

# FOR THE REFORMATION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS TO THE LEGISLATURE OF

"Great guy. Do you have an address for her, a way maybe I could get in touch about her brother?" Junior was not immune to traditional logic, but in this case he recognized the superior wisdom of Zedd's philosophy. His dread of Bartholomew and his gut-level animosity toward a child he'd never met defied all reason and exceeded simple paranoia; therefore, it must be purest, infallible animal instinct..A forgetful client had left the bumbershoot in the office six months ago. Otherwise, Nolly wouldn't have had any umbrella at all..Luck favored Paul: The hero was here, having breakfast. He and two other men were deep in conversation at a comer table.."My scar," he confessed, "is inexperience. For a man my age, Agnes, I'm in some ways unbelievably innocent. I wouldn't trade the years with Perri for anything or anyone, but intense as it was, our love didn't include ... Well, I mean, you may find me inadequate."."Oh!" She blotted her eyes on the heels of her hands. "Wait! Give me a second chance. I can do it better, I'm sure I can."..When the sound-suppressor was properly attached to the pistol, Junior Cain leaned closer to the girl, peered into her eyes, and whispered, "Naomi, are you in there?" Near the top of the stairs, Barty thought he heard voices in his bedroom. Soft and indistinct. When he stopped to listen, the voices fell silent, or maybe he only imagined them..By November 1967, the Father Brown detective stories, written for mystery-loving adults by G. K. Chesterton, thrilled Barty. This series of books would retain a special place in his heart for the rest of his life-as would Robert Heinlein's The Star Beast, which was among his Christmas gifts that year..The kiss was lovely, long and easy, full of restrained passion that boded well for nights to come in the marriage bed..Yes, he suspected that he would require a great deal of rest to prepare himself for this vixen. Even in her loose white uniform and stodgy rubber-soled shoes, she was an incomparably erotic figure. She would be a lioness in bed..This thought startled Agnes, disturbed her-yet, inexplicably, it also poured a measure of warm comfort into her chilled heart..Neighbors might not be home. And by the time he knocked, asked to use the phone, dialed ... Too great a waste of time..Angel was adamant: "Nope. I could learn that. Like dressing myself and saying thank-you."..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..Not cheerful, life-loving, high-spirited, churchgoing Naomi. She saw every day through a golden haze that came from the sun in her heart..With all twelve fragments destroyed, the curse should have been lifted from little Bartholomew: the threat of the unknown, violent enemy who was represented by the four knaves. Somewhere in the world, an evil man existed who would one day have killed Barty, but now his journey through life would take him elsewhere. Eleven saints had been given twelve shares of responsibility for lifting this curse..Only a small group of mourners gathered for this service. Junior and Naomi had been so intensely involved with each other that, unlike many young married couples, they had made few friends..Abruptly, without a cannonade of thunder, without artillery strikes of lightning, the storm broke. As loud as marching armies, rain tramped across the roof..Junior had almost fumbled his fork when he recognized the tune. His heart raced. His hands were suddenly clammy..Soon paramedics followed the police, who spread out through the apartment, and Junior relinquished his grip on the dishtowel..After arranging to have the gallery deliver his acquisition, Junior stopped in a nearby diner for lunch. The place specialized in superb heartland food: meat loaf, fried chicken, macaroni and cheese..ROCKING AS IF AFLOAT on troubled waters, abused by an unearthly and tormented sound, Junior Cain imagined a gondola on a black river, a carved dragon rising high at the bow as he had seen on a..The voice continued, issuing from a device that stood on the desk beside the phone. "Please don't bang up. This is a telephone answering machine Leave a message after you hear the tone, and I will return your call later ."."Which is?" His eyes widened, and his voice became husky with pretended fear. "They're always ... evil..If Junior was patient, he could slip in there, find Bartholomew, kill the boy in bed, whack Ichabod second, and still have a chance to make love to Celestina..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..Angel raised her attention from the salt shaker to Tom's face, studied his scars for a moment, and said, "No."..Curiously, reciting these facts usually calmed him, as though speaking of disaster would ward it off. Since Friday, however, he had found no comfort in his usual routines..Perhaps because Celestina was her father's daughter, with his faith in humanity, she was always deeply moved by the kindnesses of strangers and saw in them the shape of a greater grace. "Does your wife know what a lucky woman she is?"..A cause now apparent, the fear explained, Agnes held her baby more tightly. So new to the world, he seemed already to be slipping away from her, captured by the whirlpool of a demanding destiny..Junior knelt beside her and pressed two fingers to the carotid artery in her neck. She had a pulse, maybe a little irregular but strong..Neither guilt nor remorse plagued him. Good and bad, right and wrong, were not issues to him. Actions were either effective or ineffective, wise or stupid, but they were all value neutral..Sliding Victoria's chair away from the table, he turned her to face him. He adjusted her body so that her head was tipped back and her arms were hanging slack at her sides..By Thursday, September 23, due to Junior's accident and surgery, the draft board-which had reinstated his I -A status after he'd lost the exemption that had come with his former job as a rehabilitation therapist-agreed to schedule a new physical examination in December..In the gallery windows, eight of the nine sculptures were so disturbing that many passersby, catching sight of them, blanched and looked away and hurried on. Not everyone can be a connoisseur..Hope, on many wings, hovered all around the physician, but he was afraid to let it roost..Frowning, Panglo, said, "Terrible, you're right, so many terrible things happen, but I don't see why trains-"..By comparison, the strip club-neon aglow, theater lights twinkling----looked warm, cozy. Welcoming..He hadn't intended to enter the gallery. No one in his usual circles would attend this show, unless in such a state of chemically altered

consciousness that they wouldn't be able to recall the event in the morning, so he wasn't likely to be recognized or remembered. Yet it seemed unwise to risk being identified as a reception attendee if Celestina White's little Bartholomew and maybe the artist herself were murdered later. The police, in their customary paranoia, might suspect a link between this affair and the killings, which would motivate them to seek out and. "It's chilly and foggy and late, and there might be villains afoot at this hour," he intoned with mock gravity. "The two of you are Lipscomb women now, or soon will be, and Lipscomb women never go unescorted through the dangerous urban night." This was one of many things about Agnes that amazed Edom. If he had dared to make a list of all the qualities that he admired in her, he would have sunk into despair at the consideration of how much better she had coped with adversity than either he or Jacob. A quick tug on each pants cuff revealed no ankle holster, which was how many cops would choose to carry an off-duty piece. Fortunately, he recognized his vulnerability. Until the evening reception for Celestina White, he must spend every hour of the day in calming activities, soothing himself in order to ensure that he would be cool and effective when the time came to act. The house was empty, silent. Hanna worked only days. Nellie Oatis, Perri's companion, was not employed here anymore. Junior couldn't leave the dead man in the hall and hope to have any quality time with Celestina. "It was... the only dream that mattered," Joey said. "You ... loving me. It was a good life because of you." He told her that he loved her, and she slipped away upon his words. As she went, the haggard look of the terminal leukemic patient passed from her, and before the gray mask of death replaced it, he saw the beauty he had preserved in memory when he was three, before they took his eyes, saw it so briefly, as if something transforming welled out of her, a perfect light, her essence. "You better wise up, you tree-humping nitwit," Rudy advised Junior, grabbing the bed railing as if he might tear it off and use it to club his son-in-law senseless. "Your mind is as fascinating as ever," he said. "Your soul as beautiful. Listen, Per, since we were thirteen, I was never primarily interested in your body. You flatter yourself shamelessly if you think it was all that special even before the polio." This graciousness didn't free Paul to speak. Instead, he felt his throat thicken, trapping his voice more tightly still. When Renee realized that this rejection was complete and final, she-he, whatever-was transformed from well-sugared southern lady to bitter, venomous reptile. Eyes glittering with fury, lips twisted and skinned back from her teeth, she called him all kinds of bastard, stringing epithets together so effortlessly and colorfully that she enhanced his vocabulary more than had all the home-study courses that he'd ever taken, combined. "And face it, pretty-boy, you knew what I was from the moment you offered to buy me a drink. You knew, and you wanted it, wanted me, and then when we got right down to the nasty, you lost your nerve. Lost your nerve, pretty-boy, but not your need." Junior hoped that he hadn't been betrayed by eyeshine in the fraction of a second before he closed his eyes to slits. Still seeking some missing fact, some insight that would help him understand the maniac's Bartholomew obsession, Tom asked more questions until Celestina suddenly realized and revealed what might be the information that he sought: Cain's perverse insistence on playing the reverend's taped rough draft of "This Momentous Day" throughout his long assault on her sister. "Well, actually, I owe Phimie. It's what she said between her two deaths on the delivery table that's changed my life." Agnes dropped to one knee before the boy and held him gently by the shoulders. "Let me look." "You sounded as though you were in a lot of distress. You were frightened of this Bartholomew." At the end, with the salt Tom and the pepper Tom standing side by side in their different but parallel worlds, Maria said, "Seems like science fiction." Celestina stared out for a moment, and then turned her head to look at Tom, with both the shade of the night and the sparkle of the metropolis still captured in her eyes. "What was that all about?" Celestina screamed--"Here! In here!"--as she slapped the magazine into the butt of the pistol. pride, his one great shining moment but also his sinful pride. Clubbed with the trophy first, fists later. And now, here. "Better. Fear doesn't require him even to seduce a woman or to buy a bottle of whiskey. He just needs to open himself to it, and he will be filled like a glass under a faucet. As difficult as this may be to comprehend, Cain would choose to be neck-deep in a bottomless pool of terror, desperately trying to stay afloat, rather than to suffer that unrelieved hollowness. Fear can give shape and meaning to his life, and I intend not merely to fill him with fear but to drown him in it." A moment ago, he'd slammed into Angel's room, and that was loud, but this boomed louder, thunderous enough to wake people throughout the building. 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. Harrison and Grace had welcomed him in spite of the fact that a friend and parishioner had died on Thursday, leaving them both bereft and with church obligations. In the first two weeks, when she wasn't on pie caravans, Agnes received guests in numbers that taxed her. But there were so many people she wanted to see one last time. She fought hard, giving the disease all the what-for that she could, and she held fast to hope, but she received the visitors nonetheless, just in case. Needlepoint, meditation, and even sex had not recently provided him with significant relief of tension. The paintings of Sklent and the works of Zedd were packed in the van, where he couldn't at the moment take solace from them. Amazed, Agnes gaped at her baby. The throat lump that blocked her speech was part pride, part awe, and part fear, though she didn't at once understand why this wonderful precociousness should frighten her. The window didn't face the street. It overlooked a five-foot-wide passageway between this house and the next. The police might not spot him leaving. THE MORNING THAT it happened was bright and blue in March, two months after Barty took Angel for a dry walk in wet weather, seven weeks after Celestina married Wally, and five weeks after the happy newlyweds completed their purchase of the Galloway house next door to the Lampion place. Selma Galloway, retired from a professorship years earlier, had subsequently retired further, taking advantage of the equity in her long-owned home to buy a little condo on the beach in nearby Carlsbad. Because Junior's right arm was encumbered by the bracing board and the intravenous needle, he tugged a mass of tissues from the box with his left hand. The Hackachaks were present, of course. Junior had not yet agreed to join them in their

pursuit of blood money. They would give him little privacy or rest until they had what they wanted..He had met her in a university adult-extension course titled "Increasing Self-Esteem Through Controlled Screaming." Participants were taught to identify harmful repressed emotions and dissipate them through the authentic vocal imitations of a variety of animals..He almost laughed at himself, but he recalled the disconcerting laugh that earlier had trilled from him in the men's room, when he'd thought about stuffing Neddy Gnathic into the toilet. Now he pinched his tongue between his teeth almost hard enough to draw blood, hoping to prevent that brittle and mirthless sound from escaping him again..The hall was deserted. Then a woman came out of one of the offices and walked toward the gallery, without glancing at him..He met her eyes, but at once shifted his gaze to the porch floor again. "I've come to say ... how sorry I am, how miserably sorry."."Oh, yes, I recall it now. Polar bears eating tourists in Union Square, wolf packs prowling the Heights."..face looked familiar, and he sensed that he had seen it before in a disquieting context, although the man's identity eluded him.. "I don't want an attorney." He closed his eyes, lowered his head to the pillow, and sighed. "I just want ... peace."..II. Otter.Perhaps she was afflicted with only expressive aphasia, but she must be confused to some degree. The baby, which would be placed for adoption, was not hers to name..Looking toward the nearest window, where the wet night kissed the glass, he said, "Lawn sprinklers?"..In southern California, Agnes Lampion dreams of her newborn son. In Oregon, Junior Cain fearfully speaks a name in his sleep, and Detective Vanadium, waiting to tell the suspect about his dead wife's diary, leans forward in his chair to listen, while ceaselessly- turning a quarter across the thick knuckles of his right hand..He got behind the wheel of the Studebaker, started the engine, did a hard 180-degree turn, using more lawn than driveway, and cried out in terror when Vanadium moved noisily in the backseat.. "It sure is," Barty said. When only a mortified silence followed his remark, he added: "Gee, I thought that was kinda funny."..Maybe the bright side was that the musician hadn't either wet his pants or taken a dump while in his death throes. Sometimes, during a comparatively slow death like strangulation, the victim lost control of all bodily functions. He'd read it in a novel, something from the Book-of-the-Month Club and therefore both life-enriching and reliable. Probably not Eudora Welty. Maybe Norman Mailer. Anyway, the men's room didn't smell as fresh as a flower shop, but it didn't reek, either.. "Oh? Do they rent their house out to pirates with little pirate children, clowns with little clown children?"..As spectacularly busy as the not-yet-dead Jayne Mansfield, Frieda never wore a bra. In 1966, this free-swinging style was little seen. Initially, Junior didn't realize bralessness was a declaration of Frieda's liberation; he thought it meant she was a slut..His throat was still so raw from the explosive vomiting, seared by stomach acid, that he sounded like a character from a puppet show for children on Saturday-morning television, hoarse and squeaky at the same time. If not for the pain, he would have felt ridiculous, but the hot and jagged scrape of each word through his throat left him unable to..So Barty and Tom just happened to be chatting about a quantum physicist they had seen on a television program, a documentary about the uncanny resonance between the belief in a created universe and some recent discoveries in quantum mechanics and molecular biology. The physicist claimed that a handful of his colleagues, though by no means the majority, believed that with a deepening understanding of the quantum level of reality, there would in time be a surprising rapprochement between science and faith..She only half understood their frantic conversation, partly because the ability to concentrate was draining from her along with her lifeblood, but also because she was distracted by Joey. He was no longer in the wreck, but standing at the open rear door of the ambulance..During the ten days since Joey's passing, a great many people had conveyed their condolences to Agnes, but until this man, she'd known all of them.. "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.. "Well, it still is to me. But what I've been wondering ... when you talk about all the ways things are ... is there someplace where you don't have this problem with your eyes?"..In Cain's bedroom, Tom Vanadium's hooded flashlight revealed a six-foot-high bookcase that held approximately a hundred volumes. The top shelf was empty, as was most of the second..Antihypertensive drugs were administered intravenously, and Phimie was confined to bed, attached to a heart monitor.. "When I couldn't get enough nightclub and theater bookings for my magic act anymore ... I turned to gambling."..Edom and Jacob arrived, dinner was served, and while the food was wonderful, the conversation was better-even though the twins occasionally shared their vast knowledge of train wrecks and deadly volcanic eruptions. Paul didn't contribute much to the talk, because he preferred to bask in it. If he hadn't known any of these people, if he had walked into the room while they were in the middle of dinner, he would have thought they were family, because the warmth and the intimacy-and in the twins' case, the eccentricity-of the conversation were not what he expected of such newly made friends. There was no pretense, no falsity, and no avoidance of any awkward subject, which meant there were sometimes tears, because the death of Reverend White was such a fresh wound in the hearts of those who loved him. But in the healing ways of women that remained mysterious to Paul even as he watched them do..WHEN AT LAST Paul Damascus reached the parsonage late Friday afternoon, January 12, he arrived on foot, as he arrived everywhere these days..Since discovering the quarter in his cheeseburger, Junior had been half convinced that the maniac cop survived the bludgeoning. In spite of his grievous wounds, perhaps Vanadium had swum up through a hundred feet of murky water, barely avoiding being drowned..Her hands were slender, long-fingered, graceful. The hands of an artist. They were not powerful hands..Agnes held a smile as best she could, determined that her son's final glimpse of her face would not leave him with a memory of her despair..Likewise, she wasn't prepared to deal with a monster like the father, if one day he came for Angel. And he would come. She knew. In these events as in all things, Celestina White glimpsed a pattern, complex and mysterious, and to the eye of an artist, the symmetry of the design required that one day the father would come. She wasn't prepared to deal with the creep now, but by the time that he arrived, she would be ready for him..Many police agencies required an officer to carry a firearm even when off duty. If the Oregon State Police had no such rule, Vanadium most

likely carried one anyway, because in his crazy-as-a-snake mind,.Considering his formidable size, his clothes ought to have served an image of virile masculinity: boots, jeans, red flannel shirt. His ducked head, slumped posture, and shuffling feet were reminders, however, that many young boys, too, dressed this way..Although Junior continued to feel threatened, continued to trust his instinct in this matter, he didn't devote his every waking hour to the hunt. He had a life to enjoy, after all. Self-improvements to undertake, galleries to explore, women to pursue..SERAPHIM AETHIONEMA WHITE was nothing whatsoever like her name, except that she had as kind a heart and as good a soul as any among the hosts in Heaven. She did not have wings, as did the angels after which she had been named, and she couldn't sing as sweetly as the seraphim, either, for she had been blessed with a throaty voice and far too much humility to be a performer. Aethionema were delicate flowers, either pale-or rose-pink, and while this girl, just sixteen, was beautiful by any standard, she was not a delicate soul but a strong one, not likely to be shaken apart in even the highest wind.."Oh, yes. When he phoned, Reverend Collins told me all about you and Bartholomew. At the front door, when I asked the boy's name, I already knew it and was just setting up this little trick for you."He stood at a window, staring down into the street, his profile to her, and in his silence he searched for the words to describe the "something extraordinary" that he had mentioned earlier..They could be patient. Their self-denial and sweet anticipation ensured that their lovemaking, when at last they were able safely to indulge, would be shattering in its intensity, like the coupling of mortals raised to the status of demigods by virtue of their passion, its power and purity.."Well, maybe you're right," Bellini said somewhat acerbically, before departing, "but then you've had the advantage of an illegal search, while I'm hampered by such niceties as warrants."."Pie, pie, pie, pie, pie, pie, pie, pie," Barty repeated in the same tone of self-satisfied delight that he used when announcing "Barty potty."Neither of them was aware that their personal drama, in all its clumsiness and glory, had focused the attention of everyone in the restaurant. The cheer that went up at Celestina's acceptance of his proposal caused her to start, knocking the ring from Wally's hand as he attempted to slip it on her finger. The ring bounced across the table, they both grabbed for it, Wally made the catch, and this time she was properly betrothed, to wild applause and laughter..Even Barty seemed to be attentive, but Angel happily applied crayons to a coloring book and hummed softly to herself.."I wouldn't just whack anyone, not even a worm bucket like Cain, any more than I would commit suicide. Remember, I believe in eternal consequences."Junior closed his weary eyes and gratefully submitted as the paramedic wiped his greasy face and his crusted lips with a cool, damp cloth..He must be careful in his approach to her. He dared not rush into this. Think it through. Devise a strategy. This valuable opportunity must not be wasted..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..Intending to keep the front of the gallery under surveillance from behind the wheel of his Mercedes, Junior checked the time as he walked toward the car. His wrist was bare, his Rolex missing..Thus far, there were only two unexpected developments, the first being his explosive vomiting. He hoped he would never have to endure another such episode..Using all is powers of concentration, which were formidable, Junior sought to silence the phantom Chicane. At first, the voice steadily faded, but soon it grew louder again, and more insistent..Deeply distressed that he was planning the funeral of a man as young as Joe Lampion, whom he had liked and admired, Panglo paused to express his disbelief and to murmur comforting words, more to himself than to Jacob, as each decision was made. With one hand on the chosen casket, he said, "Unbelievable, a traffic accident, and on the very day his son is born. So sad. So terribly sad."He paused, not sure how to proceed. He was not accustomed to writing letters to total strangers.."Then I'll attend to everything right away," the doctor said, reaching for the privacy curtain that surrounded the ER bed.."When your hands are bigger," Tom agreed, "I'm sure you could. In fact, one day I'll teach you."Junior stepped back and squeezed off two shots, aiming for the lock. One round tore a chunk out of the jamb, but the other cracked through the door, shattering more than wood, and the brass knob wobbled and almost fell out.."Yes. The dried root of a Brazilian plant, the ipecacuanha. It induces vomiting with great effectiveness. The active ingredient is a powdered white alkaloid called emetine."This comment left Tom nonplussed. He could only imagine that Jacob had known someone who died in that crash-yet the twin's tone of voice and his expression seemed to suggest that a world without the Bakersfield train wreck would be a less convivial place than one that included it..As Barty ascended higher, Agnes's fear became purer, but at the same time, she was filled with a wonderful, irrational exhilaration. That this could be accomplished, that the darkness could be overcome, struck music from the harpstrings of the soul. From time to time, the boy paused, perhaps to rest or to mull over the three-dimensional map in his incredible mind, and every time that he started upward again, he put his hands in exactly the right place, whereupon Agnes would speak a silent inner yes! Her heart was with Barty high in the tree, her heart in his, as he had been with her, safe inside her womb, on the rainy twilight that she had ridden the spinning, tumbling car to widowhood..Though she worried that reading would strain his eyes, worsening his condition, she recognized the irrationality of her fear. Muscles don't atrophy from use, nor eyes wear out from too much seeing..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..By air from San Francisco south to Orange County Airport, then farther south along the coast by rental car, one week in the wake of Paul Damascus and his three charges, following directions provided by Paul, Tom Vanadium brought Wally Lipscomb to the Lampion house.."I'm gifted to a small extent, and it's an unusual gift," he admitted. "Nothing world-shaking. More than anything, really, it's a special perception I've been given. Angel's gift seems to be different from mine but related. In fifty years, she's the first I've ever met who's somewhat like me. I'm still shaking inside from the shock of finding her. But please, let's save this for Bright Beach and a better evening. You go down there tomorrow with Paul, okay? I'll stay here

to look after Wally. When he's able to travel, I'll bring him with me. I know you'll want him to hear what I have to say, too. Is it a deal?". "Tom," Kathleen said, "I know why you became a cop, I guess. St. Anselmo's Orphanage ... the murders of those children."

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