

## AVIANS IN THE STATE HOUSE HOW NORDIC IMMIGRANTS SHAPED MINNESOTA

Junior had made a mistake when he smashed the pewter stick into Vanadium's face after the cop was already unconscious. He should have bound the bastard and attempted to revive him for interrogation. In Oregon, standing at Junior Cain's bedside, turning a quarter across the knuckles of his left hand, Thomas Vanadium asks about the name that his suspect had spoken in the grip of a nightmare. This graciousness didn't free Paul to speak. Instead, he felt his throat thicken, trapping his voice more tightly still. By nature, she was unable to hold fast to resentment, couldn't nurture a grudge, and was incapable of vengeance. She had forgiven even her father, who had put her through hell for so long, who had blighted the lives of her brothers, and who had killed her mother. Forgiving was not the same as condoning. Forgiving did not mean that you had to exonerate or forget. To be useful, anger must be channeled, as Zedd explains with unusually poetic prose in *The Beauty of Rage: Channel Your Anger and Be a Winner*. Junior's current predicament would only get worse if he had to telephone Roto-Rooter to extract a musician from the plumbing. On the way home, he repeatedly checked the rearview mirror. No vehicle followed him. Besides, he didn't want the police in San Francisco to know that he'd been suspected, by at least one of their kind, of having killed his wife in Oregon. What if one of the locals was curious enough to request a copy of the case file on Naomi's death, and what if in that file, Vanadium had made reference to Junior waking from a nightmare, fearfully repeating Bartholomew? And then what if Junior eventually located the right Bartholomew and eliminated the little bastard, and then what if the local cop who'd read the case file connected one Bartholomew to the other and started asking questions? Admittedly, that was a stretch. Nevertheless, he hoped to fade from the SFPD's awareness as soon as possible and live henceforth beyond their ken. Nolly, Kathleen, and Sparky had prepared him for Industrial Woman, but when the flashlight beam flared off her fork-and-fan-blade face, Vanadium twitched in fright. Without fully realizing what he was doing, he crossed himself. Although he had made no effort to summon them, tears spilled from Junior's closed eyes. They weren't drawn from him by thoughts of poor Naomi. These next few days—perhaps weeks—were going to be tedious, until he could have Nurse Victoria Bressler. Under the circumstances, he had good reason to feel sorry for himself. Hers were the most feminine hands he'd ever seen. Slender, soft, prettier than Naomi's. He had no idea what she was talking about. This time, he vowed never to kill again, except in self-defense, regardless of the provocation. This tougher condition pleased him. No one achieved significant self-improvement by setting low standards for himself. In spite of major earthquakes pending, explosions of dynamite hauling trucks on the highway, tornadoes somewhere churning, the grim likelihood of a great dam bursting along the route, freak ice storms stored up in the unpredictable heavens, crashing planes and runaway trains converging on the coastal highway, and the possibility of a sudden violent shift in the earth's axis that would wipe out human civilization, they risked crossing the boundaries of Bright Beach and traveled north into the great unknown of territories strange and perilous. 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. "I want you to adopt the baby." Before they could react, she hurried on: "I won't be twenty-one for four months yet, and even then they might give me trouble about adopting, even though I'm her aunt, because I'm single. But if you adopt her, I'll raise her. I promise I will. I'll take full responsibility. You don't have to worry that I'll regret it or that I'll ever want to drop her in your laps and escape the responsibility. She'll have to be the center of my life from here on. I understand that. I accept it. I embrace it." As punctilious as you might expect any good accountant to be, Bartholomew Prosser didn't delay long enough to make it necessary for Junior to ring the bell twice. The porch light came on. Their struggle to put their sorrow into words moved Agnes not because they cared so deeply, but because in the end they were unable to express themselves adequately. Without the relief provided by expression, their anguish grew corrosive. Their lifelong introversion left them without the social skills to unburden themselves or to provide solace to others. Worse, their obsessions with death, in all its many means and mechanisms, had prepared them to expect Barty's cancer, which left them neither shocked nor capable of consolation, but merely resigned. Ultimately, in great frustration, each twin was reduced to fragmented sentences, crippled gestures, quiet tears—and Agnes became the only consoler. Perhaps, reluctant to admit to herself that she had yearned for him to do everything that he'd done, she had slowly been inflamed by guilt, until she convinced herself that she had, indeed, been raped. Psychotic little bitch. The three of them, gathered around her in the quick, held fast to her, as if Death couldn't take what they refused to release. He slept outdoors rarely and otherwise stayed in inexpensive motels, boardinghouses, and YMCAs. He said, "There's a whiteness in Barty's right pupil ... which I think indicates a growth. The distortions in his vision are still there, though somewhat different, when he closes his right eye, so that indicates a problem in the left, as well, even though I'm not able to see anything there. Dr. Chan has a full schedule tomorrow, but as a favor to me, he's going to see you before his usual office hours, first thing in the morning. You'll have to start out early." Wally had disposed of his properties in San Francisco under Tom's careful supervision. Any attempt to trace him from the city to Bright Beach would fail. His vehicles were purchased through a corporation, and his new house had been bought through a trust named after his late wife. "I doubted myself more than God, though Him, too. I had those boys' blood on my hands. They were mine to protect, and I failed." Junior was glad for the chance to eavesdrop, not only because he hoped to learn the nature and depth of Vanadium's suspicions, but also because he was curious—and concerned—about the cause of the disgusting and embarrassing episode that had landed him here. Her hands shook, her entire body shook, and in her mind was a hard clatter of fear like the wheels of a roller coaster rattling over poorly seamed tracks. The boy fell and rolled even as he pitched the can, anticipating the shots that Cain fired, which cracked into the doorframe inches from Tom's knees. Startled, he snatched his hand back. The object fell, ringing faintly

against the pavement..And like John Kennedy's death, Zedd's passing was cloaked in mystery, inspiring widespread suspicion of conspiracy. Only a few believed that he had committed suicide, and Junior was certainly not one of those gullible fools. Caesar Zedd, author of *You Have a Right to Be Happy*, would never have blown his brains out with a shotgun, as the authorities preferred the public to believe..Indeed, subconsciously, she had known that Nella was gone since receiving the call at 4:15 this morning. When the old woman had finished what she needed to say, the silence on the line had been eerily perfect, without one crackle of static or electronic murmur, unlike anything Celestina had ever heard on a telephone before.. "Great guy. Do you have an address for her, a way maybe I could get in touch about her brother? ". Tom believed that the girl had an intuitive understanding of the true complexity of the world, but she was only three, after all, and neither ready nor able to absorb the scientific theory that supported her intuition..Over the following hour, as Walter Panglo guided Jacob through the planning of the funeral, Jacob recounted the gruesome details of numerous airliner crashes, shipwrecks, train collisions, coal-mine disasters, darn collapses, hotel fires, nightclub fires, pipeline and oil-well explosions, munitions--plant explosions.....From the devil to the sacred and then beyond, Junior drove north on State Highway 160, which was proudly marked as a scenic route, although in these predawn hours, all lay bleak and black. Following the serpentine course of the Sacramento River, Highway 160 wove past a handful of small, widely separated towns..Bright though they were at all times, Barty's Tiffany eyes shone brighter now with beams of North Pole magic. "Maybe I do feel it.".He had dragged Ichabod halfway across the threshold when he heard someone say, "No.".Two of her largest and best paintings were in the show windows, dramatically lighted. They were dazzling. They were dreadful. They were beautiful. They were hideous..By the time all the details of mortuary and cemetery services were settled, Walter Panglo had a nervous tic in his left cheek. His eyes were open wide, as if he'd been so startled that his lids froze in a position of ascension, locked by a spasm of surprise. His hands must have grown clammy; he blotted them repeatedly on his suit.. "Your father denies the rape ever occurred, apparently out of what I'd call a misguided willingness to trust in divine justice.".When she looked up from Barty, she saw the attorney with his hands full of documents. "Surprise? I know what's in Joey's will.".Tongue clamped between his teeth as he concentrated on keeping the blue crayon within the lines of the bunny, Barty nodded. "Yeah..No more than a minute after Vanadium departed, a nurse arrived in a rush, no doubt sent by the hateful cop. Hard to tell, through all the tears, if she was a looker. A nice face, perhaps. But such a stick-thin body.. "At home," Otter said. It wasn't a lie. He did have a pouch at home. He kept his fine-work tools and his bubble level in it. And he wasn't altogether lying about the wind. Several times he had managed to bring a bit of magewind into the sail of a boat, though he had no idea how to combat or control a storm, as a ship's weatherworker must do. But he thought he'd rather drown in a gale than be murdered in this hole..The second time, armed with the previously calculated fact that each regular year contains 3,153,600 seconds, and that a leap year contains an additional 86,400, she vetted Barty's answer in only four minutes. Thereafter, she accepted his numbers without verification..Angel cocked her head and studied his left hand, which he had closed while opening his right. She pointed. "It's there.".As they moved around the base of the oak from one vantage point to another, people stopped by to reassure Agnes, although never with a word, as though to speak would be to jinx the climb. Maria placed a hand on her arm, squeezed gently. Celestina briefly massaged the nape of her neck. Edom gave her a quick hug. Grace slipped an arm around her waist for a moment. Wally with a smile and a thumbs-up sign. Tom Vanadium, thumb and forefinger in a confident OK. Lookin' good. Hang in there. Signs and gestures, maybe because they didn't want her to hear the quivers and catches in their voices..She bit her lower lip, held her breath, repressed the sob that sought release, and said, "I know..". "So what I am is I'm your talking eyes." Lowering her hand from his face, Angel said, "Do you know where bacon comes from?".For a while he thought the fear would end only when he perished from it, but eventually it faded, and in its place poured forth self-pity from a bottomless well. Self-pity, of course, is the ideal fuel for anger; which was why, pursuing the Buick through fog, climbing now toward Pacific Heights, Junior was in a murderous rage. By the time he reached Cain's bedroom, Tom Vanadium recognized that the austere decor of the apartment had probably been inspired by the minimalism that the wife killer had noted in the detective's own house in Spruce Hills. This was an uncanny discovery, troubling for reasons that Vanadium couldn't entirely define, but he remained convinced that his perception was correct.. "You should call San Francisco police, have them put your place under surveillance and nail him if he turns up.".There was an otter in our brook.According to the brief biographic note with the picture, Celestina White was a graduate of San Francisco's Academy of Art College. She had been born and raised in Spruce Hills, Oregon, the daughter of a minister..Edom would have judged this a perfect day--except for the earthquake weather. He was convinced that the Big One would bring the coastal cities to ruin before twilight..Earthquake weather. Southern Californians had many definitions of that term, but Edom knew he was right this time. Thunder would roll again soon, but it would arise from underfoot..Between new women and needlepoint pillows, he participated in s?ances, attended lectures given by ghost hunters, visited haunted houses, and read more strange books. He even sat for the camera of a famous medium whose photographs sometimes revealed the auras of benign or malevolent presences hovering in the vicinity of her subject, though in his case she could discern no telltale sign of a spirit..Whether making love or killing, he was never guided by bigotry. A private little joke with himself. But true.. "Well," Agnes said, "thank the Lord, we don't have tornadoes here in California..". "What kept me going these past two and a half years was knowing that I could get my hands on Mr. Cain when I was finally well enough to do something about him..".face with one hand, as if pulling off cobwebs. "Did you say you were in my house?".WHILE THE SLATS of ash-gray light slowly lost their meager luster, and sable shadows metastasized in sinister profusion, the sentinel silence remained unbroken between Junior Cain and the birthmarked man..Lipscomb said, "We're only two and a half blocks from the best Armenian restaurant in the city. I'll dash

over there, bring back some chilled bubbly and an early dinner, if you'll allow me." "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?" Celestina had no illusions about playing detective. She would never be able to track down the bastard, and she had no stomach for confronting him..Junior tossed garments on the floor and across the bed to create the impression that the detective had packed with haste. After being imprudent enough to blast Victoria Bressler five times with his service revolver-perhaps in a jealous rage, or perhaps because he had gone nuts-Vanadium would have been frantic to flee justice..The minister had finished. The service was over. No one came to Junior with condolences, because they would see him again shortly, at the Ford dealership buffet..before used. Boeotian. A dull, obtuse, stupid person. He felt very Boeotian all of a sudden..One problem: Nolly Wulfstan, Quasimodo without a hump, probably repaired to this convenient club after work, to down a few beers, because this was surely as close as he would ever get to a halfway attractive woman. The detective would think that he and Junior were here for the same reason-to gawk at nearly naked babes and store up enough images of bobbling breasts to get through the night-and he would not be able to comprehend that for Junior the attraction was the dance, the intellectual thrill of experiencing a new cultural phenomenon..Yes, she did, she had one, but not much of one, and compared to the McIntosh in Google's throat, this was just a bitty crab apple, easy to overlook, not excessive for a woman..Like the chicken egg. As weary as she was, Agnes could not at once puzzle out the meaning of those four words. Then: "Oh. He's in an incubator."..Clearly touched and intrigued, the magician nevertheless circled the offer in search of reasons to decline, before at last shaking his head sadly. "I doubt that I'm the caliber of person you're looking for, Mrs. Lampion. I wouldn't be entirely a credit to your project."..Because he hadn't heard Victoria Bressler speak in so long-and then only on two occasions-and because the woman on the phone had spoken so softly, Junior couldn't tell whether or not their voices were one and the same..Indeed, even the distinct fragrance of pulp paper, yellow with age, was alone sufficient to start him fantasizing..As nimble as a geriatric cat, crying out with pain, Junior nevertheless sprang onto the deep windowsill and shoved against the twin panes of the window. They were already partly open-but they were also stuck. Crouched on the deep sill, pushing against the parted casement panes of the tall French window, using not just muscle but the entire weight of his body, leaning into them, the maniac tried to force his way out of the bedroom..Tom was aware that something had happened here during the past week, an important development that Celestina mentioned on the phone but that she declined to discuss. He didn't harbor any expectations of what he'd find when she escorted him and Wally into the Lampion dining room, but if he'd tried to imagine the scene awaiting him, he wouldn't have pictured a s?ance..At 3:31 A.M., even the early-winter dawn wasn't near, yet Junior was too awake to return to bed. Though sweet, though melancholy, never ominous, the ghostly singing had left him feeling ... threatened. He considered taking a shower and getting an early start on the day. But he kept remembering Psycho: Anthony Perkins dressed in women's clothes and wielding a butcher knife..In spring, summer, and fall, they brightened the grave with the roses that Edom grew in the side yard. In this less rose-friendly season, these Christmas bouquets had been purchased at a flower shop..Almost as an afterthought, as he was leaving, he tucked the brochure for "This Momentous Day" into a jacket pocket. There would be amusement value in hearing a group of cutting-edge young artists analyze Celestina's greeting-card images. Besides, as the Academy of Art College was the premier school of its type on the West Coast, a few of the partygoers might actually know her and be able to give him some valuable background. The party raged in a cavernous loft on the third-and top-floor of a converted industrial building, the communal residence and studio of a group of artists who believed that art, sex, and politics were the three hammers of violent revolution, or something like that..Agnes's suspicion that Barty would be a child prodigy had grown from seed to full fruit on the morning of the boy's first birthday, when he'd sat in his highchair, counting green-grape-and-apple pies. Through the following two years, ample proof of high intelligence and wondrous talents ripened Agnes's suspicion into conviction..Angel was adamant: "Nope. I could learn that. Like dressing myself and saying thank-you."..Like a disc fish with silvery scales, the coin lay in the cup of Junior's palm. Directly over his life line.."You'll do better away from the ships, all the fighting and raiding. The King's working the old mines at Samory, round the mountain. There you'd be out of his way. Work for him you must, if you want to stay alive. I'll see that you're sent there. If you'll go."..While the doctor proceeded with his evening rounds, the nurse remained with Junior until it was clear that the tranquilizer had calmed him and that he was no longer in danger of succumbing to another bout of hemorrhagic vomiting..His musical abilities were most likely an offshoot of his more extraordinary talent for math. He said that music was numbers, and what he seemed to mean was that he could all but instantly translate the notes of any song into a personal numerical code, retain it, and repeat the song by repeating the memorized sequence of code. When he read sheet music, he saw arrangements of numbers..PAUL DAMASCUS WAS walking the northern coast of California: Point Reyes Station to Tomales, to Bodega Bay, on to Stewarts Point, Gualala, and Mendocino. Some days he put in as little as ten miles, and other days he traveled more than thirty..Junior had seen the silvery coin snapping off the cop's thumb and spinning upward. Now it was gone, as though it had vanished in midair..Junior suspected that no one other than this man's mother called him Tom. He was probably "Detective" to some and "Vanadium" to most who knew him..After Maria, Bonita, and Francesca had gone, when Agnes and her brothers joined forces to clear the table and wash the dishes, Barty kissed them good-night and retired to his room with The Star Beast..Perhaps the paramedic had given him an injection, a sedative. the howling ambulance rocked along on this most momentous day, Junior Cain wept profoundly but quietly--and achieved temporary peace in a dreamless sleep..Still cautious, Junior approached the back door, the window. Vanadium's body lay on the car floor, wrapped in the tumbled blanket.."Oh, sure, I know,"

Mary said. "But when it's a bad place, you feel it before you go in. So you just go around to the next place that isn't bad. No big deal." The machine, one in a bank of four, wasn't filled with ordinary newspapers, which cost only a dime, but with a raunchy tabloid aimed at heterosexual swingers. The paramedic snatched the oxygen feed from his patient's nose and quickly elevated his head, providing a purple towel to catch the thin ejecta. Junior hadn't noticed when the detective stopped turning the coin across his knuckles. All these punctures in the wall. Gouges. Slashes. So much rage required to make them. 2000, the Year of the Dragon, gives way without a roar to the Year of the Snake, and after the Snake comes the Horse. Day by day the work is done, in memory of those who have gone before us, and embarked upon work of her own, young Mary is out there among you. For now, only her family knows how very special she is. On one momentous day, that will change. At home again, in the safety of the family, Barty collapsed in exhaustion from the sustained effort to see with eyes that he didn't possess. Abed for ten days, feverish, afflicted with vertigo and migraine headaches, nauseated, he lost eight pounds before his recovery was complete. Undiminished antiperistaltic waves coursed through his duodenum, stomach, and esophagus, and now he gasped desperately for air between each expulsion, without much success. "I'm not. I'm just going to be the conscience that Enoch Cain seems to have been born without." He felt some guilt at this-but only a little. His sister had done much for him; but jobless, ruled by his obsessions, hobbled by too much of his father's dour nature, there wasn't a lot that he could do for her. Just this benign deceit with the cards. For half an hour he studied Barty's eyes with various devices and instruments. Thereafter, he arranged an immediate appointment with an oncologist, as Joshua Nunn had predicted. "Cancer," she whispered, and superstitiously reproached herself for speaking the word aloud, as though thereby she'd given power to the malignancy and ensured its existence. Draped across his midsection, the terrible cold weight had chilled his flesh; but now his bone marrow prickled with ice at the thought of the birthmarked detective sitting silently in the dark, watching. Junior would have preferred dealing with Naomi, dead and risen and seriously pissed, rather than with this dangerously patient man. Too much clatter, drawing attention. No leisure for romance now, no chance for a two-sister score. just kill Celestina, kill Bartholomew, and go, go. Before Junior had become a physical therapist, he had considered studying to be a dentist. A low tolerance for the stench of halitosis born of gum disease had decided him against dentistry, but he still could appreciate a set of teeth as exceptional as these. In all the many ways things are, across the infinity of worlds and all Creation, Barty believed that no woman existed whose beauty exceeded hers or whose heart was better. Tuesday, January 9, having cashed out a number of investments during the past ten days, Junior made a wire transfer of one and a half million dollars to the Gammoner account in the Grand Cayman bank. He followed an alleyway to the building's service entrance, for which he possessed a key that wasn't provided to other tenants. He unlocked the steel door and stepped into a small, dimly lighted receiving room with gray walls and a speckled blue linoleum floor. Raised by a father to whom any form of amusement was blasphemy, Agnes had never seen a magician perform until she was nineteen, when Joey Lampion, then her suitor, had taken her to a stage show. Rabbits plucked out of top hats, doves conjured from sudden plumes of smoke, assistants sawn in half and mended to walk again; every illusion that had been old even in Houdini's time was a jaw-dropping amazement to her that evening. Now she remembered a trick in which the magician had poured a pitcher of milk into a funnel fashioned from a few pages of a newspaper, causing the milk to vanish when the funnel, still dry, was unrolled to reveal ordinary newsprint. The thrill that had quivered through her that evening measured I on the Richter scale compared to the full 10-point sense of wonder quaking through her at the sight of Barty as dry as if he'd spent the afternoon perched fireside. 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. The paramedic put aside the needle, having used it, and grabbed the paddles of a. around a long time yet, but women outlive men by several years. Actuarial tables aren't wrong. "A speeding truck passed, stirring the fog, and the white broth churned past the car windows, a disorienting swirl. 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. Hound smiled. "They haven't undone what you did yet, either," he said. "Old Whiteface was crawling all over her yesterday, growling and muttering. Ordered the helm replaced." He meant Losen's chief mage, a pale man from the North named Gelluk, who was much feared in Havnor. "Well, the lab could detect abnormally high salt levels, but that wouldn't matter in court. He could say he ate a lot of salty foods." "Nicholas Deed." On her tongue, the name was as bitter as a dissolving aspirin. Missing windshield. Considering that the space was pinched by the crumpled roof, however, and in light of Agnes's pregnancy and imminent second-stage labor, the severe contortions involved in this extraction would be too dangerous. Agnes dropped to one knee before the boy and held him gently by the shoulders. "Let me look." Bill wasn't impressed. "They build houses out of mud in China. No wonder everything falls down." and humble. They managed to worry up tuition for art school, but Celestina worked as a waitress to pay for her studio apartment and other needs. To the left, a door led to a back staircase, accessible with the special key already in his hand. To the right: a key-operated service elevator for which he'd been provided a separate key. To Edom, humanity was obviously not the greater of these two destructive forces. Men and women were part of nature, not above it, and their evil was, therefore, just one more example of nature's malignant intent. They had stopped debating this issue years ago, however, neither man conceding any credibility to the other's dogma. If Agnes knew that Jacob had been helping her game, she might never play cards with him again. She would not approve of what he had done. Consequently, his great skill as a card mechanic must be forever his secret. In

the face of his kindness, however, she couldn't refuse his request. She nodded.. "We don't sell no pizza," Angel said, because lately they had received a few calls for a new pizzeria with a phone number one digit different from theirs.. But he was more than she had ever imagined her boy to be, more than merely a prodigy.. Slow deep breaths. Per Zedd, slow deep breaths. Any state of anxiety, regardless of how powerful, could be ameliorated or even dissipated. He was uncomfortable, achy, thirsty, but he remained utterly still and observant. After a while, he realized that the sense of oppression with which he'd awakened was not entirely a psychological symptom: Something heavy lay across his abdomen. And it was cold-so cold, in fact, that it had numbed his middle to the extent that he hadn't immediately felt the chill of it. Shivers coursed through him. He clenched his jaws to prevent his teeth from chattering and thereby alerting the man in the chair. Although he never took his eyes off the corner, Junior became preoccupied with trying to puzzle out what was draped across his midsection. The mysterious observer made him sufficiently nervous that he couldn't order his thoughts as well as usual, and the effort to prevent the shivers from shaking a sound out of him only further interfered with his ability to reason. The longer that he was unable to identify the frigid object, the more alarmed he became. He almost cried out when into his mind oozed an image of Naomi's dead body, now past the whitest shade of pale, as gray as the faint light at the window and turning pale green in a few places, and cold, all the heat of life gone from her flesh, which was not yet simmering with any of the heat of decomposition that would soon enliven it again.. He was uncharacteristically restive. His stoic nature, his long learned Jesuit philosophy regarding the acceptance of events as they unfold, and the acquired patience of a homicide detective were insufficient to prevent frustration from taking root in him. In the more than two months since Enoch Cain vanished, following the murder of Reverend White, no trace of the killer had been found. Week by week, the slender sapling of frustration had grown into a tree and then into a forest, until Tom began every morning by looking out through the tightly woven branches of impatience.. The sensual memories of his torrid evening with Seraphim had left Junior aroused. Unfortunately, the only female nearby was Industrial Woman, and he wasn't that desperate.. "Yeah," he confirmed, applying a blue crayon to a grinning bunny that was dancing with a squirrel.. She got a can of soda, returned to the table, and sat down as if finished with her explorations. "You're okay, Barty."

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