

## ARCTIC TWILIGHT LEONARD BUDGELL AND CANADAS CHANGING NORTH

Walking rather than riding was now nothing more than a matter of habit. And by walking, he could delay his arrival at a house that had grown strange to him, a house in which every noise he made, since Monday, seemed to echo as if through vast caverns. The ghost cop was forty feet behind him, beyond ranks of other pedestrians, every one of whom might as well have been faceless now, smooth and featureless from brow to chin, because suddenly Junior could see no countenance other than that of the walking dead man. The haunting visage bobbed up and down as the grim spirit strode along, vanishing and reappearing and then vanishing again among all the bobbing and swaying heads of the intervening multitudes. Then Junior saw the blood on the right cuff of Vanadium's shirt. Blood dripping from his hand, too. Regrettably, he had no choice but to conclude that she hadn't made up her mind whether to keep the baby or to seek out an illegal abortion without Junior's approval. She had been thinking about scraping his child out of her womb without even telling him. The sill was about four and a half feet off the lavatory floor. With both hands, Junior levered himself onto it. Now, here, lying on a bed in the emergency room of a Sacramento hospital, on a Saturday afternoon only six weeks before the camellia festival, Junior suffered under the care of a resident physician who was so young as to raise the suspicion that he was merely playing doctor. Finally he began: Greetings on this momentous day. I'm writing to you about an exceptional woman, Agnes Lampion, whose life you have touched without knowing, and whose story may interest you. Beautiful she was, both of face and form, even with her mouth gaping wide and her eyes rolled back in her skull. How bright her future might have been if she had not chosen to deceive. A tease was, in essence, a deceiver-promising what she never intended to deliver. "A friend's daughter. They say she died in a traffic accident down in San Francisco. She was even younger than Naomi." As she tucked the bedclothes around him again, she said, "Barty, I don't think you should let anyone else see how you can walk in the rain without getting wet. Not Edom and Jacob. Not anyone at all. And anything else special that you discover you can do ... we should keep it a secret between you and me." "Jacob scares people," Agnes said. "No one would eat a pie that Jacob delivered without having it tested at a lab." "No member of the society ever violates a secret confidence," Agnes assured him. Gob of mucus in his throat. His face contorted with a misery that he did not have to fake, and he was astonished to feel tears spring to his eyes. "Too bad. You might have used that to bargain with." At the stream Serrenen, where it runs within the north wall of the city, the midwife gave Otter his true name, by which he is remembered in islands far from Havnor. He supposed Victoria might have a visitor. Perhaps a relative or a girlfriend. Not a man. No. She knew who her man was, and she would have no other while she waited for the chance to surrender to him and to consummate the relationship that had begun with the spoon and the ice in the hospital ten days previously. 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. If he had cut himself intentionally for the express purpose of writing the name in blood, then the reservoir of anger was deeper still and pent up behind a formidable dam of obsession. Even the Shantung-softened lamplight blazed too bright and did not serve her well, so she switched it off and said, "Scoot over." "Mommy, watch!" He turned in the deluge with his arms held out from his sides. "Not scary!" "Why do you think he's spending his money for all this tricky stuff?" Kathleen wondered, not for the first time. The sole male guest in whom he took an interest—a big interest was Sklent, the one-name painter whose three canvases were the only art on the walls of Junior's apartment. Rhythmic breathing. Slow and deep. Slow and deep. Per Zedd, the route to tranquility is through the lungs. "Even in an infinite number of worlds," Wally objected, "there's no place I was that stupid." evening. She brought her daughters, seven-year-old Bonita and six year-old Francesca, who came with their newest Barbie dolls—Color Magic Barbie, the Barbie Beautiful Blues Gift Set, Barbie's friends. They hadn't been close to Naomi, who'd once said she felt like Romulus and Remus, raised by wolves, or like Tarzan if he'd fallen into the hands of nasty gorillas. To Junior, Naomi was Cinderella, sweet and good, and he was the love-struck prince who rescued her. He tried to lean back as he dropped, with the hope that he would fall under her, providing cushion if they met with sidewalk instead of lawn. One of the gifts of power is to know power. Wizard knows wizard, unless the concealment is very skillful. And the boy had no skills at all except in boat-building, of which he was a promising scholar by the age of twelve. About that time the midwife who had helped his mother at his birth came by and said to his parents, "Let Otter come to me in the evenings after work. He should learn the songs and be prepared for his naming day." Agnes ran to the kitchen, where she had been working when the doorbell rang, packing boxes of groceries to be delivered with the honey-raisin pear pies that she and Jacob had baked this morning. Hound shrugged. He didn't choose to tell Losen that people hated him disinterestedly. A calico cat appeared at Tom's side, running, pacing him. Cats were witches' familiars. Good luck or bad, this cat? Bartholomew might be a teenager living with his parents or a dependent adult residing with family; if so, he wouldn't be revealed in this search, because the phone would not be listed in his name. Or maybe the guy loathed his first name and never used it except in legal matters, going by his middle name, instead. For a long time, she sat alone in the dark living room, in the armchair that had been Joey's favorite, thinking about many things but returning often to the memory of Barty's dry walk in wet weather. "Sometimes she wrote little paragraphs to God, very touching and humble notes of gratitude, thanking Him for bringing you into her life." She sat at the kitchen table, staring at the glass. After a while she emptied it in the sink without having taken a sip. The girl was creepy, no doubt about it, and Junior felt now precisely as he had felt on the night of Celestina's exhibition at the Greenbaum Gallery, when he had come out of the alleyway after disposing of Neddy Gnathic in the Dumpster and had checked his watch only to discover his bare wrist. He was missing something here, too, but it wasn't merely a Rolex, wasn't a thing at all, but an insight, a profound truth. Ghosts. Sklent was an atheist, and yet he

believed in spirits. Here's how that works: Heaven, Hell, and God do not exist, but human beings are as much energy as flesh, and when the flesh gives out, the energy goes on. "We're the most stubborn, selfish, greedy, grubbing, vicious, psychotic, evil species in the universe," Sklent explained, "and some of us just refuse to die, we're too hardass to die. The spirit is a prickly bur of energy that sometimes clings to places and people that were once important to us, so then you get haunted houses, poor bastards still tormented by their dead wives, and crap like that. And sometimes, the bur attaches itself to the embryo in some slut who's just been knocked up, so you get reincarnation. You don't need a god for all this. It's just the way things are. Life and the afterlife are the same place, right here, right now, and we're all just a bunch of filthy, scabby monkeys tumbling through an endless damn series of barrels." Paul pulled her back. He gently but firmly thrust her through the open door of the guest room in which he'd spent the night. "Stay here, wait." Junior was at critical depth. The psychological pressure was at least five thousand pounds per square inch and growing by the second. Implosion imminent. The hospital room was softly lighted, and shadows roosted on all sides like a flock of slumbering birds. In spite of the gloom, the boy's miraculous accomplishment was evident: his clothes and hair were dry as though he'd worn a coat and hood. The window mechanism creaked, the two tall panes began to open outward but too slowly, and the cold white night exhaled a chill plume of breath into the room. They were as gracious as any people he had ever met, but they also seemed genuinely interested in his story. He wasn't surprised that Tuesday morning, while he showered with a swimming cockroach that was as exuberant as a golden retriever in the motel's lukewarm water, Junior vowed never to kill again. Except in self-defense. Years earlier, a stream had been diverted to fill the vast excavation. Stock fish were added, mostly trout and bass. 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. The following day, Wednesday, December 27, his mother drove him to the library, where he checked out two Heinlein titles recommended by the librarian: Red Planet and The Rolling Stones. Judging by his excitement, on the way home in the car, his response to previous mystery-novel series had been a pleasant courtship, whereas this was desperate, undying love. Only madmen were capable of such butchery. Hopeless lunatics like Ed Gein, out there in Wisconsin, arrested just seven years ago, when Junior had been sixteen. Ed, the inspiration for Psycho, had constructed mobiles out of human noses and lips. He used human skin to make lampshades and to upholster furniture. His soup bowls had once been human skulls. He ate the hearts and selected other organs of his victims, wore a belt fashioned from nipples, and occasionally danced under the moon while masked by the scalp and face of a woman he had murdered. A nurse in surgical greens appeared. "Pull up the sleeves of your scrub nearly to your elbows. Scrub hard. I'll tell you when to stop." Her name was Victoria Bressler, and she was an attractive blonde. She would never have been serious competition for Naomi, because Naomi had been singularly stunning, but Naomi, after all, was gone. If this insurance payoff was not mere coincidence, if it was the wealth that had been foretold, then how far behind the fortune did the knave travel? Years? Months? Days? NOLLY SAT BEHIND his desk, suit jacket draped over the back of the chair, porkpie hat still squarely on his head, where it remained at virtually all times except when he was sleeping, showering, dining in a restaurant, or making love. Hound had taken him, had stood and seen his people beaten senseless, had not stopped the beating. Yet he spoke as a friend. Why? said Otter's look. Hound answered it. When she still didn't meet his stare, he seized her by the chin and tipped her head back. "And you give yourself far too little credit," Salk continued gently. "There's no doubt in my mind that Perri was a hero. But she was married to a hero, as well." At last: the humiliating backless gown, the precious drugs, even a pretty nurse who seemed to like him, and then oblivion. Cupping Angel entirely in his big hands, smiling at her, he said, "Oh, no, Mrs. White, this looks like a healthy young lady to me. No medicine required." Junior intended to add one stocky ghost to the party. Perhaps on a summer night in years to come, at the edge of the light fall from his Coleman lantern, a fisherman would see a semitransparent Vanadium providing entertainment with an ethereal quarter. Then it would stop. The torment would stop. Surely. His sense of drift, of sliding aimlessly through the days, would lift from him, and he would find purpose once more in determined self-improvement. He would definitely learn French and German. He would take cooking classes and become a culinary master. Karate, too. He did wonder why he had chosen this night of all nights to become even a more fearless adventurer, rather than a month ago or a month hence. Instinct told him that he'd felt the need to test himself, that a crisis was fast approaching, and that to be ready for it, he must be confident that he could do what had to be done when the crunch came. Slipping into sleep, Junior suspected that Prosser might have been less lark than preparation. He wondered if the hawk had descended in a constricting gyre, justice coming down, but he could not lift his head to see. They were childless. It had to be that way. Truthfully, Paul felt no regrets about missing out on fatherhood. Because they were a family of two, they were closer than they might have been if fate had made children possible, and he treasured their relationship. "He's crafty, you say. Can you use him?" Gradually he grew calm. His great frosty exhalations diminished to a diaphanous dribble that evaporated two inches from his lips. Maria looked stricken when she answered the doorbell, for she intuited that a visit, instead of a call, meant the worst. The fully evolved man never has to rely on the gods of fortune, Zedd tells us, because he makes his luck with such reliability that he can spit in the faces of the gods with impunity. One of the paramedics knelt beside the body, checking Naomi for a pulse, although in these circumstances, his action was such a formality that it was almost harebrained. "It seems it was his own idea, your majesty." He'd never had a chance to read this to Perri or to benefit from her opinion. Now, as he scanned the lines of his calligraphic handwriting, his words seemed foolish,

inappropriate, confused..This was a relaxation technique that had worked often before. He had teamed it from a brilliant book, *How to Have a Healthier Life through Autohypnosis*..Tom caused less of a stir in the restaurant than Kathleen had expected. Other diners noticed him, of course, but after one or two looks of shock or pity, they appeared indifferent, though this was undoubtedly the thinnest pretense of indifference. The same quality in him that elicited deferential regard from the waiter apparently ensured that others would be courteous enough to respect his privacy..From the moment the girl was admitted on the evening of January 5, the nurses at St. Mary's Hospital in San Francisco called her Phimie, too, not because they knew her well enough to love her, but because that was the name they heard Celestina use.."You're better at concentrative meditation without seed than anyone I've ever known, better than me. That's why you, especially, should never undertake a long session unsupervised," Chicane scolded. "At the very least, the very least, you should use your electronic meditation timer. I don't see it here, do I?"..Rena was cheerful, short, and solid. Her waist measurement must have been two-thirds her height, and she favored floral dresses that emphasized her girth. With a German accent and in a voice that always seemed about to dissolve in a great gale of mirth, she said, "Madchen lieb, you look like a Christmas candle to me."..In the afternoon, Dr. Schurr came to the hospital to review test results and to reexamine Barty. When the early-winter twilight gave way to night, he sent them back to Dr. Chan, and Agnes didn't press Schurr for an opinion. All day she'd been impatient for a diagnosis, but suddenly she was loath to have the facts put before her..A door slammed, and after the briefest of internal debates about whether to ize or act, Junior left Ichabod straddling the threshold. He must get to Celestina before she reached a telephone, and then he could come back and finish moving the body.."Will do. Check out those paintings he collects. People pay real money for them, even people who've never been in a looney bin.."because even to cry in pain will invite more vicious discipline than the pummeling he's already endured. His father..Olive complexion, no less smooth than the skin of a calamata. Eyes as lustrous as pools shimmering with a reflection of eternity and stars..Her shaking threatened her composure. She was Barty's mother and father, his only rock, and she must always be strong for him. She clenched her teeth and tensed her body and gradually quieted the tremors by an act of will..He visited the bank in which he maintained a safe-deposit box under the John Pinchbeck identity. He withdrew the twenty thousand in cash and retrieved all the forged documents from the box..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..Surprised, Tom leaned in his chair to look more directly at the blind boy. On the telephone, Celestina had mentioned only that Barty was a prodigy, which didn't quite explain the aptness of the oak-tree metaphor..He paid cash to the locksmith, and included in the payment were the two dimes and the nickel Vanadium had left on his nightstand..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.".."I really am sorry about this," Junior said, regretting the necessity to deny her the right to look good at her own funeral, "but it's got to appear to be a crime of passion."..Avoiding the graveled driveway, on which he was more likely to scuff his freshly polished loafers, he approached the house across the lawn, beneath the moon-sifting branches of a great pine that made itself useless for Christmas by spreading as majestically as an oak..The musician had no talent for deception. His hopping-hen eyes pecked at the nearest painting, at other guests, down at the floor, everywhere but directly at Junior, and a nerve twitched in his left cheek. "Well, I'm very good, you know, at faces, they stick with me, I don't know why. Goodness knows, my memory is otherwise shot."..Barty rode with his mother in her green Chevrolet station wagon. Because the cakes, pies, and gifts were too numerous to be contained in one vehicle, Edom followed them in his flashier yellow-and-white '54 Ford Country Squire.."Sure they do," said Wally as he unlocked the two deadbolts. "But you gotta be twenty-one years old to get a license for one."..Junior realized that killing Renee this very night would be an unthinkable waste. Instead, he could marry her first, enjoy her for a while, and eventually arrange an accident or suicide that left him with all-or at least a significant portion of her assets..The January air was crisp, fragrant with evergreens and with the faint salty scent of the distant sea. A curiously yellow moon glowered like a malevolent eye, studying him from between ragged ravelings of dirty clouds..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..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..Applying his intelligence now, he employed simple meditation techniques to calm himself and to slow his heartbeat. The cop was trying to rattle him into making a mistake, but calm men did not incriminate themselves..He left by the back door, to avoid the aftermath seeping across the foyer floor. Fog enveloped him, cool and refreshing..After taking a preliminary statement from Celestina, Bellini left to romance a judge out of bed and obtain a search warrant for Enoch Cain's residence, having already ordered a stakeout of the Russian Hill apartment. Celestina's description of her assailant was a perfect match for Cain. Furthermore, the suspect's Mercedes had been abandoned at her place. Bellini sounded confident that they would find and arrest the man soon..With every step through the long night walk, Paul had considered what he would say, must say, if this encounter ever took place. Now all his practiced words deserted him..Not all of the pins were knocked to the shear line with a single pull of the trigger. Three pulls were the minimum required, sometimes as many as six, depending on the

lock..From the plush pillow shadows of the bed, Barty said, "Oh, look. Christmas lights." That last part was true. He just wasn't loose in this world anymore. And in the world to which he'd gone, he would not find easy victims..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.

[Service Catalogue a Clear and Concise Reference](#)

[Knowledge Transferring Assessment a Clear and Concise Reference](#)

[Managed Content Services Third Edition](#)

[Information-Theoretic Security Standard Requirements](#)

[Change Request Third Edition](#)

[Mobile Network a Clear and Concise Reference](#)

[Financial Management Service the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)

[Policy-Based Management Third Edition](#)

[Online Transaction Processing a Clear and Concise Reference](#)

[Survey Methodology Third Edition](#)

[Health Level 7 Third Edition](#)

[Business Support System Standard Requirements](#)

[Transportation Management System Second Edition](#)

[IT Service Support Management Tools a Clear and Concise Reference](#)

[Electronic Services Delivery a Complete Guide](#)

[Application Development Ad a Clear and Concise Reference](#)

[Green Cell Shipping a Clear and Concise Reference](#)

[Data at Rest the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)

[Business System Planning Third Edition](#)

[Software-Defined Application Services Second Edition](#)

[Knowledge Management for Customer Service a Clear and Concise Reference](#)

[Mobile Content Management System the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)

[Service Fulfillment Standard Requirements](#)

[Asset Management Standard Requirements](#)

[Enterprise Engine Third Edition](#)

[Customer Feedback Management Services Third Edition](#)

[Process Audit Third Edition](#)

[Hardware Platform Interface Second Edition](#)

[ABAP Second Edition](#)

[Mobile Identity Management a Complete Guide](#)

[Information Lifecycle Management a Clear and Concise Reference](#)

[Oracle Enterprise Manager the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)

[Sustainability Accounting Standard Requirements](#)

[VRML Complete Self-Assessment Guide](#)

[Coupa Second Edition](#)

[Software Quality Analyst Second Edition](#)

[Design for Manufacturability Second Edition](#)

[Hackathon Second Edition](#)

[Cloud Communications a Clear and Concise Reference](#)

[Organizational Diagnostics Second Edition](#)

[Enterprise Data Planning a Clear and Concise Reference](#)

[Search Algorithm Standard Requirements](#)

[Unified Communications Management Complete Self-Assessment Guide](#)

[Virtual ISP Complete Self-Assessment Guide](#)

[Outsourcing Relationship Management the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)

[Systems Integrator Third Edition](#)

[Cmdb Complete Self-Assessment Guide](#)  
[Google Docs Sheets and Slides a Clear and Concise Reference](#)  
[Understanding by Design a Clear and Concise Reference](#)  
[It Decision Support a Clear and Concise Reference](#)  
[Process Window Index Standard Requirements](#)  
[Technology Business Management Council Third Edition](#)  
[Threat Management Unit Third Edition](#)  
[Mean Down Time the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)  
[Occupational Safety and Health a Clear and Concise Reference](#)  
[Data Center Services Complete Self-Assessment Guide](#)  
[Adherence Management Coaching Second Edition](#)  
[Group Technology the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)  
[Tivoli Service Automation Manager Third Edition](#)  
[Health Information and Quality Authority a Complete Guide](#)  
[Environmental Impact Design a Clear and Concise Reference](#)  
[Customer Demand Planning Complete Self-Assessment Guide](#)  
[Marketing Database System Second Edition](#)  
[Power Usage Effectiveness Standard Requirements](#)  
[Ie Information Engineering the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)  
[Infrastructure and Operations Automation Third Edition](#)  
[Jet Data Access Objects Third Edition](#)  
[Good Technology a Clear and Concise Reference](#)  
[Information Excellence a Complete Guide](#)  
[Sales Development the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)  
[Operating System Service Management the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)  
[E-Government the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)  
[HP Information Management Software Second Edition](#)  
[Policy Analysis Standard Requirements](#)  
[Green Building the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)  
[Seven Management and Planning Tools a Complete Guide](#)  
[Collaborative Software Third Edition](#)  
[Radio Over IP a Clear and Concise Reference](#)  
[Application Manager Complete Self-Assessment Guide](#)  
[User Programmatic Interface Complete Self-Assessment Guide](#)  
[Business Planning Information a Clear and Concise Reference](#)  
[Storage Resource Management Standard Requirements](#)  
[Business Value the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)  
[Oracle Internet Directory Second Edition](#)  
[Asset Location Second Edition](#)  
[Employee Benefits the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)  
[Software Analysis Pattern Complete Self-Assessment Guide](#)  
[Oma Device Management a Complete Guide](#)  
[Process Safety Complete Self-Assessment Guide](#)  
[Customer Service Assurance Complete Self-Assessment Guide](#)  
[Visual Programming Language a Clear and Concise Reference](#)  
[Enterprise Information Management Programs a Clear and Concise Reference](#)  
[High Availability Third Edition](#)  
[Service-Oriented Development of Applications Standard Requirements](#)  
[Port Operations Simulator the Ultimate Step-By-Step Guide](#)  
[Open Banking Strategy Third Edition](#)

[Information Services Procurement Library Second Edition](#)

[Cambridge IGCSE \(TM\) Business Studies Teachers Guide](#)

[Safety Life Cycle Standard Requirements](#)

[The Gilmore Girls Companion](#)

---