

D A PATHFINDER IN MEDICINE WITH SELECTIONS FROM HER WRITINGS AND A C

sport shirt just for no reason at all, because she thought he'd look nice in it?".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..stopped by to help Agnes, and some offered to stay with her at night. She gratefully accepted assistance with the housecleaning, laundry, and shopping, but she declined the all-night company because of her dreams..Later, at home in bed, after Nolly proved the value of oysters, he and Kathleen lay holding hands. Following a companionable silence, he said, "It's a mystery.".The way one does research into nonexistent history is to tell the story and find out what happened. I believe this isn't very different from what historians of the so-called real world do. Even if we are present at some historic event, do we comprehend it-can we even remember it-until we can tell it as a story? And for events in times or places outside our own experience, we have nothing to go on but the stories other people tell us. Past events exist, after all, only in memory, which is a form of imagination. The event is real now, but once it's then, its continuing reality is entirely up to us, dependent on our energy and honesty. If we let it drop from memory, only imagination can restore the least glimmer of it. If we lie about the past, forcing it to tell a story we want it to tell, to mean what we want it to mean, it loses its reality, becomes a fake. To bring the past along with us through time in the hold-alls of myth and history is a heavy undertaking; but as Lao Tzu says, wise people march along with the baggage wagons..Lipscomb shifted his gaze from the street below to the source of the rain. "Phimie was not gone long, perhaps a minute-a minute and ten seconds at most-and when she was with us again, it was clear from her condition that the cardiac arrest was most likely secondary to a massive cerebral incident. She was disoriented, paralysis on the right side ... with the distortion of the facial muscles that you saw. Her speech was slurred at first, but then something strange happened. . .Angel, on the window seat, wore nothing but white. White sneakers and socks. White pants. White T-shirt. Two white bows in her hair..On a shelf above one of the clothes rods stood a single piece of Mark Cross luggage, an elegant and expensive two-suitier. The rest of the high shelf was empty-enough space for as many as three more bags..The singular beauty of San Francisco and the exquisite patina of its colorful history spoke to her heart and kindled in her such an unreasonable passion that she sometimes wondered, at least half seriously, if she had spent other lives here. Often, streets were wondrously familiar to her the first time that she set foot on them. Certain great houses, dating from the late 1800s and early 1900s, inspired her to imagine elegant parties thrown.Leaving the children under the tree, Tom returned to the house to phone the police..As luck would have it," the nun said, "Dr. Lipscomb was in the when it happened. He'd just delivered another baby under."Oh!" She blotted her eyes on the heels of her hands. "Wait! Give me a second chance. I can do it better, I'm sure I can.".LATE TUESDAY AFTERNOON in Bright Beach, as a darker blue and iridescent tide rolled across the sky, seagulls rowed toward their safe harbors, and on the land below, shadows that had been upright at work all day now stretched out, recumbent, preparing for the night.. "Everybody needs cheese," Angel said, which apparently meant that Mrs. Ornwall would never lack work. "Mommy, you're wrong..He yearned for a new heart mate. He was wise enough to know that no amount of yearning could transform the wrong woman into the right one. Love couldn't be demanded, planned, or manufactured. Love always came as a surprise, snuck up on you when you were least expecting it, like Anthony Perkins in a dress..Jacob had spent most of two days baking Barty's favorite pies, cakes, and cookies, and he'd prepared a meal as well. Maria's girls were at her sister's place this evening, so she stayed for dinner. Edom poured wine for everyone but Barty, root beer for the guest of honor, and while this couldn't be called a celebration, Agnes's spirits were lifted by a sense of normality, of hope, of family..Toward the front of the house, along a hallway suddenly as dark as a tunnel, toward a vague light in the seething gloom. And here a window at the end of the hall..He clenched the steering wheel tightly with both hands, clenched his teeth so fiercely that his jaw muscles bulged and twitched, and clenched his mind around a stubborn determination to get control of himself. Slow deep breaths. Positive thoughts..Although she had never seen snow other than in pictures and on film, this deep-settled silence seemed to speak of failing flakes, of white muffling mantles, and she wouldn't have been in the least surprised if, stepping outside, she had found herself in a glorious winter landscape, cold and crystalline, here on the always-snowless hills and shores of the California Pacific.. "I suppose anyone could fill some empty gelatin capsules with the syrup," said Parkhurst. "But-" "Roll your own, so to speak. Then he could palm a few of them, swallow 'em without water, and the reaction would be delayed maybe.Smiling in the fearless dark, she listened to the rhythmic breathing of a sleeping boy.. "I know you, kid. You can handle anything from here on, whether it's a sold-out show or it's not, whether you're going to be famous or just another nobody.. "Yeah, but I've been thinking about that. If he feels some kind of responsibility ... then why did he ever represent Cain in the first place?".Two high-quality deadbolt locks. Sufficient protection against the average intruder, but inadequate to keep out a self-improved man with channeled anger.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..And though Barty was not shy, neither was he a show-off. He didn't seek praise for his accomplishments, and in fact, they were little known outside of his immediate family. His satisfaction came entirely from learning, exploring, growing.. "Yes, I was." She didn't tell him that her fear had not been allayed by his assurances or by his second walk in the rain..Junior locked the door. He started the engine and drove out of the cemetery faster than was prudent on the winding service road..Years earlier, a stream had been diverted to fill the vast excavation. Stock fish were added, mostly trout and bass..Using a clean rag that they had brought to polish the engraved face of the memorial, Barty said, "Is he good with numbers like me?".Fascinated by this strange new realm, Angel returned to her chair periodically, between explorations, to sip apple

juice and to reveal her latest discoveries: "They got yellow shelf paper. They got potatoes in a drawer. They got four kinds of pickles in the refrigerator. They got a toaster under a sock with pictures of birds on it." Focus, Caesar Zedd teaches, is the sole quality that separates millionaires from the flea-ridden, sore-pocked, urine-soaked winos who live in cardboard boxes and discuss vintages of Ripple with their pet rats. Millionaires have it, winos don't. Likewise, nothing but the ability to focus separates an Olympic athlete from a cripple who lost his legs in a car wreck. The athlete has focus, and the cripple doesn't. After all, Zedd notes, if the cripple had it, he would have been a better driver, an Olympic athlete, and a millionaire. Agnes invited everyone to stay for dinner. The pies were no sooner finished than large cook pots, saucepans, colanders, and other heavy artillery were requisitioned from the Lampron culinary arsenal. The beetle-green Pontiac waited in the driveway, with a shine that tempted nature to throw around some bad weather. Joey always kept a spotless car, and he probably wouldn't have had time to earn a living if he had resided in some shine-spoiling climate rather than in southern California. He was surprised they had come so soon, less than twenty-four hours after the tragedy. This was especially unusual, considering that a homicide detective was obsessed with the idea that rotting wood, alone, was not responsible for Naomi's death. Before he searched the bedroom, Vanadium walked quickly back through the rooms that he had already inspected, suddenly remembering the three bizarre paintings of which Nolly, Kathleen, and Sparky had spoken, and wondering how he could have overlooked them. They were not here. He was able to locate, however, the places on the walls where the art works had hung, because the nails still bristled from the pocket plaster, and picture hooks dangled from the nails. Writing came with reading, and in a notebook, he began to make entries about points of interest in the stories that he enjoyed. His *Diary of a Book Reader*, as he titled it, fascinated Agnes, who read it with his permission; these notes to himself were enthusiastic, earnest, and charming-but literally month by month, Agnes noticed that they grew less naive, more complex, more contemplative. Admittedly, she had allowed herself to be disturbed by the fall of the cards, too. According to them any credibility at all opened the door to full belief. Grace declined food, but Tom ordered for her, anyway, selecting those things that by now he knew Celestina liked, guessing that the mother's taste had shaped the daughter's. "Forget Barty's tree for a second and imagine that all these many worlds are like stacked slices of Swiss cheese. Through some holes, you can see only the next slice. Through others, you see through two or three or five slices before holes stop overlapping. There are little holes between stacked worlds, too, but they're constantly shifting, changing, second by second. And I can't see them, really, but I have an uncanny feel for them. Watch closely." Junior thought he was alone, but just when he felt capable of summoning the energy to shift to a more comfortable position, he heard a man clear his throat. The phlegmy sound had come from beyond. EVERY MOTHER BELIEVES that her baby is breathtakingly beautiful. She will remain unshakably convinced of this even if she lives to be a centenarian and her child has been harrowed by eight hard decades of gravity and experience. This graciousness didn't free Paul to speak. Instead, he felt his throat thicken, trapping his voice more tightly still. 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. She took a deep breath. She lifted her head, straightened her shoulders, and went inside, where a new life waited for her. "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. An IV rack stood beside the bed, dripping fluid into his vein, replacing the electrolytes that he had lost through vomiting, most likely medicating him with an antiemetic as well. His right arm was securely strapped to a supporting board, to prevent him from bending his elbow and accidentally tearing out the needle. She didn't have an appetite, anyway. Joey was too much on her mind. The safe birth of a healthy child was a blessing, but it wasn't compensation for her

loss. Although by nature resistant to depression, she now had a darkness in her heart that would not relent before a thousand dawns or ten thousand. If a mere nurse had insisted that she eat, Agnes would not have been persuaded, but she couldn't hold out against the insistent importuning of one special seamstress..In the car again, a block from home, Barty said, "Maybe you could just not tell Uncle Edom and Uncle Jacob until Sunday night. They won't handle it real well. You know?".Against the sight of Franklin Chan's pity, which implied the hopelessness of Barty's condition, Agnes closed her eyes. But she opened them at once, because this chosen darkness reminded her that unwanted darkness might be Barty's fate.. "Sure. There's lots of places where he didn't get shot, but there's places where he got shot and died, too.".The walls were barren. The only art in these rooms was a single sculpture. Junior was taking university extension courses in art appreciation and almost daily haunting the city's countless galleries, constantly deepening and refining his knowledge. He intended to refrain from acquiring a collection until he was as expert on the subject as any director of any museum in the city..While waiting for inspiration to present him with a better strategy, Junior returned to the telephone book in search of the right Bartholomew. Not the directory for Spruce Hills and the surrounding county, but the one for San Francisco..Saturday and Sunday, between sessions with the directory, Junior cruised around the county on a series of pleasure drives-testing the theory that the maniac cop was no longer following him. Apparently, Simon Magusson was correct: The case had been closed..Celestina, surprised by Lipscomb's arrival, was still mentally numb from Neddy's harangue. "Doctor, I didn't know you were coming.".Although he found Magusson's face sufficiently disturbing that he avoided looking at it more than necessary, and though Magusson's bulging eyes were so moist with bitterness and with need that they inspired nightmares, Junior shifted his gaze from his half-numb hands to his attorney. "Luck? I lost my wife. And my unborn baby.".Celestina succumbed to a fit of giggles. Before she could control them, she used up two Kleenex to blow her nose and to blot the laughter from her eyes..Therefore, after the nasty shooting, as the Bartholomew hunt continued, so did the good life..Maria's hand tamed, the card turned, and another knave of spades revolved into view, snapped against the table..He'd acted boldly, recklessly, without scoping the territory to be sure Prosser was alone. The accountant lived by himself, but a visitor might be present..On Sunday, New Year's Eve, Edom and Jacob came for dinner. Following dessert, when Barty went to his room to continue reading Starman Jones, which he had begun late that afternoon, Agnes told her brothers the truth about their nephew's eyes..On this January twilight, as Maria Elena Gonzalez drove south along the coast from Newport Beach, all men of the sea must have been reaching for bottles of rum to celebrate the fruit-punch sky: ripe cherries in the west, blood oranges overhead, clustered grapes dark purple in the east..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..Somehow, Vanadium's malevolent spirit was also to blame for Junior's failure to find a new heart mate, in spite of all the women he'd been through. Undoubtedly, when Bartholomew was dead and Vanadium vanquished with him, romance and true love would bloom..Agnes remembered the blood, the awful red flood. Excruciating pain and such fearsome crimson torrents. She'd thought her baby had entered the world stillborn on a tide of its own blood and hers..Thereafter, he was repelled at the prospect of kissing her, and their relationship fell apart.. "Tom, a couple minutes ago," Agnes said, "Celestina mentioned your. . . 'certain awareness.' Which is what exactly?".Once, she left the TV and came to Tom, where he sat talking with Paul. "It's like Gunsmoke and The Monkees are next to each other on the TV, both at the same time. But the Monkees, they can't see the cowboys-and the cowboys, they can't see the Monkees.". "You didn't at all," Dr. Salk assured him. "I need to talk to you. If you would give me a little of your time...". "Then you only have to wait eighteen years," he said, opening the apartment door and stepping aside once more, allowing Celestina to precede him..Taking no chances, Junior swung the candlestick again, bending down as he did so. The second impact was not as solid as the first, a glancing blow, but effective..She said, "Honey, what I'm wondering is ... could you walk where you don't have bad eyes, like you walked where the rain wasn't ... and leave the tumors in that other place? Could you walk where you have good eyes and come back with them?".Most of these firearms were loaded and ready for use, but five remained in their original boxes, in the back of her bedroom closet. Evidently, considering the original bill of sale taped to each of the five boxed handguns, she must have acquired all the weapons legally.. "Fear?" Kathleen asked, more interested in Vanadium's words than in his prestidigitation. "You said you're offering fear to Cain ... as if that was something he would want.".rearview mirror was not hung with one of those tacky decorative deodorizers. The seats, regularly treated with leather soap, were softer and more supple than they had been when the car had shipped out of.Blue fire flashed across the top of the range and followed drips down the baked-enamel front to the floor. Blue flared to yellow, and the yellow darkened when the blaze found the cadaver..Or perhaps the sorrow was less sadness than yearning. He had to move on, but he was loath to begin this strange journey without her..She snatched the handset away from Angel, told Bellini, "He's here," threw the phone on the bed, told Angel, "Stay close to me," ran to the windows, and jerked the drapes out of the way..almost recoiled in disgust. She held the newborn so that its mother could look into..Then he closed his eyes, held the revolver in both hands, and at point-blank range, he shot the dead woman twice..More likely than not, he would cross Bartholomew's path when he least expected, not as a consequence of his searching, but in the normal course of a lay. If that happened, he must be prepared to eliminate the threat immediately, by any means available to him..As they savored the icy martinis, she asked about the client, and Nolly said, "He bought the story. I won't be seeing him again.".The night seemed to be longer than a Martian month. Agnes dozed, fitfully, waking more than once, sweaty and shaking, from a dream in which her son was taken from her in pieces: first his eyes, then his hands, then his ears, his legs..... "I get frustrated," he

admitted. "Trying to learn how to do things in the dark ... I get peed off, as they say." the sentences. The substance of what she said and the tone in which she said it were so perfect that it almost seemed as though an angel had relieved her of this burden by possessing her long enough to help her son understand what must happen and why..He knew that he needed to get a grip on himself. But he could not keep his breathing slow and deep, couldn't remember any of Zedd's other foolproof methods of self-control, couldn't recall a single useful meditative technique..Initially, when told that his patient was a Negro, Junior had been reluctant to serve as her physical therapist. Her program of rehab required mostly structured exercise to restore flexibility and to gain strength in the affected limb, but some massage would be involved, as well, which made him uncomfortable..During the rest of that first year, he walked to Palm Springs and back, a round trip of more than two hundred miles, and north to Santa Barbara..Daylight had retreated from the windows. Winter night, wound in scarfs of fog, like a leprous mendicant, rattled out a breath as though begging their attention beyond the glass..The calls to Bellini in San Francisco and to others in Oregon were made with a prayer for news, but the prayer went unanswered. Cain had not been seen, heard from, smelled, intuited, or located by the pestering clairvoyants who had attached themselves to the sensational case..Leavening his tortured voice as best he could with shock and hurt, as though deeply wounded by the need to speak these words, Junior Cain said, "You ... you think I killed her, don't you? That's crazy." The paramedic, fingers pressed to the radial artery in Junior's right wrist, must have felt a rocket-quick acceleration in his pulse rate..were a favorite pair when he was puttering around the house on weekends. "Oh," he said, "that dog." "It's just ... the last time I saw him, he trapped me in a corner and told this god awful story, far more than I wanted to know, about some British murderer back in the forties, this monstrous man who beat people to death with a hammer, drank their blood, then disposed of their bodies in a vat of acid in his workroom." He shuddered..The dining room again, but this time he remembered how he had gotten here: by way of the living room..Because he kept imagining the stealthy sounds of a dead cop rising in vengeance behind him, Junior switched on the radio. He tuned in a station featuring a Top 40 countdown..He went in a pretense of blindness, gripping Angel's arm, but he missed nothing, and etched every detail in his memory, against the need of them in the coming dark..He had been stowed in a storeroom of one of the old palaces that Losen had appropriated. It had no window, its door was cross-grained oak barred with iron, and spells had been laid on that door that would have kept a far more experienced wizard captive. There were men of great skill and power in Losen's pay. Hound did not consider himself to be one of them. "All I have is a nose," he said. He came daily to see that Otter was recovering from his concussion and dislocated shoulder, and to talk with him. He was, as far as Otter could see, well-meaning and honest. "If you won't work for us they'll kill you," he said. "Losen can't have fellows like you on the loose. You'd better hire on while he'll take you." With his mother, his uncles, and Maria hovering just two steps behind, Barty followed the driveway, not bothering with the cane, keeping his right foot on the concrete, his left foot on the grass, until he came to a jog in the pavement, which apparently he'd been seeking. He stopped, facing due north, considered for a moment, and then pointed due west: "The oak tree's over there." Repressing a smirk, feigning a respectful solemnity, he dared to glance at Vanadium, but the detective stared into Naomi's grave as though he hadn't heard the mockery-or, having heard it, didn't recognize it for what it was..Not understanding, thinking that he was inexplicably asking if she loved him, she said, "Yes, of course, you silly bear, you stupid man, of course, I love you." Although a believer, Agnes was not at the moment able to spread the flowers and ferns of faith over the hard, ugly reality of death. Cowled and skeletal, Death was here, all right, scattering his seeds among all her gathered friends, one day to reap them..The ninth piece was not art, certainly not a work by Griskin, and could disturb no one half as much as it rattled Junior. Upon a black pedestal stood a pewter candlestick identical to the one that had cracked the skull of Thomas Vanadium and had added dimension to the cop's previously pan-flat face.."I'm going to recommend that you be admitted overnight and that we lance these under hospital conditions. We'll use a sterile needle on some of them, but a number are so large they're going to require a surgical knife and possibly the removal of the carbuncle core. This is usually done with a local anesthetic, but in this instance, while I don't think general anesthesia will be required, we'll probably want to sedate you that is, put you in a twilight sleep."..squint-eyed, sharp-faced night clerk must not have been the owner, because he wasn't the type to have dreamed up cute spellings for the sign out front. Judging by his appearance and attitude, he was a former Nazi death-camp commandant who fled Brazil one step ahead of the Israeli secret service and was now hiding out in Oregon..Action. just concentrate on action and ignore the disgusting aftermath. Remember the runaway train and the bus full of nuns stuck on the tracks. Stay with the train, don't go back to look at the smashed nuns, just keep moving forward, and everything will be all right..They were married in September of that year, much later than even Grace White's wager date. As Grace's guess had been closer than her daughter's, however, Celestina paid with a month of kitchen duty..Round one hit Ichabod in the left thigh, because Junior fired while bringing the weapon up from his side, but the next two were solid torso scores. This was not bad for an amateur, even if the distance to target was nearly short enough to define their encounter as hand-to-hand combat, and Junior decided that if the deformation of his left foot hadn't prevented him from fighting in Vietnam, he would have acquitted himself exceptionally well in the war..This declaration was received seriously by Edom and Jacob, as if the devil often strolled the streets of Bright Beach and from time had been known to snatch little babies from their mothers' and eat them with mustard..Urgency gripped the paramedics. The rescuers' equipment and the pieces of the car door were dragged out of the way to make a path for a gurney, its wheels clattering across pavement littered with debris..A spirit-shredding bleakness clawed at her, but she couldn't permit it to leave her in tatters. If she traded hope for despair, as her brothers had done, Bartholomew would be finished before he'd begun. She owed him optimism, lessons in the joy of life..By now, all here assembled knew Celestina well enough that Tom's final example raised an affectionate laugh from the group.."Yes, I'm nicely

rounding myself into an early grave," he said almost cheerfully. "And I must admit to enjoying it." "Some men," she said, "wouldn't be able to sustain desire when their hands touched my back. I'll understand if you're one of them. It's not beautiful to the eye, and rough as oak bark to the touch. That's why I brought you here, so you'd know this before you consider where you want to go from ... where we are now." Because Junior's right arm was encumbered by the bracing board and the intravenous needle, he tugged a mass of tissues from the box with his left hand. THE RAIN THAT HAD threatened to wash out the morning funeral finally rinsed the afternoon, but by nightfall the Oregon sky was clean and dry. From horizon to horizon spread an infinity of icy stars, and at the center of them hung a bright sickle moon as silver as steel. Fully clothed, she lay atop the bedspread. She intended to listen to a little classical music before brushing her teeth... "If he gets back within the next hour, better ring me at his place so I can scoot." Any reasonable person would agree that the line between legitimate and harassment was hair-thin. The weather was good, so he went for a walk, though he crossed the street repeatedly to avoid passing newspaper-vending machines. Snapping the cylinder into place, he rose to his feet. Already he had a new plan, and the cop's revolver was the most important tool that he required to implement it. Dinner was cooking in the upper of the two ovens. He switched the bottom oven, setting it at warm, and dropped open the door. "This momentous day," Thomas Vanadium said quietly, stiff gazing into the grave, "seems full of terrible endings. But like every day, it's actually full of nothing but beginnings." When he judged that he was near the porch steps, he probed with his cane. Two paces later, the tip rapped the lowest step. A tune clinked off the keys of a phantom piano in Junior's mind, "Someone to Watch over Me." The hawk-eyed watcher was the pianist at the elegant hotel lounge where Junior had enjoyed dinner on his first night in San Francisco, and twice since. The Church nourished the soul, while the occult nourished the imagination. In Mexico, where physical comforts were often few and hope of a better life in this world was hard won, both the soul and the imagination must be fed if life was to be livable. "Well, it still is to me. But what I've been wondering ... when you talk about all the ways things are ... is there someplace where you don't have this problem with your eyes?" honor and family. This was life, and everyone lived his life in the shadow of one solemn obligation or another. And now she didn't need him anymore. He gazed at her face, held her cooling hand; his anchor was slipping away from him, leaving him adrift. Junior worried that he might not locate the correct Dumpster among the many. Yet he didn't switch on the flashlight, suspecting that he would be better able to find his way if the conditions of darkness and fog were exactly as they had been earlier. In fact, this proved to be the case, and he instantly recognized the hulking Dumpster when he came upon it.

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