

THE FRESHMAN AND HIS COLLEGE A COLLEGE MANUAL

With everyone in the diner now aware of Junior, with every head turned toward him and with every wary eye tracking him, he dropped the bun cap and the mustard dispenser on the floor. Barging through the swinging gate at the end of the lunch counter, he entered the narrow work area behind it. The day before Christmas, along the California coast. Although sun gilded the morning, clouds gathered in the afternoon, but no snow would ease sled runners across these roofs. The glimmering bay and the shimmering amber candlelight provided the perfect atmosphere for the song that arose now from the piano in the bar. Vanadium nodded. "And I'd like to hear about Cain's reactions in more detail. I've read your reports, of course, and they've been thorough, but necessarily condensed. There'll be lots of subtleties that only reveal themselves in conversation. Often, the apparently insignificant details are the most important to me when I'm devising strategy." If not for Celestina's slutty little sister, Bartholomew would not exist. No threat. Junior's life would be different, better. WHEN AT LAST Paul Damascus reached the parsonage late Friday afternoon, January 12, he arrived on foot, as he arrived everywhere these days. Three equally modest rooms opened off this lounge. Two housed complete dental units, and the third provided cramped office space shared by the receptionist and the doctor. Traumatized by the violence in her mother's bedroom, not fully aware of what happened to Wally, Angel had been tearful and anxious. A thoughtful physician gave her a glass of orange juice spiked with a small dose of a sedative, and a nurse provided pillows. Bedded down on two pillow-padded chairs, wearing a rose-colored robe over yellow pajamas, she gave herself as fully to sleep as she always did, sedative or not, which was every bit as fully as she gave herself to life when she was awake. Already another contraction racked her, so intense that the pain was not limited to her lower back and abdomen, but seared the length of her spine, like an electric current leaping vertebra to vertebra. Her breath pinched in her chest as though her lungs had collapsed. "Yes?" the silver-haired eminence replied, wrinkling his nose as though he suspected that this customer would ask if the display pedestal was included in the price. Her lifelong optimism, her buoyancy, which she had miraculously sustained through so many difficult years, would never survive this. She would no longer be a rock of hope for him and Edom. Their future was despair, undiluted and unrelenting. Tears burst from Junior, stinging torrents, a salt sea of grief that blurred his vision and bathed his face in brine. "Get out of here, you disgusting, sick son of a bitch," he demanded, his voice simultaneously shaking with sorrow and twisted by righteous anger. "Get out of here now, get out!" He and the homicide detective had been friends for almost thirty years, since Max had been a uniformed rookie on the SFPD and Vanadium had been a young priest freshly assigned to St. Anselmo's Orphanage here in the city. Before choosing police work, Max had contemplated the priesthood, and perhaps back then he had sensed the cop-to-be in Tom Vanadium. Friday, December 29, was a grand day: cool but not cold; high scattered clouds ornamenting a Wedgwood-blue sky. The streets were agreeably abustle but not swarming like the corridors of a hive, as sometimes they could be. San Franciscans, reliably a pleasant lot, were still in a holiday mood and, therefore, even quicker to smile and more courteous than usual. surreptitiously with Junior. He was accustomed to being an object of desire. This night, however, the only lady he cared about was San Francisco herself, and he wanted to be alone with her. The full nature of the nightmare continued to elude him, but he became convinced that good reason for his fear existed, that the dream had been more than a dream. He had a nemesis named Bartholomew not merely in dreams, but in the real world, and this Bartholomew had something to do with ... babies. Yet through the summer of 1966, following this call, he acted like a man who was haunted. A sudden draft, even if warm, chilled him and caused him to turn in circles, seeking the source. In the middle of the night, the most innocent of sounds could scramble him from bed and send him on a search of the apartment, flinching from harmless shadows and twitching at looming invisibilities that he imagined he saw at the edges of his vision. Nearly two weeks ago, in the Spruce Hills hospital, Junior had been drawn by some strange magnetism to the viewing window at the neonatal-care unit. There, transfixed by the newborns, he sank into a slough of fear that threatened to undo him completely. By some sixth sense, he had realized that the mysterious Bartholomew had something to do with babies. A speeding truck passed, stirring the fog, and the white broth churned past the car windows, a disorienting swirl. Eleven years later, a few months after marrying Agnes, Joey mysteriously invited Edom to accompany him on "a little drive," and took his bewildered brother-in-law to a nursery. They returned home with fifty pound bags of special mulch, jars of plant food, and an array of new tools. Together, they stripped the sod from the side yard, turned the soil, and prepared the ground for the rich variety of hybrid starter plants that were delivered the following week. "Thanks, Sparky, but not tonight. I'm thinking of taking a look around downstairs if old Nine Toes isn't stuck at home tonight with a case of paralytic bladder." trees also revealed Barty, and no radiance from another world shone spectrally through him, as it had shone through Joey-dead-and-risen. But first, in early July, he stopped taking French lessons. It was an impossible language. Difficult to pronounce. Ridiculous sentence constructions. Anyway, none of the good-looking women he met spoke French or cared whether he did. Holding hands, Barty and Angel led the adults into the kitchen, to the back door. This procession had a ceremonial quality that intrigued Tom, and by the time they stepped onto the porch, he was impatient to know why everyone-except he and Wally-was emotionally airborne, one degree of altitude below euphoria. With a cry of alarm, he bolted to the bathroom and made it with not a second to spare. He seemed to be on the throne long enough to have witnessed the rise and fall of an empire. Into her fevered mind came an image of a milk-glass infant, as translucent as Joey at the back door of the ambulance. Fearing that this vision meant her child would be stillborn, she said, My baby, but no sound escaped her. Greed. So easy, taking money from the rubes. Soon, instead of peeling off a little from each game, he sought bigger kills. On Tuesday evening, September 7, after half an hour in the lotus position, thinking about nothing whatsoever

but a white pin with two black bands at its neck and the number I painted on its head, Junior went to bed at eleven o'clock and set his alarm for three in the morning, when he intended to shoot himself. "We want the scary one, 'specially if it has spiders, Pixie Lee said squeakily but defiantly. He felt remarkably well when he arrived home: calm, proud of his quick thinking and stalwart action, pleasantly tired. He hadn't chosen to kill again; this obligation had been thrust on him by fate. Yet he had proven that the boldness he'd shown on the fire tower, rather than being a transient strength, was a deeply rooted quality. "Ah, evidently you can read my mind. Scarier than heart reading any day. Maybe there's a thin line between minister's daughter and witch." Then by ambulance to the hospital, whisked into surgery, and for a while, blessed unconsciousness. In the kitchen, Barty sat at the table, and Paul's heart pinched at the sight of the boy in padded eyepatches. Although the ace of hearts had only positive meanings, and although, according to Maria, multiple appearances, especially in sequence, meant increasingly positive things, a series of chills nevertheless riffled through Agnes's spine, as if her vertebrae were fingers shuffling. "This meeting of the North Pole Society of Not Evil Adventurers is officially closed." "There's a valuable lesson in that," Agnes said. "Others can learn from it if you care to share. But if you want to record your life only up to the card cheating, that's okay, too. Even that far, it's a fascinating journey, a story that shouldn't be lost with you when you pass on. Libraries are packed with biographies of movie stars and politicians' most of them not capable of as much meaningful self-analysis as you'd get from a toad. We don't need to know more about celebrities' lives, Obadiah. What might help us, what might even save us, is knowing more about the lives of real people who've never made it even medium but who know where they came from and why." "I'll come by at eight o'clock for breakfast," Wally suggested. "We have to set a date." The night was holding its breath again, the previous breeze now pent up in the breast of darkness. 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." use it. The cop was no threat to the English army, as Joan had been, but as far as Junior was concerned, the creep most definitely deserved to be burned at the stake. Other rooms were furnished as sparsely as those in a monastery. Indeed, the dining room contained nothing whatsoever. She hadn't looked up from her sketching. Although Junior thought she hadn't seen him, she'd apparently been aware of him all along. "Yes," she admitted, her face still close to his, "I'm afraid. But Dr. Chan is a fine surgeon, and this is a very fine hospital." Captivated by catastrophe, so lost in his book that he might as well have stepped magically inside of it and closed the covers after himself, Uncle Jacob didn't answer. "Nature has no maternal instincts," Edom said quietly but with conviction. "To think otherwise is sheer sentimentality at its worst. Nature is our enemy. She's a vicious killer." He had been thankful that during the long trance, he hadn't wet himself. Now he would gladly have accepted any amount of humiliation rather than suffer these vicious cramps. pride, his one great shining moment but also his sinful pride. Clubbed with the trophy first, fists later. And now, here, He hit Celestina with the big question, the huge question, just as she paused in her babbling to suck in a deep breath, the better to spout even more nonsense, whereupon this panicky inhalation caught in her breast, caught so stubbornly that she was certain she would need the attention of paramedics to start breathing again, but then Wally popped open the box, revealing a lovely engagement ring, the sight of which made the trapped breath explode from her, and then she was breathing fine, although snuffling and crying and just generally a mess. "I love you, Wally." The guy appeared vulnerable, his arms occupied with the kid and the bag, and Junior considered bursting out of the Mercedes, striding straight to the Celestina-humping son of a bitch, and shooting him point-blank in the face. Brain-shot, he would drop quicker than if the headless horseman had gotten him with an ax, and the kid would go down with him, and Junior would shoot the bastard boy next, shoot him in the head three times, four times just to be sure. By telephone, he had been prepared for this boy. Strange as it was to find a Bartholomew in their lives, given Enoch Cain's peculiar obsession, Tom nonetheless agreed with Celestina that the wife killer could have no way to know about this child-and could certainly have no logical reason to fear him. The only thing they had in common was Harrison White's sermon, which had inspired this boy's name and might have planted the seed of guilt in Cain's mind. After taking a minute to steel himself, Junior squatted next to the dead detective. Such behavior as hers was unlikely to lead to self-discovery, self improvement, and fulfillment. We make our own misery in this life. For better or worse, we create our own futures. The word need, instead of want, moved Paul to follow the doctor across the coffee shop. So these are reports of my explorations and discoveries: tales from Earthsea for those who have liked or think they might like the place, and who are willing to accept these hypotheses: things change: authors and wizards are not always to be trusted: nobody can explain a dragon. body on the flight out of San Francisco. When finally her obligations were met, she. 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. Perhaps Dr. Parkhurst, too, was disturbed by this fascistic and fanatical spew sampling, because he became brusque. "I have a few appointments to keep. By the time I make evening rounds, I expect Mr. Cain to. Several large Dumpsters hulked nearby, dark rectangles less seen than suggested in the slowly churning murk, like forms in a dream, as ominous as graveyard sarcophaguses, each as suitable for a musician's carcass as any of the others. According to the cards, Barty would be rich financially, but also in talent, spirit, intellect. Rich in courage and honor, Maria promised. With a wealth of common sense, good judgment, and luck. This sight that might inspire celebration among sailors was denied to Barty, who rode in the backseat with Agnes. Neither could he see how the crimson sky studied its painted face in the

mirror of the ocean, nor how a burning blush shimmered on the waves, nor how the veil of night slowly returned modesty to the heavens..The roses filling the countersunk vases in the comers of Joey's gravestone were not Edom-grown, but they were Edom-bought. He had visited the florist himself, personally selecting each bloom from the inventory in the cooler; but he didn't have the courage to accompany Agnes and Barty to the grave..So Otter worked along with them with a clear head and an angry heart. They were in a trap. What's the use of a gift of power, he thought, if not to get out of a trap?.Because of the events regarding Barty and Angel back in January, Celestina, Grace, and Wally were no longer displaced persons waiting to return to San Francisco. They had begun anew here in Bright Beach; and judging by all indications, they were going to be as happy and as occupied with useful work as it was possible to be on this troubled side of the grave..Agnes got out of bed, switched on the lamp, and tucked Barty in once more. "Say your silent prayers."On the counter beside the bathroom sink stood an open box of BandAids in a variety of sizes, a bottle of rubbing alcohol, and a bottle of iodine..From Sparky, Tom Vanadium had borrowed a master key with which he could open the door to Cain's apartment, but he preferred not to employ it as long as he could enter by a back route. The less often he used the halls that were frequented by residents, the more likely he would be able to keep his flesh-and-blood presence a secret from Cain and sustain his ghostly reputation. If too many tenants got a look at his memorable face, he would become a topic of discussion among neighbors, and the wife killer might tumble to the truth..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 blonde was coming on to him, just as a score of other women had done since his arrival, so Junior tried to balance seduction with information gathering. Putting his hand over the hand with which she was gently massaging his thigh, he said, "I knew her brother in Nam. Then I got wounded, shipped out, lost touch. Like to find him."Barty looked at Angel, and Angel looked at Barty, and they dropped to their knees on the grass before their daughter. They were both grinning ... and then their grins stiffened a little..Naomi's beautiful countenance rose in his mind, and she looked beautiful for a moment, but then he thought he saw a certain slyness in her angelic smile, a disturbing glint of calculation in her once loving eyes..When she didn't at once accept his generosity, he said, "All my life, I've lived just to get through the day. First survival. Then achievement, acquisition. Houses, investments, antiques ... There's nothing wrong with any of that. But it didn't fill the emptiness. Maybe one day I'll return to medicine. But that's a hectic existence, and right now I want peace, calm, time to reflect. Whatever I do from here on . . . I want my life to have a degree of purpose it's never had before. Can you understand that?."To the foot of the bed slouched the third and final Hackachak: twenty-four-year-old Kaitlin, Naomi's big sister. Kaitlin was the unfortunate sister, having inherited her looks from her father and her personality equally from both parents. A peculiar coppery cast enlivened her brown eyes, and in a certain slant of light, her angry glare could flash as red as blood..The masterpiece that Junior purchased was small, a sixteen-inch-square canvas, but it cost twenty-seven hundred dollars. The entire picture-titled *The Cancer Lurks Unseen, Version 1*-was flat black, except for a small gnarled mass, bile-green and pus-yellow, in the upper-right quadrant. Worth every penny..He had bribed a parking attendant to keep his Mercedes at the curb in a valet zone, in front of a nearby restaurant, so it would be instantly available when needed. He could also leave the car and follow Celestina on foot if she chose to stroll home from here..calm. He tried to imagine what Victoria's breasts would look like, freed from all restraint..He snatched the woman's car keys off the pavement, slid behind the wheel of the Pontiac, and drove off to find a pharmacy, the only stop that he intended to make until he reached Spruce Hills.."He must've listened on the car radio," Agnes said, digging down into the layered days in her packed trunk of memories. "He was trying to get ahead of his work, so he'd be able to stay around the house a lot during the week after the baby came. So he arranged to meet with some prospective clients even on Sunday. He was working a lot, and I was trying to deliver my pies and meet my other obligations before the big day. We didn't have as much time together as usual, and even as impressed as he must've been with the sermon, he never had a chance to tell me about it. The next-to-last thing he ever said to me was 'Bartholomew.' He wanted me to name the baby Bartholomew."The spectral singer didn't exhibit her blood-and-bone sisters' reluctance to pursue her man..Amused, Wally said, "You artists do love to dramatize-or have I forgotten the San Francisco blizzard of '65?."He sprang to his feet, or maybe only staggered up, depending on whether his image of himself right now was pulp or real, and surveyed the scene, looking for the bandaged man. A few neighbors crossed the lawn toward Grace, and others approached along the street. But the killer was gone..Having gotten the new roof for them at cost, Agnes subsequently put together donations from a dozen individuals and one church group to cover all but two hundred dollars of the outlay..Evidently, the hero was accustomed to encounters of this nature. He rose, pulled out the unused fourth chair. "Please sit with us."Celestina turned in her seat to look back at Wally and Angel, who were waving. "I guess I am." "It was... the only dream that mattered," Joey said. "You ... loving me. It was a good life because of you."In that slow, flat delivery with which Junior was becoming increasingly impatient, Detective Vanadium said, "We all were, Doctor. It was another election year, remember? More than once during that campaign, I could've chugged ipecac. What else would work if I wanted to have a good vomit?."His Country Squire laden with cookies, plum cakes, homemade caramel corn with almonds, and gifts, Edom drove directly home from Obadiah Sepharad's place, which had been their final stop. He roared away as if trying to outrun tornadoes and tidal waves..Thus armored, he at last arrived in the city of Sacramento, an hour before dawn. Sacramento, which means "sacrament" in Italian and in Spanish, calls itself the Camellia Capital of the World, and holds a ten-day camellia festival in early March-already advertised on billboards now in mid-January. The camellia, shrub and flower, is named for G. J. Camellus, a Jesuit missionary who brought it from Asia to Europe in the eighteenth century.."Well," Tom said, "those people who think it's just a trick generally react bigger than you folks, and you know it's real."Kennedy, whose portraits hung side by side, the girl revealed to their mom and dad what had been

done to her and also what, in her despair. Too rattled to want lunch at the St. Francis Hotel or anywhere else, Junior returned to his apartment. Not once did he look back to see if the fire had grown visible as a glow against the night sky. The events at Victoria's were part of the past. He was finished with all that. Junior was a forward-thinking, future-oriented man. "Sometimes these sympathetic vibrations are very apparent, but a lot of the time, they're so subtle that you can hear them only if you're unusually perceptive." It didn't seem to him to amount to much. It was such an easy matter to him to make a silvery light shine in a dark room, or find a lost pin by thinking about it, or true up a warped joint by running his hands over the wood and talking to it, that he couldn't see why they made a fuss over such things. But his father raged at him for his "shortcuts," even struck him once on the mouth when he was talking to the work, and insisted that he do his carpentry with tools, in silence. By Sunday evening, a combination of factors—deep commitment to the philosophy of Zedd, explosive testosterone levels, boredom, self-pity, and a desire to be a risk-taking man of action—once more motivated Junior to splash a little Hai Karate behind each ear and go courting. Shortly after sunset, with a single red rose and a bottle of Merlot, he set off for Victoria Bressler's place. When she went upstairs at 2:10 in the morning, she found the boy fast asleep in the soft lamplight, Tunnel in the Sky at his side. Halfway home, he heard sirens and saw the beacons of approaching emergency vehicles. He pulled the Suburban to the side of the road and watched as two fire trucks passed, followed by an ambulance. Around a long time yet, but women outlive men by several years. Actuarial tables aren't wrong." His mother, gently pushing Tom to the prime view point at the head of the stairs, seemed unconcerned about her child's venture into the storm. 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. The bullet had been fired by a renegade cop who was every bit as lousy a marksman as he was a corrupt scumball. He'd been aiming for Nolly's crotch. The thorns had not been stripped from the long stem of the white rose. Vanadium clutched it so tightly that the sharp points punctured his meaty palm. He seemed to be unaware of his wounds. 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 Kleifton, though a less crippling case. You scrawl names on the walls with your own blood, play Psycho with a Sheetrock stand-in for Janet Leigh—and then fly off to Reno for a weekend of blackjack, stage shows, and all-you-can-eat buffets. Not likely. "Me too." He closed the ring box. Took a deep breath. Opened the box again. "Celestina, when I met you, my heart was beating but it was dead. It was cold inside me. I thought it would never be warm again, but because of you, it is. You have given my life back to me, and I want now to give my life to you. Will you marry me?" Quickly, he searched for the source, but in less than a minute, before he could trace the voice, it faded away. Unlike that night in December, this time the singing didn't resume. She twisted her sweat-drenched face in what might have been frustration, closed her. Tom opened his empty hands and then filled one of them with his water glass. The rattling ice belied his calm face. For Junior, 1968—the Chinese Year of the Monkey—would be the Year of the Plastic Surgeon. He would require extensive dermabrasion to restore the smoothness and tone to his skin, to be as irresistibly kissable as he had been before. While at it, he would need surgery to make subtle changes in his features. Tricky. He didn't want to trade perfection for anonymity. He must take care to ensure that his postsurgery look, when he let his hair grow in and perhaps dyed it, would be as devastating to women as his previous appearance. Although he was a stranger, arriving unannounced, and something of an eccentric by anyone's definition, Paul was received by Grace and Harrison White with warmth and fellowship. At their doorstep, raising his voice to compete with the wailing weather, he hurriedly blurted out his mission, as if they might reel back from his wild windblown presence if he didn't talk quickly enough: "I've walked here from Bright Beach, California, to tell you about an exceptional woman whose life will echo through the lives of countless others long after she's gone. Her husband died the night their son was born, but not before naming the boy Bartholomew, because he'd been so impressed by 'This Momentous Day. And now the boy is blind, and I hope you'll be able and willing to give some comfort to his mother." The Whites failed to reel backward, didn't even flinch from his unfortunately explosive statement of purpose. Instead, they invited him into their home, later invited him to dinner, and later still asked him to stay the night in their guest room. As a recreational site, Quarry Lake could be judged only a partial success. During the mining operation, trees were cleared well back from the edge of the dig, so that much of the shore would be unshaded on a hot summer day. And along half the strand, signs were posted warning Ungraded Shore: Immediate Deep Water. In places, where lake met land, the bottom lay over a hundred feet below. She hung her head, covered her face with her chilled hands, and wondered how her mother could sustain faith in God when such terrible things could happen to someone as innocent as Phimie. Agnes rubbed noses with him again, kissed him, and rose from the edge of the bed. Barty wanted to hug her. He did hug her. He hugged Angel, too. He hugged Tom Vanadium. As beautiful as they were, none of these women satisfied him as profoundly as Naomi had satisfied him. Junior Cain definitely was not a crazed sex-killer, not driven to homicide by weird lusts beyond his control. A single night of sex and death—an indulgence never to be repeated—wouldn't require serious self-examination or a reconsideration of his self-image. Dinner arrived, and Tom persuaded Celestina and Grace to come to the table for Angel's sake, even if they had no appetite. After so much chaos and confusion, the child needed stability and routine wherever they could be provided. Nothing brought a sense of order and normality to a disordered and distressing day more surely than the gathering of family and friends around a dinner table. Aware of the dangers of dehydration, he drank a bottle of water and put two half-gallon containers of Gatorade in the Suburban. "Each life," Barty Lampion said, "is like our oak tree in the backyard but lots bigger. One trunk to start with, and then all the branches,

millions of branches, and every branch is the same life going in a new direction." "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." His request felt like an assault. Agnes almost rocked backward as though struck. Sometimes, in his mind, Tom wasn't running along the residential streets of Bright Beach, but along the corridor of the dormitory wing over which he had served as prefect. He was cast back in time, to that dreadful night. A sound wakes him. A fragile cry. Thinking it a voice from his dream, he nevertheless gets out of bed, takes up a flashlight, and checks on his charges, his boys. Low-wattage emergency lamps barely relieve the gloom in the corridor. The rooms are dark, doors ajar according to the rules, to guard against the danger of stubborn locks in the event of fire. He listens. Nothing. Then into the first room-and into a Hell on earth. Two small boys per room, easily and silently overcome by a grown man with the strength of madness. In the sweep of the flashlight beam: the dead eyes, the wrenched faces, the blood. Another room, the flashlight jittering, jumping, and the carnage worse. Then in the hall again, movement in the shadows. Josef Krepp captured by the flashlight. Josef Krepp, the quiet custodian, meek by all appearances, employed at St. Anselmo's for the past six months with nary a problem, with only good employee reviews attached to his record. Josef Krepp, here in the corridor of the past, grinning and capering in the flashlight, wearing a dripping necklace of souvenirs. He slid his chair sideways to the secretary and leaned forward with the gun in both hands. Although she would have felt ridiculous phrasing this question in these words to any other three-year-old, no better way existed to ask it of her special son: "Kiddo ... do you realize you're speaking of your dad in the present tense?" Junior intended to pack only a single bag, leaving most of his clothes behind. He could afford a fine new wardrobe. The reception still roared in both showrooms of the gallery. Legions of the uncultured, taste-challenged in every regard except in their appreciation for hors d'oeuvres, yammered about art and chased their cloddish opinions with mediocre champagne. Knickknacks and mementos were not to be found anywhere in the house. And until now Junior had seen nothing hanging on the barren walls except a calendar in the kitchen. She felt that she had failed her sister. She didn't know what more she could have done, but if she'd been wiser and more insightful and more attentive, surely this terrible loss would not have come to pass. During the girl's final appointment, Junior discovered she would be home alone that same night, her parents at a function she wasn't required to attend. She appeared to reveal this inadvertently, quite innocently; however, Junior was a bloodhound when it came to smelling seduction, regardless of how subtle the scent. 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. "Did they rush you straight in here or did you arrange all the insurance matters at reception, Mr. Pinchbeck?" Another pocket. More cartridges. Trying to squeeze just two into the magazine, but his hands shaking and slippery with sweat.

[The Poetical Works of Anna Seward With Extracts from Her Literary Correspondence Volume 1](#)

[The Letters of Junius With Notes and Illustrations Historical Political Biographical and Critical Volume 1](#)

[A Treatise on Christian Doctrine Compiled from the Holy Scriptures Alone](#)

[Truffe La Botanique de la Truffe Et Des Plantes Truffi res--Sol--Climat--Pays Producteurs--Composition Chimique--Culture--Rcolte--Commerce--Fraudes--Qualit s Alimentaires--Conserves--Pr parations Culinaires](#)

[The Pedagogical Seminary Volume 20 Volume 25](#)

[Horses Worn to Mere Shadows The Victorio Campaign 1880](#)

[The Correspondence of the Right Honourable William Wickham from the Year 1794 Volume 2](#)

[Old World Hero Stories](#)

[Pmr Oral Boards Made Easy 20 Oral Board Practice Cases](#)

[How to Write Business Letters](#)

[A Compendium of Food-Microscopy with Sections on Drugs Water and Tobacco](#)

[A History of the Castles Mansions and Manors of Western Sussex by DGC Elwes Assisted by CJ Robinson](#)

[The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu Volume 3](#)

[Paris Universal Exhibition 1855 Catalogue of the Works Exhibited in the British Section of the Exhibition in French and English Together with Exhibitors Prospectuses Prices Current c](#)

[A Practical Introduction to the Study of Japanese Writing](#)

[History of the Plague in London 1665 To Which Is Added the Great Fire of London 1666](#)

[Etidorpha Or the End of the Earth The Strange History of a Mysterious Being and the Account of a Remarkable Journey as Communicated in Manuscript to Llewelly Drury Who Promised to Print the Same But Finally Evaded the Responsibility Which Was](#)

[Dress Design](#)

[The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes as Described by Nicolas Perrot French Commandant in the Northwest Bacqueville de la Potherie French Royal Commissioner to Canada](#)

[Every-Day Soldier Life Or a History of the One Hundred and Thirteenth Ohio Volunteer Infantry](#)

[Nelly Bracken A Tale of Forty Years Ago](#)

[The New Testament Manuscripts of the Freer Collection](#)
[The Construction of the Panama Canal](#)
[Inca Land Explorations in the Highlands of Peru with Illustrations](#)
[Christian Nurture By Horace Bushnell](#)
[The Geology of the Oil Regions of Warren Venango Clarion and Butler Counties Including Surveys of the Garland and Panama Conglomerates in Warren and Crawford and in Chautauqua Co NY Descriptions of Oil Well Rigs and Tools and a Discussion](#)
[The British Perfumer Being a Collection of Choice Receipts and Observations Made During an Extensive Practice of Thirty Years by Which Any Lady or Gentleman May Prepare Their Own Articles of the Best Quality Whether of Perfumery Snuffs or](#)
[A New Life of Toyotomi Hideyoshi](#)
[Tagebuch W hrend Meines Aufenthalts in Frankreich Volume 2](#)
[History of Detroit and Wayne County and Early Michigan A Chronological Cyclopedia of the Past and Present](#)
[The American Tailor and Cutter Volume 30](#)
[hail and Farewell!](#)
[The Excellences of the Congregation of the Oratory of St Philip Neri](#)
[My Diary in India in the Year 1858-9 My Diary in India in the Year 1858-9 Volume 1](#)
[The Old Whaling Days A History of Southern New Zealand from 1830 to 1840](#)
[Lights and Shades of Ireland](#)
[Stradling Correspondence A Series of Letters Written in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth with Notices of the Family of Stradling of St Donats Castle Co Glamorgan](#)
[The History of Cape May County New Jersey From the Aboriginal Times to the Present Day](#)
[A Brief History of Education A History of the Practice and Progress and Organization of Education](#)
[The Convivio of Dante Alighieri](#)
[A Burmese Loneliness A Tale of Travel in Burma the Southern Shan States and Keng Tung](#)
[A Memorial and Biographical History of Northern California Illustrated Containing a History of This Important Section of the Pacific Coast from the Earliest Period of Its Occupancyand Biographical Mention of Many of Its Most Eminent Pioneers and Also](#)
[Final Proof Or the Value of Evidence](#)
[The Burgess Animal Book for Children](#)
[Our Sentimental Garden](#)
[Letters of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy from 1833 to 1847](#)
[Horseless Vehicles Automobiles Motor Cycles Operated by Steam Hydro-Carbon Electric and Pneumatic Motors A Practical Treatise for Everyone Interested in the Development Use and Care of the Automobile Including a Special Chapter on How to Build](#)
[The Koran Commonly Called the Alkoran of Mohammed](#)
[Principles of Accounting](#)
[First-Year Mathematics for Secondary Schools](#)
[The Housekeepers Instructor Or Universal Family Cook Being a Full and Clear Display of the Art of Cookery in All Its Branches to Which Is Added the Complete Art of Carving](#)
[Early Zoroastrianism Lectures Delivered at Oxford and in London February to May 1912](#)
[Pioneering Venus A Planet Unveiled](#)
[The Pottery and Porcelain of the United States An Historical Review of American Ceramic Art from the Earliest Times to the Present Day](#)
[China and Her People Being the Observations Reminiscences and Conclusions of an American Diplomat by the Hon Charles Denby Profusely Illustrated with Reproductions of Photographs Collected by the Author Volume 2](#)
[Ancestors and Descendants of Andrew Moore 1612-1897 Volume 1](#)
[The Tempo of Modern Life](#)
[Pen and Pencil Sketches Being the Journal of a Tour in India Volume 2](#)
[The Attic Theatre A Description of the Stage and Theatre of the Athenians and of the Dramatic Performances at Athens](#)
[Robespierre and the French Revolution](#)
[Town Records of Derby Connecticut 1655-1710](#)
[On the Veldt in the Seventies](#)
[The Creation of Manitoba Or a History of the Red River Troubles](#)
[The Reminiscences and Recollections of Captain Gronow Being Anecdotes of the Camp Court Clubs Society 1810-1860 Volume 1](#)

[The Eclectic Practice in Diseases of Children](#)

[The Metallography of Iron and Steel](#)

[American Tariff Controversies in the Nineteenth Century Volume 1](#)

[National Portrait Gallery of Illustrious and Eminent Personages of the Nineteenth Century](#)

[Plane Trigonometry](#)

[Report of the Royal Commission on the Practice of Subjecting Live Animals to Experiments for Scientific Purposes](#)

[The History of Protestant Missions in India From Their Commencement in 1706 to 1881](#)

[Narrative of a Voyage to the Southern Atlantic Ocean in the Years 1828-29-30 Performed in HM Sloop Chanticleer Volume 1](#)

[Veterinary State Board Questions and Answers](#)

[Tea Machinery and Tea Factories A Descriptive Treatise on the Mechanical Appliances Required in the Cultivation of the Tea Plant and the Preparation of Tea for the Market](#)

[The Romance of Steel The Story of a Thousand Millionaires](#)

[The Poems of Philip Freneau Poet of the American Revolution Volume 1](#)

[Types and Details of Bridge Construction Volume 2](#)

[Galileo Galilei and the Roman Curia](#)

[The Topographical Statistical and Historical Gazetteer of Scotland With a Complete County-Atlas from Recent Surveys Exhibiting All the Lines of Road Rail and Canal Communication And an Appendix Containing the Results of the Census of 1851 Volume](#)

[Autobiography of Sir George Biddell Airy](#)

[The Theory and Practice of Surveying Containing All the Instructions Requisite for the Skilful \[sic\] Practice of This Art with a New Set of Accurate Mathematical Tables](#)

[The Whitney Family of Connecticut and Its Affiliations Being an Attempt to Trace the Descendants as Well in the Female as the Male Lines of Henry Whitney from 1649 to 1878 To Which Is Prefixed Some Account of the Whitneys of England Volume 3](#)

[The Whalebone Whales of the Western North Atlantic Compared with Those Occurring in European Waters](#)

[In Moorish Captivity An Account of the Tourmaline Expedition to Sus 1897-98](#)

[A Short History of Modern Peoples \(Part II of World Progress\)](#)

[Chaldea from the Earliest Times to the Rise of Assyria \(Treated as a General Introduction to the Study of Ancient History\)](#)

[A Woman Who Went to Alaska](#)

[The Plant-Lore Garden-Craft of Shakespeare](#)

[The Practice of Navigation and Nautical Astronomy](#)

[The Life of the Late General FR Chesney Colonel Commandant Royal Artillery](#)

[Familiar Quotations](#)

[The Presidents of the United States 1789-1914 02](#)

[The Pagan Tribes of Borneo A Description of Their Physical Moral Intellectual Condition with Some Discussion of Their Ethnic Relations Volume 2](#)

[A Complete Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms with an Appendix Embracing a Dictionary of Briticisms Americanisms Colloquial Phrases Etc](#)

[Our Search for a Wilderness An Account of Two Ornithological Expeditions to Venezuela and to British Guiana](#)

[The Totall Discourse of the Rare Adventures Painefull Peregrinations of Long Nineteen Yeares Travayles from Scotland to the Most Famous Kingdomes in Europe Asia and Affrica](#)

[A Compilation of the Bar Examination Questions of the State of New York Since 1896 with Answers References and Notes Also Rules Regulating Law Examinations Adopted by the State Board of Law Examiners for the Year 1901 and the Rules for Admission](#)

[Chess Its Poetry and Its Prose A Practical and Theoretical Treatise on the Arts of Composing and Solving Chess Problems with Numerous Illus Diagrams Containing Essays on the Principles of Porblem Composition Practical Composition the Art of](#)

[Capt Francis Champernowne the Dutch Conquest of Acadie and Other Historical Papers](#)

[Abstracts of Wiltshire Inquisitiones Post Mortem Returned Into the Court of Chancery King Charles the First](#)