come to affect you, me, all of us." No sign of Vanadium. Some of the taller monuments offered hiding places on both sides of the cemetery road, as did the thicker trunks of the larger trees.. 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.. summoned an expression no less dubious than that of a policeman listening to the alibi of a suspect with bloody hands. Then: "I'm quite sure that Wroth Griskin does not make candlesticks. If that's what you're looking for, I'd recommend the housewares department at Gump's." He phoned her before leaving, to be sure she was home. She didn't work weekend shifts at the hospital; but maybe she would have gone out on this night off. When she answered,

he recognized her seductive voice-and devilishly muttered, "Wrong number." This humble house wasn't where you expected to hear an elaborate custom doorbell-or even any doorbell at all, since knuckles on wood were the cheapest announcement of a visitor..The funeral was at two o'clock, after which family and friends of the deceased would gather here in the parsonage for a social, to break bread together and to share their memories of the loved one lost..Since the cops believed that Junior accidentally shot himself while searching for a nonexistent burglar, he was already in their book as an idiot. If he tried to explain how Vanadium had tormented him with the quarter, and how a quarter turned up, of all places, in his cheeseburger, they would figure him for a hopeless hysteric..Babies of unwed mothers-especially of dead unwed mothers, and especially of dead unwed mothers whose fathers were ministers unable to endure public mortification-were routinely put up for adoption. Since Seraphim had given birth here, the baby would be-no doubt already had been-adopted by a San Francisco-area family..Junior liked women who drank a lot. They were usually amorous or at least unresistant..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..Perhaps hoping to discover which runaway freight train or exploding factory would smear him across the landscape, Jacob pushed aside his dessert plate and shuffled each deck separately, then shuffled them together until they were well mixed. He stacked them in front of Maria..In his seventies but vigorous and full of fun, Sparky liked to take an occasional jaunt to Reno, to pump the slot machines and try a few hands of blackjack. The off-the-record, tax-free monthly checks from Simon were gratefully received, ensuring the old man's cooperation with the conspiracy.. "Miss White," he continued, still facing the window, "not long before you arrived in surgery this morning, your sister died on the table. We hadn't delivered the baby yet, and perhaps couldn't have done so, by cesarean, in time to prevent brain damage, so for both the sake of the mother and child, heroic efforts were made to bring Phimie back and ensure continued circulation to the fetus until we could extract it." Why Cain, even if he was the father, should be interested in the little girl was a mystery to Tom Vanadium. This totally self-involved, spookily hollow man held nothing sacred; fatherhood would have no appeal for him, and he certainly wouldn't feel any obligation to the child that had resulted from his assault on Phimie..Angel. A less exotic synonym for her own name. Seraphim's angel. The angel of an angel.. "When I couldn't get enough nightclub and theater bookings for my magic act anymore ... I turned to gambling." Junior was impressed and delighted by her clever assumption of it strictly professional voice and demeanor, which convincingly masked her intense desire. Sweet Victoria was a worthy coconspirator..I got Starkweather, killing all those people with no hope of personal gain. You got maniac cops and this new war in Vietnam.. "Once out of the coma and stabilized for a few weeks, I was transferred to a hospital in Portland, where I had to undergo eleven surgeries." The dying-dove hands fluttered down Junior's arms, plucking feebly at his leather coat, and at last hung limp at Neddy's sides..With Barty's presence, Christmas Eve dinners had become even more agreeable, especially this year when he was almost-three-going-on-twenty. He talked about the visits to friends that he and his mother and Edom had made earlier in the day, about Father Brown, as if that cleric-detective were real, about the puddle-jumping toads that had been singing in the backyard when he and his mother had arrived home from the cemetery, and his chatter was engaging because it was full of a child's charm yet peppered with enough precocious observations to make it of interest to adults.. "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." He woke at noon, eyes gummed shut with the effluence of sleep. He felt lousy, but he was in control of himself-and strong enough to fetch his suitcase, which he'd been unable to carry upon arrival..Sometimes, just the thought of getting in the car and venturing into the dangerous world was intolerable. Then he settled into his La-ZBoy and waited for the natural disaster that would soon scrub him off the earth as though he had never existed..To Dr. Parkhurst, Vanadium said, "In my work, I see lots of people who've just lost loved ones. None of them has ever puked like Vesuvius." Even as the morning matured, the fog and the rain conspired to bar all but a faint gray daylight from St. Mary's. Shadows flourished..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..Agnes found herself drifting up. A frightening sense of weightlessness overcame her..The maniac kicked once more, but because of the bracing dresser, the door wouldn't budge, so he kicked harder, again without success..Now Junior threw back the covers and sprang out of bed. In double briefs, he restlessly roamed the hotel room..Like a spring-loaded novelty snake erupting from a can, Junior exploded up from the chair, nearly knocking it over.. "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?" Heinlein dreamed of traveling to far worlds. Prior to his death, John Kennedy had promised that men would walk on the moon before the end of the decade. Barty wanted nothing so grand, only to read a few stories, to lose himself in the wonderful private pleasure of books, because soon each story would be a listening experience only, no longer entirely a private journey..When the long table was laden and the wine poured, when everyone but Mary settled into chairs, Angel said, "My daughter tells me she wants to make a short presentation before I say grace. I don't know what it is, but she assures me it doesn't involve singing, dancing, or reading any of her poetry." I knew Phimie died in childbirth, not an accident, and Max's instincts told him rape. I explained to your dad why Cain was the man. I wanted whatever information he might have. But I suppose ... sitting there, looking at my face, he decided that Cain is indeed the biggest hornet's nest ever, and he didn't want to put his daughter and granddaughter at greater risk than necessary." of the deceased. This memorial was modest, neither large nor complicated in design. Nevertheless, often the carvers in this line of business followed days after the morticians, because the stones to which they applied their craft demanded more labor and less urgency than the cold bodies that rested under them..He had the

capacity to be exceptional at anything to which he applied himself. Bob Chicane had been right about that: Junior was far more intense than other men, possessed of greater gifts and the energy to use them..Dessert was on the house. The waiter brought the four best items on the menu, to spare them the need to make two small decisions after having made such a big one..After carefully wiping her fingers on a paper napkin, Maria examined the garments with interest. She carried her living as the seamstress at Bright Beach Dry Cleaners. At the sight of each rent, popped button, and split seam she clucked her tongue..Paul Damascus remained busy, filling prescriptions, until he was finally able to take a lunch break at two-thirty..Junior picked up his pace, pushing through the crowd, repeatedly glancing back, and although he caught only quick squints of the dead cop's face, he could tell that something was terribly wrong with it. Never a candidate for matinee-idol status, Vanadium looked markedly worse than before. The port-wine birthmark still pooled around his right eye. His features were not merely pan-flat and plain, as they had been before, but were ... distorted..This galerieur was tall, with silver hair, chiseled features, and the all-knowing, imperious manner of a gynecologist to royalty. He wore a well-tailored gray suit, and his gold Rolex was the very watch that Wroth Griskin might have killed for in his salad days..The nurse raised her eyes from Agnes to this other person. "Yes a chip of ice would be all right."..In the morning, after Agnes showered and dressed, when she went downstairs, she discovered Barty already at the kitchen table, eating a bowl of cereal while riveted to the book. Finished with breakfast, he returned to his room, reading as he went..Celestina turned in her seat to look back at Wally and Angel, who were waving. "I guess I am."..With the same surprising ease that she had gotten a plane out of San Francisco on a one-hour notice, Celestina booked two return seats on an early-evening flight from Oregon, as though she had a supernatural travel agent..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..As before, the name tolled through him like the ominous note of the deepest bass bell in a cathedral carillon, struck on a cold midnight..So keep moving. Don't get hung up on the disgusting aftermath. Keep whistling along like a runaway train. Clean up, clean out, roll on..could not be a person of the best intentions. Doctors and nurses wouldn't monitor their patients with the lights off.."Consider what I told you," Dr. Salk urged. "Your Perri would want you to think about it."..Although Junior felt honor-bound to give Victoria first shot at him, he certainly didn't owe her monogamy. Eventually, when he had shaken off suspicion as finally as he had shaken off Naomi, he would be in the mood for a dessert buffet, romantically speaking, and one éclair would not satisfy..On the afternoon of November ninth, when Paul and Barty were with her, reminiscing, and Angel was in the kitchen, getting drinks for them, his mother gasped and stiffened. Breathless, she paled past chalk, and when she could breathe and speak again, she said, "Get Angel now. No time to bring the others."..Sometimes Barty could be fierce in his independence-his mother told him so-and now he rebuffed Angel too sharply. "I don't want to be waited on. I'm not helpless, you know. I can get sodas myself" By the time he reached the doorway, he felt sorry for his tone, and he looked back toward where the window seat must be. "Angel?".The driver shook his head. "I knew everything anyone would need to know about you when I heard you ask your kid what would happen if the stupid boogeyman showed up in her dream."..He felt some guilt at this-but only a little. His sister had done much for him; but jobless, ruled by his obsessions, hobbled by too much of his father's dour nature, there wasn't a lot that he could do for her. Just this benign deceit with the cards..A new quarry, operated by the same company, lay a mile farther north. This was the old one, abandoned after decades of cutting.."Some Baptists are opposed to drink, Doctor, but we're the wicked variety. Though all we have is a warm bottle of Chardonnay."..Vanadium was no ordinary cop, as he himself had said. In his obsession, convinced that Junior had murdered Naomi and impatient with the need to find evidence to prove it, what was to stop the detective if he decided to deal out justice himself? What was to prevent him from walking up to the Suburban right now and shooting his suspect pointblank?.Without using his flashlight, depending only on the moon, he ascended through the cemetery to the service road..He lived high, on Russian Hill, in a limestone-clad building with carved Victorian detail. His one-bedroom unit included a roomy kitchen with breakfast nook and a spacious living room with windows looking down on twisty Lombard Street..Nolly's gums were in great shape, too: firm, pink, no sign of recession, snug to the neck of each tooth..Shortly after Agnes turned out the light, she said, "Kiddo, it's been one whole week since you walked where the rain wasn't, and I've been doing a lot of thinking about that."..During those spells when she was too shaky to draw, she stood at the window, gazing at the storied city..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.The pair of sliding doors at the living-room archway stood half open. Beyond, voices drew Paul against his will.."What room has Mrs. Lombardi been moved to?" she asked. "I'd like to ... to see her before I go."..Jacob Isaacson--twin brother of Edom-knew nothing negative about Panglo, but he didn't trust him. If the mortician had been caught prying gold teeth from the dead and carving satanic symbols in their buttocks, Jacob would have said, "It figures." If Panglo had saved bottles of infected blood from diseased cadavers, and if one day he ran through town, splashing it in the faces of unsuspecting citizens, Jacob would not have raisers one eyebrow in surprise..I'm not the first to observe that much of what quantum mechanics reveals about the nature of reality is uncannily compatible with faith, specifically with the concept of a created universe. Several fine physicists have written about this before me. As far as I am aware, however, the notion that human relationships reflect quantum mechanics is fresh with this book: Every human life is intricately connected to every other on a level as profound as the subatomic level in the physical world; underlying every apparent chaos is strange order; and "spooky effects at a distance," as the quantum-savvy put it, are as easily observed in human society as in atomic, molecular, and other physical systems. In this story, Tom Vanadium must simplify and condense complex aspects of quantum mechanics into a few sentences in a single chapter, because although he isn't aware that he's a fictional character, he is obliged to be entertaining. I hope that any physicists reading this

will have mercy on him..So after waiting two months for the superhot Harrison White case to cool down, Junior returned instead to Spruce Hills, traveled bald and pocked and passing as Pinchbeck, under the cover of night.. "Sure they do," Barty said. "But I think Maria embroidered the birds just because they were pretty." Finally sleeping, he had anxiety dreams of being in a public rest room, overcome by urgent need, only to find that every stall was occupied by someone he had killed, all of them vengefully determined to deny him a chance for dignified relief.. "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." The unmatched suite of bedroom furniture, cheap and scarred, might have been purchased at a thrift shop. A double bed and one nightstand. A small dresser.. The car shuddered, wrenched steel screamed, and a cry of triumph rose from the rescuers.. "Oh, dear God," she whispered, and although she had always been a strong woman who stood on a rock of faith, who drew hope as well as air with every breath, she was as weak now as the unborn child in her womb, sick with fear.. The two women stared at each other, and at last Celestina said, "Good Lord, what's happening here?" As nimble as a geriatric cat, crying out with pain, Junior nevertheless sprang onto the deep windowsill and shoved against the twin panes of the window. They were already partly open-but they were also stuck. Crouched on the deep sill, pushing against the parted casement panes of the tall French window, using not just muscle but the entire weight of his body, leaning into them, the maniac tried to force his way out of the bedroom.. The following morning, he canceled his German lessons. It was an impossible language. The words were enormously long.. The family didn't exist in anticipation of developments with Barty and Angel, didn't put the pair at the center of their world. Instead, they did the good work, shared the satisfactions that came daily with being part of Pie Lady Services, and got on with life.. BARTY TODDLED, Barty walked, and ultimately Barty carried a pie for his mother on one of her delivery days, wary of his balance and solemn with responsibility.. Snapping the cylinder into place, he rose to his feet. Already he had a new plan, and the cop's revolver was the most important tool that he required to implement it.. From the public hallway on the ground level, stairs led to the upper three floors. He would be able to hear anyone descending long before they arrived.. 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.. He tugged on a pair of thin latex surgical gloves. Flexed his hands. All right.. "This momentous day," Thomas Vanadium said quietly, stiff gazing into the grave, "seems full of terrible endings. But like every day, it's actually full of nothing but beginnings." "Well, Uncle Jacob doesn't understand kids. Anyway, this is pretty good stuff." Gazing into the mirror, which ought to have been clouded with self-pity as though with steam, Junior Cain searched for his anger and found it. This was a black and bitter anger, as poisonous as rattlesnake venom; with little difficulty, his heart was distilling it into purest rage.. In a cabinet above the bench, Junior found a pair of clean, cotton gardening gloves. He tried them on, and they fit well enough.

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