

SUPPLEMENTARY TEACHER RESOURCES FOR GRADE 1 COMMON CORE EDITION

In spite of the thousands of hours that Paul was afoot, he seldom thought about why he walked. He met people along the way who asked, and he had answers for them, but he never knew if any answer might be the truth. In his seventies but vigorous and full of fun, Sparky liked to take an occasional jaunt to Reno, to pump the slot machines and try a few hands of blackjack. The off-the-record, tax-free monthly checks from Simon were gratefully received, ensuring the old man's cooperation with the conspiracy. He switched off the flashlight and stood solemnly for a moment, paying his respects to Seraphim. She had been so sweet, so innocent, so supple, so exquisitely proportioned. The magazine covers were colorful, lurid, full of violence and eeriness and the coy sexual suggestiveness of a more innocent time. Most days, he read a story while eating the two pieces of fruit that were his lunch, but sometimes he lost himself in a particularly vivid illustration, daydreaming about far places and great adventures. After poring through enough sensational newspaper accounts to be convinced that the curse-casting reverend was undeniably dead, Junior had acquired four pieces of surprising information. Three were of vital importance to him. Junior's heart knocked so hard and fast that he wouldn't have been surprised if Vanadium, at the far end of the room, had begun to tap his foot in time with it. He had noted all seven names on the bassinets, but he read them again. He sensed in their names-or in one of their names-the explanation for his seemingly mad perception of a looming threat. The toast now came to Celestina. "To Phimie, who will be with me in memory every hour of every day for the rest of my life, until she is with me again for real. And to ... to this most momentous day." Vanadium's vehicle, obviously not an official police sedan, was a blue 1961 Studebaker Lark Regal. A dumpy and inelegant car, it looked as though it had been designed specifically to complement the stocky detective's physique. In the tree, the girl grinned. "Even if he stays up there until dawn, he'll still be coming down in the dark, won't he. Oh, we'll be fine, Aunt Aggie. This thought startled Agnes, disturbed her-yet, inexplicably, it also poured a measure of warm comfort into her chilled heart. Naked, dripping, he roamed the apartment. As on the night of December 13, the voice seemed to arise from thin air: ahead of him, then behind him, to the right, but now to the left. He usually ate lunch alone in his office. The room was the size of an elevator, but of course didn't go up or down. It went sideways, however, in the sense that herein Paul was transported into wondrous lands of adventure. Snap, snap, snap! Three more quarters ricocheted off the left side of his face-temple, cheek, jaw. Since childhood, he had been waiting for this moment-if indeed it was The Moment-and he had nearly lost hope that the much-desired encounter would ever come to pass. He had expected to find others with his perceptions among physicists or mathematicians, among monks or mystics, but never in the form of a three-year-old girl dressed all in midnight-blue except for a red belt and two red hair bows. Celestina, the battering Baptist, back in action, came at him again. With one leg broken, another cracked, and the stretcher bar splintered, the chair wasn't as formidable a weapon as it had been. She swung it, Junior dodged, she struck at him again, he juked, and she reeled away from him, gasping. "Well, anyway," she said, as though Muffins uncharacteristic viciousness had been adequately explained, "this mending ought to cover ten more lessons." The hateful window. The hateful, frozen window. Celestina wrenched on the crank with all of her strength, and felt something give a little, wrenched, but then the crank popped out of the socket and rapped against the sill. In the dark woods of the dream, still the presence: faceless and silent, radiating a merciless intent. Suddenly remembering the doctor's assurance to Neddy that they would be out of this building by week's end, Celestina said, "But we've nowhere to go." 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!" This graciousness didn't free Paul to speak. Instead, he felt his throat thicken, trapping his voice more tightly still. With the uniformed troopers was a stocky, late-fortyish, brush-cut man in black slacks and a gray herringbone sports jacket. His face was almost pan flat, his first chin weak, his second chin stronger than the first, and his function unknown to Junior. He would have been the least likely man to be noticed in a ten-thousand-man convention of nonentities, if not for the port-wine birthmark that surrounded his right eye, darkening most of the bridge of his nose, brightening half his forehead, and returning around the eye to stain the upper portion of his cheek. A Description of Earthsea. That Olympian purge had, however, made him appear to be both emotionally and physically devastated by the loss of his wife. He couldn't have calculated any stratagem more likely to convince most. If killing the wrong Bartholomew had broken a dam in Junior and released a lake of tension, whacking the right Bartholomew would set loose an ocean of pent-up stress, and he would feel free as he'd not felt since the fire tower. Freer than he'd been in his entire life. A smoldering cigarette, usually dangling aslant from one corner of a hard mouth set in a cynical sneer, was standard issue for tough-guy gumshoes, but Nolly didn't smoke. His failure to develop this bad habit resulted in a less satisfyingly murky atmosphere than the clients of a private dick might expect. "Maybe he's a character I saw in a movie or read in a novel. I'm a member of the Book-of-the-Month Club. I'm always reading one thing or another. I don't remember a character named B-Bartholomew, but maybe I read the book years ago." In his mind, Junior saw a quarter turning knuckle over knuckle, and he heard the maniac cop's droning voice: There's a fine George and Ira Gershwin song called "Someone to Watch over Me." You ever hear it, Enoch? I'm that someone for you, although not, of course, in a romantic sense. Charmed by the vulnerability of the young, he'd never slept with an older woman. The prospect intrigued him. She would have tricks in her repertoire that younger women were too inexperienced to know. As the last of the flan was served and Maria's girls took their seats once more, Barty blinked at the candles and said, "Gone now," even though the tiny spectrums still shimmered in the cut crystal. He turned his full attention to the flan with such enthusiasm that his mother soon stopped puzzling over rainbows. "It

doesn't have to be grand," she said, with a seductive leer, "but if we're going to wait, then the wedding better be soon." "Just now." Although Angel tried to sound nonchalant, she was trembling. "I'm not sure I can do it again." Later, after they finished eating but were still sitting at the table over coffee, the conversation turned solemn, although for the moment, the subject wasn't the late Harrison White. How long the two women and the girl must hide out, when and where they would be able to resume lives as normal as might still be possible for them: These were the issues of the moment. Besides, Junior was reluctant to kill Vanadium, for real this time, and risk discovering- that the detective's filthy-scabby-monkey spirit would in fact prove to be a relentless haunting presence that gave him no peace. At Thanksgiving dinner, again at the three tables set end to end, in the year of the triple zero, Mary Lampion, now fourteen years old, made an interesting announcement over the pumpkin pie. In her travels where none but she could go, after seven fascinating years of exploring a fraction of all the infinite worlds, she said she sensed beyond doubt that, as Barty's mother had told him on her deathbed, there is one special place beyond all the ways things are, one shining place. On the lawn, Koko, their four-year-old golden retriever, was lying on her back, all paws in the air, presenting the great gift of her furry belly for the rubbing pleasure of young Mistress Mary. When all were gathered on the porch, lined up across the head of the steps and along the railing, in chill damp air that smelled faintly of ozone and less faintly of jasmine, Barty said, "Mr. Vanadium, your quarter trick is really cool. But here's something out of Heinlein." If Junior was not discreet, and if gossip about the widower Cain and the sexy nurse began to circulate, Vanadium would be on the case again even if it had been closed. The cop was sick, hateful, driven by unknowable inner demons. Although he might for the moment have been reined in by those in higher office, mere gossip of a spicy nature would be excuse enough for him to open the file again, which he'd surely do without informing his superiors. Enigmatic as ever on this subject, he continued: "I'm probably not blind more places than I am. Yeah, sure, I'd rather be me in one of the other places where my eyes are good, but this is the me I am. And you know what?" Up flew his hands, as white as doves, flapping as though trying to escape from the sleeves of his raincoat, as if he were a magician rather than a musician. "Supposing he's senile, wouldn't he possibly think you were his long- lost brother or someone?" Whether making love or killing, he was never guided by bigotry. A private little joke with himself. But true. First, he searched immediately around the dead man, figuring that the watch might still be snared on the coat belt or on one of the sleeve straps. No luck. "Retinoblastoma is usually unilateral," Dr. Chan continued, "occurring in one eye. Bartholomew has tumors in both." "December 1, 1958, in Chicago, Illinois, a parochial-school fire killed ninety-five." Instead of answering the question, meaning to imply that he believed Junior already knew the facts, Thomas Vanadium said, "I was able to get a warrant to search your house." Junior thought this must be a trick. No hard evidence existed to indicate that Naomi had died at the hands of another rather than by accident. Junior closed his eyes at once and let his jaw sag, breathing through his mouth, feigning sleep. 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. He would never allow himself to be bankrupted and made poor again. Never. His fortune had been won at enormous risk, with great fortitude and determination. He must defend it at any cost. AS GREASY WITH FEAR sweat as a pig on a slaughterhouse ramp, Junior woke from a nightmare that he could not remember. Something *is reaching for him-that's all he could recall, hands clutching at him out of the dark-and then he was awake, wheezing. Night still pressed at the glass beyond the venetian blind. The pharmacy lamp in the corner was aglow, but the chair that had been beside it was no longer there. It had been moved closer to Junior's bed. 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. "And after Phimie was gone ... he still hoped to learn the rapist's name, put him in prison. But then something changed his mind ... oh, maybe two years ago. Suddenly, he wanted to let it go, leave judgment to God. He said if the rapist was as twisted as Phimie claimed, then Angel and I might be in danger if we ever learned a name and went to the police. Don't stir a hornet's nest, let sleeping dogs be, and all that. I don't know what changed his mind." Short and slender, Dr. Chan was as self-effacing as a Buddhist monk, as confident and as gracious as a mandarin emperor. His manner was serene, and his effect was tranquility. Friday brought Scamp again, all of Scamp, all day, every way, wall-to-wall Scamp, so on Saturday he hadn't enough energy to do more than shower. Had he ever thought he could get away with this? He must have been delusional, temporarily mad. "No. Lampion. Somewhere in your father's French background, there must have been lamp makers. A lampion is a small lamp, an oil lamp with a tinted-glass chimney. Among other things, in those long ago days, they used them on carriages." As a matter of principle, Junior considered firing the slit-mouthed troll on the spot, but then Magusson said, "You shouldn't be bothered any further by Detective Vanadium." Edom and Jacob came to dinner with Agnes every evening. And though the past weighed heavily on them when they were under this roof, without fail they stayed long enough to wash the dishes before fleeing back to their apartments over the garage. In the kitchen, he fussily avoided the blood and stepped around Victoria to switch off both ovens. He killed the gas flame under the large pot of boiling water on the cook top. A mutual interest in ballroom dancing had resulted in their introduction when each needed a new partner for a fox-trot and swing competition. Nolly had started taking lessons five years before he had met Kathleen. guarantee against self-incrimination, a slap in the face of justice, a violation of the rights of man. WALLY HAD NOT gone home with Death, but they had definitely been at the dance together. 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. Agnes had the craziest notion that he was counting them, when at is age, Of course, he would have no concept of numbers. Now her mooring was Wally Lipscomb-obstetrician, pediatrician, landlord, and best friend--who arrived halfway through the

reception. As she listened to Helen Greenbaum's sales report, Celestina held Wally's hand so tightly that had it been a plastic champagne flute, it would have cracked..As though one of the quarters had dropped into his ear and triggered a golden oldie in the jukebox of his mind, Junior heard Vanadium's voice in the hospital room, in Spruce Hills, on the night of the day when Naomi died: "en you cut Naomi's string, you put an end to the effects that her music would have on the lives of others and on the shape of the future.....In the gallery windows, eight of the nine sculptures were so disturbing that many passersby, catching sight of them, blanched and looked away and hurried on. Not everyone can be a connoisseur.. "And you're saying fear can fill his emptiness as well as sex or booze?" Kathleen wondered..Rising, Celestina said to Tom, "Last Tuesday night, we had to switch on the lawn sprinklers. This will be much better."..On the sofa, Celestina finally worked up the courage to dial her parents' number in Spruce Hills..No. Not exactly then. Not at the sight of the coin or the detective. He had felt this way at Vanadium's mention of the name that he, Junior, had supposedly spoken in his nightmare..A nuclear-powered sound system blasted out the Doors, Jefferson Airplane, the Mamas and the Papas, Strawberry Alarm Clock, Country Joe and the Fish, the Lovin' Spoonful, Donovan (unfortunately), the Rolling Stones (annoyingly), and the Beatles (infuriatingly). Megatons of music crashed off the brick walls, made the many-paned metal framed windows reverberate like the drumheads in a hard-marching military band, and created simultaneously an exhilarating sense of possibility and a sense of doom, the feeling that Armageddon was coming soon but that it was going to be fun..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..The hall was deserted. Then a woman came out of one of the offices and walked toward the gallery, without glancing at him.. "I'm gonna dream about baby chickens," she told Celestina, "and if I'm all yellow, they'll think I'm one of them."..room, heavier and colder than the ice bags that were draped across Junior's midsection.. "There's nothing here for you," she said, stepping back from the door in order to close it..Returning his attention to his own shoes, Jacob said, "So ... what am I supposed to do about this?"..Paul realized that the kitchen had fallen silent, that the women had turned to the two children and now stood as motionless as figures in a waxworks tableau..Studying the brochure, Junior felt that the best response to this artist's work was to go directly into the bathroom, stick one finger down his throat, and purge himself. Considering his medical history, however, he couldn't afford to be such an expressive critic..His first overnight journey, in June of '65, was to La Jolla, north of San Diego. He carried too large a backpack and wore khaki pants when he should have worn shorts in the summer heat..The symptoms that terrified Phimie-the headache, crippling abdominal pain, dizziness, vision problems-had entirely relented. Possibly they had been more psychological than physical in nature.. "By the way he acted, you'd have sworn that he gave me and Angel shelter in the storm, back then, instead of turning us out to freeze in the snow."..find reason to celebrate every development in life, including the cruelest catastrophe, by discovering the bright side to even the darkest hour..Turning in circles, he tipped his head back, presenting his face to the streaming sky, laughing..He vanished through some hole, some slit, some tear bigger than anything through which Tom flipped his quarters..Out of a sphinx face, Obadiah conjured a smile that lifted the point of his white goatee when he turned his head to look at Edom. "Ah ... so long ago," he murmured, as though speaking to himself. "So long ago ... but I remember now." He winked at Edom..Edom, eager to learn precisely when a tidal wave or falling asteroid would bring his doom, fetched a pack of cards from a cabinet in the parlor. When Maria explained that only every third card was read and that a full look at the future required four decks, Edom returned to the parlor to scare up three more..Nevertheless, he stepped away from the wall, and with his hands extended to full arm's length, he turned, feeling the lightless world around him. Nothing. No one..Victoria lived on the northeast edge of Spruce Hills, where streets petered into country lanes. Here the houses tended to be more rustic, built on larger and less formally landscaped lots than those closer to the center of town, and set back farther from the street..And although Simon would have denied it, would even have joked that a conscience was a liability for an attorney, he possessed a moral compass. When he traveled too far along the wrong trail, that magnetized needle in his soul led him back from the land of the lost..Striving to appear casual, but obviously unnerved, the pencil-thin man backed off again. "The paintings are lovely, wonderful, I'm enormously impressed. I'm a friend of the artist's, you know. She was a tenant of mine, I was her landlord during her early college years, in her salad days, a nice little studio apartment, before the baby. A lovely girl, I always knew she'd be a success, it was so apparent in even her earliest work. I just had to come tonight, even though a friend's covering two of my four sets. I couldn't miss this."..She wanted so badly to believe, to see her son made whole again, and the funny thing was that she could believe, and without emotional risk, because it was true..NOT IN A MOOD to garden, but wearing the proper gloves, Junior clicked on the foyer light, the hall light, the kitchen light, and stepped around the clubbed-smothered-shot nurse, to the range, where he switched on the right oven, in which an unfinished pot roast was cooling, and the left oven, in which the dinner plates waited to be warmed. He cranked up a flame again under the pot of water that had been boiling earlier-and glanced hungrily at the uncooked pasta that Victoria had weighed and set aside..Until Nolly, Kathleen's life had been as short on romance as a saltless saltine is short on flavor. Her childhood and even her adolescence were so colorless that she'd settled on dentistry as a career because it seemed, by comparison to what she knew, to be an exotic and exciting profession. She'd dated a few men, but all were boring and none was kind. Ballroom-dancing lessons-and ultimately competitions-promised the romance that dentistry and dating hadn't provided, but even dancing

was somewhat a disappointment until her instructor introduced Kathleen to this balding, bull-necked, lumpy, utterly wonderful Romeo..Incredibly, Renee came after him, slinky and seductive, trying to calm him and lure him back into an embrace..So quick, this violence, over even as it began. Because he had no interest in aftermath, however, Junior suffered no disappointment at the briefness of the thrill. The past was past, and as he closed the front door and stepped around the body, he focused on the future..Junior got in the car once more, slammed the door, and said, "Panfaced, double-chinned, half-bald, puke-collecting creep."..Maria Gonzalez arrived with her daughters, and while it was natural for Angel to be drawn to the company of older girls, she had no interest in anyone but Barty..The possibility that he'd left a clear fingerprint on the watch crystal had to be judged remote. And the band had been too textured to take a print useful to the police..The glimmering bay and the shimmering amber candlelight provided the perfect atmosphere for the song that arose now from the piano in the bar..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..Angel. A less exotic synonym for her own name. Seraphim's angel. The angel of an angel..Tom Vanadium's uninflected but curiously hypnotic voice, his pensive manner, his gray eyes so beautiful in that fractured face, his air of measured melancholy, and his evident intelligence gave him a presence that was simultaneously as solid as a great mass of granite and yet otherworldly..Barty's mathematical genius proved to have a valuable practical application. Even in his blindness, he perceived patterns where those with sight did not. Working with Tom Vanadium, he devised strikingly successful investment strategies based on subtleties of the stock market's historical performance. By the 1980s, the foundation's annual return on its endowment averaged twenty-six percent: excellent in light of the fact that the runaway inflation of the 1970s had been curbed..He chased after none of these lovelies beyond a few dates, and none of them pursued him when he was done with them, although surely they were distressed if not bereft at losing him..Yet he didn't fault himself for a lack of sensitivity. He'd met this woman only once before. He wasn't emotionally invested in her as he had been in sweet Naomi.."Stop it, stop it! " Agnes, only ten years old, slender and shaking, but wild with righteousness, until now held in thrall by her own fear, by the memory of all the beatings that she herself has taken. She screams at their father and strikes him with a book she's brought from the house. The Bible. She strikes their father with the Bible, from which he's read to them every night of their lives. He drops the roses, tears the holy book out of Agnes's hands, and pitches it across the yard. He rakes up a handful of the scattered roses, intending to make his son resume this dinner of sin, but here comes Agnes once more, the Bible recovered, brandishing it at him, and now she says what all of them know to be true but what none of them has ever dared say, what even Agnes herself will never again dare to say after this day, not while the old man lives, but she dares to say it now, holding the Bible toward him, so he can see the gold-embossed cross upon the imitation-leather cover. "Murderer," Agnes says. "Murderer " And Edom knows that they're all as good as dead now, that their father will slaughter them right here, right this minute, in his rage. "Murderer," she says accusingly, behind the shield of the Bible, and she doesn't mean that he is killing Edom, but that he killed their mother, that they heard him in the night, three years before, heard the short but awful struggle, and know that what happened was no accident. Roses fall from his skinned and pierced hands, a flurry of petals yellow and petals red. He rises and takes a step toward Agnes, his dripping fists crimson with his blood and with Edom's. Agnes doesn't back away, but thrusts the book toward him, and scintillant sunlight caresses the cross. Instead of tearing the book out of her hands again, their father stalks away, into the house, surely to return with club or cleaver ... yet they will see no more of him this day. Then Agnes-with tweezers for the thorns, with a basin full of warm water and a washcloth, with iodine and Neosporin and bandages-kneels beside him in the yard. Jacob, too, comes forth from the dark crawlspace under the porch, having watched in terror from behind the latticework skirt. He is shaking, crying, flushed with embarrassment because he didn't intervene, although he was wise to hide, for the disciplinary beating of one twin usually leads to the pointless beating of the other. Agnes gradually settles Jacob by involving him in the treatment of his brother's wounds, and to Edom she says, often thereafter, "I love your roses, Edom. I love your roses. God loves your roses, Edom." Overhead, agitated wings quiet to a soft flutter, and the shrieking crows grow silent. The air pools as still and heavy as the water in a hidden lagoon within a secret glade, in the perfect garden of the unfallen....Eye to eye with Tom, Celestina herself did some clear-seeing. "You're special, too, in lots of obvious ways. But like Angel, you're special in some secret way ... aren't you?".The wedding reception-big, noisy, and joyous-spread across the three properties without fences. His mother's name was so often mentioned, her presence so strongly felt in all the lives that she had touched, that sometimes it seemed that she was actually there with them..pistol that he'd purchased in late June. The city operated a program to melt confiscated and donated weapons and to remake them into plowshares or xylophones, or into the metal fittings of hookah pipes..She shook her head, and red bows fluttered. "No. 'Cause you didn't just move it around."..Teasing out the card, Edom saw that it was an ace of diamonds-remarkable in light of Maria Gonzalezs fortune'-telling session last Friday evening. He was more astonished, however, by the name printed in black ink diagonally across the face of the card: BARTHOLOMEW..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..Turning away from the window, Celestina grabbed the girl and pushed her toward the bed, whispering, "Down, under."..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.. "One of the things I was searching for in your house was a life insurance policy on your wife. I didn't find one. Didn't find any canceled checks for the premium, either." Already, the girl had taken Barty's hand. The two kids descended from the porch into the rain. They didn't circle the oak, but stopped at the foot of the steps and turned to face the house.. Alone with Paul, as he stood abashed, she removed her blouse and bra and, with arms crossed over her breasts, revealed to him her savaged back. Whereas her father had used open-hand slaps and hard fists to teach his twin sons the lessons of God, he preferred canes and lashes as the instruments of education for his daughter, because he believed that his direct touch might have invited sin. Scars disfigured Agnes from shoulders to buttocks, pale scars and others dark, crosshatched and whorled.. Celestina didn't hear gunfire, but she couldn't mistake the bullets for anything else when they cracked through the door.. Her brothers' solemnity irritated Agnes. They appeared to be taking this reading seriously, as though it were far more than just a little after-dinner entertainment.. Many police agencies required an officer to carry a firearm even when off duty. If the Oregon State Police had no such rule, Vanadium most likely carried one anyway, because in his crazy-as-a-snake mind., "Will I love you tomorrow, you mean, and the day after tomorrow, and on forever? Of course, forever, Wally, always." Junior picked up his pace, pushing through the crowd, repeatedly glancing back, and although he caught only quick squints of the dead cop's face, he could tell that something was terribly wrong with it. Never a candidate for matinee-idol status, Vanadium looked markedly worse than before. The port-wine birthmark still pooled around his right eye. His features were not merely pan-flat and plain, as they had been before, but were ... distorted.. Celestina's question had been about Phimie, but they had told her about the baby, and she was alarmed by their evasion.. The boy's difference was defined as much by what he didn't do as by what he did. For one thing, he didn't observe the Terrible Twos, the period of toddler rebellion that usually frayed the nerves of the most patient parents. No tantrums for the Pie Lady's son, no bossiness, no crankiness.. Later, at home, after Agnes sent Edom back to his apartment, she opened a bottle of vodka that she had bought on the way back from Maria's. She mixed it with orange juice in a waterglass.. Each page comprised four columns of names and numbers, most with addresses. Approximately one hundred names filled each column, four hundred to a page.. Vanadium continued in his characteristic drone, a tone at odds with the colorful content of his speech: "A man takes one look at his wife's body, starts to sweat harder than a copulating hog, spews like a frat boy at the end of a long beer-chugging contest, and chucks till he chucks up blood-that's not the response of your average murderer." The room was bright enough for him to confirm that he was alone. The interior of the box in which Naomi now resided could be no more silent than this house.. Somewhere, he does. Daddy died here, but he didn't die every place I am. it's lonely for me here, but not lonely for me everywhere.. After a little silence Otter said, "Thanks." And he looked up at Hound, one brief, questioning, judging glance.. During the past few hours, he had changed his life again, as dramatically as he had changed it on that fire tower almost three years ago.. Junior had thought the news was the lab report, which had found no ippecac in his spew. All that had been distraction.

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