

## COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY FOR PTSD

While Angel continued her relentless interrogation of Paul Damascus, Tom joined her mother in front of the large window at the end of the room farthest from the dinner table. The Selective Service physician quickly declared Junior to be maimed and unfit. Quietly but with passion, Junior pleaded for a chance to prove his value to the armed forces, but the examiner was unmoved by patriotism, interested only in keeping the cattle line of other potential draftees moving past him at a steady pace. The galerieur's icy demeanor thawed marginally at this proof of taste and financial resources. He either smiled or grimaced at a vague but unpleasant smell-hard to tell which-and identified himself as the owner, Maxim Coquin. A SEVERE THIRST INDICATED to Agnes that she wasn't dead. There would be no thirst in paradise. The busboy swept the empty appetizer plates away as the waiter arrived simultaneously with small salads. Fresh martinis followed. "You remember things?" the girl asked, her fingertips still pressed lightly to his cheek. Her strength was the strength of stones only in the sense that she felt as immovable as rock, yet she found the resources to raise one arm, to place her left hand over Maria's bead-tangled fingers. "But the baby's dead." As he turned the corner onto Jasmine Way, he felt his heart lift in expectation of the sight of his home. It wasn't a grand residence--a typical Main Street, USA, house-but it was more splendid to Paul than Paris, London, and Rome combined, cities that he would never see and would never regret failing to see. After the latest concerned nurse departed, Sheena leaned close. She cruelly pinched Junior's cheek between thumb and forefinger, as if she might tear off a goblet of flesh and pop it into her mouth. One moment, girl and yellow vinyl ball. The next moment, gone as if they'd never been. "I said it didn't work that way, and it doesn't. Yet ... I don't actually walk in those other worlds to avoid the rain, but I sort of walk in the idea of those worlds. . . ." With a sigh, Obadiah differed: "Not clever. Crude. Before my hands became these great-knuckled lumps, I could have dazzled you." "What's this?" the man asked her, as Sinatra swooped through "Come Fly with Me." The paramedic pumped the inflation cuff of the sphygmomanometer, and Junior's blood pressure was most likely high enough to induce a stroke, driven skyward by the thought that Naomi's love had been a lie. He slipped behind the door and raised the pewter candlestick over his head. Weighing perhaps five pounds, the object made a formidable bludgeon, almost as good as a hammer. That every mortal semblance took, Airborne, Phimie complained of ringing in her ears, which might have been related to the flight. She also suffered an episode of double vision and, in the airport after landing, a nosebleed, which appeared to be related to her previous symptoms. Shaking off this peculiar case of the spooks, Barty proceeded toward the stairs. Just when he reached the newel post, he heard the faint creak of the marker floorboard behind him. Barty never cried. In the hospital neonatal unit, he'd been a marvel to the nurses, because when the other newborns were squalling in chorus, Barty had been unfailingly serene. By eleven months, his vocabulary had expanded to nineteen words, by Agnes's count: an age when even a precocious child usually spoke three or four at most. "That's correct," Parkhurst said. "Probably one or more small blood vessels ruptured from the extreme violence of the emesis." "Wally gave her tests. She's got an exceptional understanding of color, spatial relationships, and geometric forms for a child her age. She may be a visual prodigy." Her case of polio had been so severe that braces and crutches were never an option. Muscle rehabilitation had been ineffective. Celestina finally zipped shut the satchel. "You better watch out for the big bad wolf." On Thursday, December 28, employing forged driver's licenses and social-security cards as identification, Junior opened small savings accounts and also rented safe-deposit boxes for Pinchbeck and Gammoner at different banks with which he'd never previously done business, using the mailing addresses that he'd established earlier. Dr. Zedd's death, just last Thanksgiving, had been a blow to Junior, a loss to the nation, to the entire world. He considered it a tragedy equal to the Kennedy assassination one year previous. For a while, Junior profited enormously from Tammy's investment advice, and the sex was great. As a thank-you for the hefty trading commissions she earned-and not incidentally for all the orgasms-Tammy gave him a Rolex. He didn't mind her four cats, didn't even care when the four grew to six, then to eight. By the time Agnes opened the driver's door and slumped behind the steering wheel, Barty levered himself onto the seat beside her. Grunting, he pulled his door shut with both hands as she jammed the key in the ignition and started the engine. Jacob feared what men could do with clubs, knives, guns, bombs, with their bare hands, but he was most preoccupied by the unintended death that humanity brought upon itself with its devices, machines, and structures meant to improve the quality of life. In the morning, at breakfast, from this calmer perspective, he looked back at his tantrum in the middle of the night and wondered if he might be in psychological trouble. He decided not. In November and December, Junior studied arcane texts on the supernatural, went through new women at a pace prodigious even for him, found three Bartholomews, and finished ten needlepoint pillows. Without sigh or complaint, he would walk back to her with the purse. The errand was no trouble. In fact, returning the purse would give him a chance to get another good-night kiss. When the pianist eventually launched into "Someone to Watch over Me," he didn't appear to be responding to a request, considering that a few other numbers had been played since the most recent gratuity. The tune was, after all, in his nightly repertoire. From San Francisco south to Orange County Airport on a crowded commuter flight, then farther south along the coast by rental car, Paul Damascus brought Grace, Celestina, and Angel to the Lampion house. "Before we go to my place, there's someone I very much want you to meet. She's not expecting us, but I'm sure it'll be okay." "Oh, it doesn't mean you're nervous in that sense. Nervous in this case means psychologically induced. Grief, Enoch. brief and shock and horror-they can have profound physical effects." By the time Junior passed the three offices and found the men's room, Neddy had occupied it. The door was locked, which must mean this was a single-occupant john. Finding nothing more of interest in the study, he considered searching the rest of the house. "If you ranted at him about earthquakes, tornadoes, erupting volcanoes,

and all that stuff, how could he mistake you for me?". "But in 'This Momentous Day,' Bartholomew is just the disciple, the historical figure, and he's also a metaphor for the unforeseen consequences of even our most ordinary actions." Dr. Lipscomb brought his hands to his face, covering his nose and mouth as earlier they had been covered with a surgical mask, as though he were in danger of drawing in, with his breath, an idea that would forever change him.. Wally and Celestina went to dinner at the Armenian restaurant from which he'd gotten takeout on the day in '65 that he rescued her and Angel from Neddy Gnathic. Red tablecloths, white dishes, dark wood paneling, a cluster of candles in red glasses on each table, air redolent of garlic and roasted peppers and cubeb and sizzling soujouk-plus a personable staff, largely of the owners' family-created an atmosphere as right for celebration as for intimate conversation, and Celestina expected to enjoy both, because this promised to be a most momentous day in more ways than one.. The sight of the heavily bandaged face apparently pressed all of the compassion buttons in the reverend, because he broke out of his paralytic shock and started forward-before he registered the weapon.. The short walk across the room, to the hero's table, looked more daunting to Paul than the trek he'd just completed. He was nobody, a small-town pharmacist who missed more work each month, who relied increasingly on his worried employees to cover for him, and who would lose his business if he didn't get a grip on himself. He had never done a great deed, never saved a life. He had no right to impose upon this man, and now he knew he hadn't the nerve to do so, either.. After mentally reviewing what he must say, after working up a nervous edge, he dialed the SFPD emergency number.. Agnes saw no arc of color from candle to candle, and she thought that he must mean for her to look at the many cut-crystal wineglasses and water glasses, in which the lambent flames were mirrored. Here and there, the prismatic effect of the crystal rendered reflections of the flames into red-orange-yellow-green-blue-indigo-violet spectrums that danced along beveled edges.. In the crisis, the rack holding her oxygen bottle had been rolled to the bed. The breathing mask lay on the pillow beside her.. Although Junior was free of the superstitions that Naomi, in her innocence and sentimentality, had embraced, he wept without pretense.. Sparky Vox-with less training in theology and philosophy than his guest, but with a spiritual insight that any overeducated Jesuit would have to admire, even if grudgingly-had settled Vanadium's uneasy conscience. "The problem with movies and books is they make evil look glamorous, exciting, when it's no such thing. It's boring and it's depressing and it's stupid. Criminals are all after cheap thrills and easy money, and when they get them, all they want is more of the same, over and over. They're shallow, empty, boring people who couldn't give you five minutes of interesting conversation if you had the piss-poor luck to be at a party full of them. Maybe some can be monkey-clever some of the time, but they aren't hardly ever smart. God must surely want us to laugh at these fools, because if we don't laugh at 'em, then one way or another, we give 'em respect. If you don't mock a bastard like Cain, if you fear him too much or even if you just look at him in an all-solemn sort of way, then you're paying him more respect than I ever intend to. Another glass of wine?". Only a small group of mourners gathered for this service. Junior and Naomi had been so intensely involved with each other that, unlike many young married couples, they had made few friends.. For guidance, Agnes couldn't rely entirely on any of the child rearing books in her library. Barty's unique gifts presented her with special parenting problems. Now, when he asked if he could stay up even later, to read about John Thomas Stuart and Lummo, John's pet from another world, she granted him permission.. "Angel," Phimie said urgently, and then, with an effort that made a blood vessel swell. Commodified fantasy takes no risks: it invents nothing, but imitates and trivializes. It proceeds by depriving the old stories of their intellectual and ethical complexity, turning their action to violence, their actors to dolls, and their truth-telling to sentimental platitude. Heroes brandish their swords, lasers, wands, as mechanically as combine harvesters, reaping profits. Profoundly disturbing moral choices are sanitized, made cute, made safe. The passionately conceived ideas of the great story-tellers are copied, stereotyped, reduced to toys, molded in bright-colored plastic, advertised, sold, broken, junked, replaceable, interchangeable.. In the hall that served the two ground-floor apartments, they encountered Rena Moller, the elderly woman who lived in the unit across from theirs. She was polishing the dark wood of her front door with lemon oil, a sure sign that her son and his family were coming to dinner.. "I should," Tom agreed, "but the point is this. . ." With the finesse of a magician, he allowed the salt shaker to slip out of the concealment of his palm, and stood it beside the pepper. "This is also me.".. than the left: slack yet with a pulled look. The left eyelid drooped. That side of her. "I'm paying," Celestina insisted when they were seated. "I'm now a successful artist, with untold numbers of critics just waiting to savage me.".. Otter shook his head.. When Agnes crunched the ice, the nurse said, "No, no. Don't swallow it all at once. Let it melt.".. "When your hands are bigger," Tom agreed, "I'm sure you could. In fact, one day I'll teach you.".. Switching on the lights as he went, Junior sought the source of the serenade. He carried the 9-mm pistol, which would have been useless against a spirit visitor; but his extensive reading about ghosts hadn't convinced him that they were real. His faith in the effectiveness of bullets and pewter candlesticks, for that matter-remained undiminished.. Something was due to happen in this peculiar, extended, almost casual haunting under which he had suffered for more than two years, since finding the quarter in his cheeseburger. While all around him in the streets, people bustled in good cheer, Junior slouched along in a sour mood, temporarily having forgotten to look for the bright side.. In reality, it had been a homely device, a mere box. In memory, it seemed ominous, charged with the evil portent of a nuclear bomb.. "Holding fast to the boy's right foot, Jacob observed that one elevator might descend safely but that if they took two, one or the other was certain to crash to the bottom of the shaft, considering the unreliability of all machinery made by man.. 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.. Perhaps because Celestina was her father's daughter, with his faith in humanity, she was always deeply moved by the kindnesses of strangers and saw in them the shape of a greater grace. "Does your wife know what a lucky woman she is?". "I know what you're thinking," her mother said, reaching

across the table and placing one hand over Celestina's. "I know how useless you feel, how helpless, how small, but you must remember this . . . Escorting her home didn't require either a car or a long walk, because she lived upstairs in the hotel where he'd had dinner. The top three floors of the building featured enormous owner-occupied apartments..He had the capacity to be exceptional at anything to which he applied himself. Bob Chicane had been right about that: Junior was far more intense than other men, possessed of greater gifts and the energy to use them..She struggled, wept, pretended disgust, faked shame, swore to bring the police down on him. Another man, not as highly skilled at reading men as Junior, might have thought the girl's resistance was genuine, Sat her charges of rape were sincere. Any other man might have backed off, but Junior was neither fooled nor confused..Glancing at the plump pie in Edom's hands, the gentleman replied to Agnes in a musical yet gravelly voice worthy of Louis Armstrong: "You must be the lady Reverend Collins told me about..They agreed that to the outside world, Barty must continue to appear to be a sightless man-or otherwise either be treated like a freak or be subjected, perhaps unwillingly, to experimentation. In the modern world, there was no tolerance for miracles. Only family could be told of this development..She poured cold milk and drank it quickly. As she was rinsing the empty glass, she felt as if she might throw up, but she didn't..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..Clutching the purse as though determined to resist robbery even in death, the guy dropped, sprawled, shuddered, and lay still. He'd gone down with no shout of alarm, with no cry of mortal pain, with so little noise that Junior wanted to kiss him, except that he didn't kiss men, alive or dead, although a man dressed as a woman had once tricked him, and though a dead pianist had once given him a lick in the dark..But first, March 23: the bad date with Frieda Bliss, and what he discovered in his apartment when he came home that night..The mass of these malignancies suggest they will soon spread-or have already spread-out of the eye to the orbit. There is no hope that radiation therapy will work in this instance, and no time to risk trying it even if there were hope. No time at all. No time. Dr. Schurr and I agree, to save Bartholomew's life, we must remove both eyes immediately..Barty followed the movement of her hand, raised his gaze to her eyes, hesitated, and then said questioningly, "No pie?".Using a false name, claiming that he was an adoptee, Junior made inquiries with several child-placement organizations, as well as with state and federal agencies. He discovered that Wulfstan's story was true: Adoption records were sealed by law for the protection of the birth parents, and getting at them was all but impossible.. "I'm not sad," Tom said, "because though I have this face here in this world, I know there's another me-in fact, lots of other Tom Vanadiums-who don't have this face at all. Somewhere I'm doing just fine, thank you..The cop weighed too much to be carried any distance, the blanket proved effective, the decision to drag him was wise, and the whole process was value neutral..As she commented on each masterpiece, Frieda grew steadily less coherent. She had drunk a few cocktails, the better part of a bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon, and two after-dinner brandies..Aware of the dangers of dehydration, he drank a bottle of water and put two half-gallon containers of Gatorade in the Suburban.. "Why should I care whether you have any peace?" she asked, and she seemed to be listening to a woman other than herself.. "I don't stumble. Not much, anyway." To the girl, Bartholomew said, "Angel, are you okay?".The voice had come not from the armchair in the corner, but from immediately beside the bed..Agnes discovered that watching her child be totally consumed by a new enthusiasm was an unparalleled delight. Through Barty, she had a tantalizing sense of what her own childhood might have been like if her father had allowed her to have one, and at times, listening to the boy exclaim about the space-faring Stone family or about the mysteries of Mars, she discovered that at least some part of a child still lived within her, untouched by either cruelty or time..His homely face was long and narrow, as though pulled into that shape by the weight of his responsibilities. In other circumstances, however, his generous mouth might have shaped an appealing smile; and his green eyes had in them the compassion of someone who himself had known great loss..For two years, since finding the quarter in his cheeseburger, Junior had been searching for a metaphysics that he could embrace, that squared with all the truths that he had learned from Zedd, and that didn't require him to acknowledge any power higher than himself Here it was. Unexpected. Complete. He didn't fully understand the bit about monkeys and barrels, but he got the rest of it, and peace of a sort descended upon him..The floor of the spacious bathroom featured beige marble tiles with diamond-shaped inlays of black granite. The countertop and the shower stall were fabricated from matching marble, and the same marble was employed in the wainscoting..According to the cards, Barty would be rich financially, but also in talent, spirit, intellect. Rich in courage and honor, Maria promised. With a wealth of common sense, good judgment, and luck..Behind them, the door rebounded forcefully from a rubber-tipped stopper and closed with a thud. The lock wasn't engaged, however, and they might be interrupted momentarily..She looked surprised, all right, but her expression wasn't the one that Junior had painted on the canvas of his imagination. Her surprise had no delight in it, and she didn't at once break into a radiant smile..The formless apprehension with which she had awakened at 1:50, Tuesday morning, had returned to her from time to time during the past couple days. Now, here it came again, pinching her throat and tightening her chest-at last beginning to take form..In Junior's estimation, this was not the way that a normal person lived. This was the home of a deranged loner, a dangerously obsessive man..Having survived the night, Edom and Jacob were waiting in the hall. Each kissed his nephew, but neither could speak..Agnes's sharp intake of breath caused Edom to look up from his nephew's name. Pale, she was, her eyes as haunted as old mansions..In a rocking chair, holding her tiny son in her arms, Agnes cried quietly. Often, Barty slept through her weeping. Awakened, he smiled or squinched his face into a puzzled frown..After following his uncle's movements, Barty looked at the table again. "Pie, pie, pie, pie, pie, pie..".In a red coat with a red hood, Bartholomew appeared first in the arms of the tall lanky man, the Ichabod Crane look-alike, who also had a large tote bag hanging from his shoulder..Somehow, Agnes knew that in his younger days, Obadiah

had been a stage magician. Artlessly, she drew him out on the subject.. "Your father denies the rape ever occurred, apparently out of what I'd call a misguided willingness to trust in divine justice." As if he sensed her reluctance to return to Dr. Chan, Barty had kept her occupied with talk of the red planet as they approached the office building, had talked her off the street, along the driveway, and into a parking space, where finally she relinquished the fantasy of an endless road trip. At 5:45, long past the end of office hours, Dr. Chan's suite was quiet. Uneasy nevertheless, Agnes went down the hall to her son's room and found that he had fallen asleep sitting up, while reading. She slipped *The Star Beast* out of the tangle of his arms, marked his place with the jacket flap, and put the book on the nightstand. "We were about to order dinner from room service," Tom said, handing a menu to Paul. Though she worried that reading would strain his eyes, worsening his condition, she recognized the irrationality of her fear. Muscles don't atrophy from use, nor eyes wear out from too much seeing. Prosser-fifty-six, a widower, an accountant-had a thirty-year-old daughter, Zelda, who was an attorney in San Francisco. Junior had driven to Terra Linda previously, to research the accountant; he already knew Prosser had no connection to Seraphim's fateful child. Kathleen savored her martini. "Mmmm ... as cold as a hit man's heart and as crisp as a hundred-dollar bill from the devil's wallet." "And maybe," said Agnes, caught up in the speculation, "when your life comes to an end in all those many branches, what you're finally judged on is the shape and the beauty of the tree." "There's a valuable lesson in that," Agnes said. "Others can learn from it if you care to share. But if you want to record your life only up to the card cheating, that's okay, too. Even that far, it's a fascinating journey, a story that shouldn't be lost with you when you pass on. Libraries are packed with biographies of movie stars and politicians' most of them not capable of as much meaningful self-analysis as you'd get from a toad. We don't need to know more about celebrities' lives, Obadiah. What might help us, what might even save us, is knowing more about the lives of real people who've never made it even medium but who know where they came from and why." The most shameful thing Junior found was the "art" on the walls. Tasteless, sentimentalized realism. Bright landscapes. Still lifes of fruit and flowers. Even an idealized group portrait of Prosser, his late wife, and Zelda. Not one painting spoke to the bleakness and terror of the human condition: mere decoration, not art. Not once did he look back to see if the fire had grown visible as a glow against the night sky. The events at Victoria's were part of the past. He was finished with all that. Junior was a forward-thinking, future-oriented man. When Renee realized that this rejection was complete and final, she-he, whatever-was transformed from well-sugared southern lady to bitter, venomous reptile. Eyes glittering with fury, lips twisted and skinned back from her teeth, she called him all kinds of bastard, stringing epithets together so effortlessly and colorfully that she enhanced his vocabulary more than had all the home-study courses that he'd ever taken, combined. "And face it, pretty-boy, you knew what I was from the moment you offered to buy me a drink. You knew, and you wanted it, wanted me, and then when we got right down to the nasty, you lost your nerve. Lost your nerve, pretty-boy, but not your need." "It's a miracle both of you didn't go through that railing," the attorney agreed. Packed full of aftermath, the movie was too violent for Junior's taste. He had wanted to meet at a showing of *Doctor Dolittle* or *The Graduate*. But Google, as paranoid as a lab rat after half a lifetime of electroshock experiments, insisted on choosing the theater. 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 the. Vanadium was surely unaware of any connection between Junior and Seraphim White. And now the girl could never talk. twenty-eight pounds. Typically, seven to eight pounds of this is the fetus. The placenta and the amniotic fluid weigh three pounds. The remaining eighteen are due to water retention and fat stores. He didn't want to risk marrying weapon and silencer here in the hall, where he might be seen. Besides, complications could arise from being splattered with Neddy's blood. Aftermath was disgusting, but it was also highly incriminating. For the same reason, he was loath to use a knife. "You figure all this," Jolene asked, "because Mother Nature gives us a nice warm day in January?" An affecting but difficult-to-define note in Dr. Lipscomb's voice brought Celestina slowly out of the office chair, to her feet. Perhaps it was wonder. Or fear. Or reverence. Perhaps all three. You ever hear it, Enoch? I'm that someone for you, of course, in a romantic sense." He produced her coat as if by legerdemain. Magically, she found her arms in the sleeves and the collar around her neck, though given her size lately, putting on anything other than a hat usually required strategy and persistence. So. Two monks they were: one in the service of everlasting light, the other in the service of eternal darkness. This bond between the Lampion and White families, which Grace had already heard about from Paul, came as news to Celestina as much as to Agnes. It inspired more reminiscences of lost husbands and the wistful wish that Joey and Harrison could have met. Sometimes Celestina marveled at how intimately and inextricably the tendrils of tragedy and joy were intertwined in the vine of life. Sorrow was often the root of future joy, and joy could be the seed of sorrow yet to come. The layered patterns in the vine were so complex, so enrapturing in their lush detail and so fearsome in their wild inevitability, that she could fill uncountable canvases, through many lifetimes as an artist, striving to capture the enigmatic nature of existence, in all its beauty dark and bright, and in the end merely suggest the palest shadow of its mystery. He doused the light and crouched motionless in the absolute darkness, leaning against a wall of the dumpster to steady himself, because his feet were planted in slippery layers of fog-dampened plastic trash bags. The quiet passion in Vanadium's voice was genuine, expressed with reason but not fervor, not in the least sentimental or unctuous-which made it more disturbing. "Vibrations in one string set up soft, sympathetic vibrations in all the other strings, through the entire body of the instrument." That was all right, for she had done the same for Otter's elder sister, and so his parents sent him to her in the evenings. But she taught Otter more than the song of the Creation. She knew his gift. She and some men and women like her, people of no fame and some of questionable reputation, had all in some degree that gift; and they shared, in secret, what lore and craft they had. "A gift untaught is a ship unguided," they said to Otter, and they taught him all they knew. It wasn't much, but there

were some beginnings of the great arts in it; and though he felt uneasy at deceiving his parents, he couldn't resist this knowledge, and the kindness and praise of his poor teachers. "It will do you no harm if you never use it for harm," they told him, and that was easy for him to promise them..They had not come to Junior yesterday in their grief, if in fact they had thought to grieve..As always in uncertainty, she asked herself what her mother would do in this situation. Grace, of infinite grace, unfailingly did precisely the needed thing, knew exactly the right words to console, to enlighten, to charm a smile out of even the miserable. Often, however, the needed thing involved no words, because in our journey we so often feel abandoned, and we need only to be reassured that we are not alone..One manly woman. Several womanly men. But no blocky figure that could have been the crazed cop even in disguise.. "Nevertheless, even if Muffin assaulted you, she's otherwise such a sweet little thing. What would Maria think of you if you told her you'd smashed poor Muffin with a shovel? ".Neddy favored a quick greeting, two curt pumps, but Junior held fast after the handshake was over. He didn't grind the musician's knuckles, nothing so crude, just held on pleasantly but firmly. His intention was to confuse and further rattle the man, taking advantage of his obvious dislike of having his personal space encroached upon, in the hope that Neddy would reveal why he'd been watching Junior so intently from across the room..Junior could neither speak nor even mewl in agony. All the saliva had been draining forward, out of his open mouth, for so long that his throat was parched and raw. He felt as though he had munched on a snack of salted razor blades that were now stuck in his pharynx. His rattling wheeze sounded like scuttling scarabs..Junior phoned a twenty-four-hour-a-day locksmith and paid premium post midnight rates to have the double deadbolts re-keyed..The station wagon rolled out, the Volkswagen bus followed it, and Wally brought up the rear. "Wagons, ho!" he announced. The morning that it happened, Barty ate breakfast in the Lampion kitchen with Angel, Uncle Jacob, and two brainless friends..Surprisingly, dolls. Quite a few dolls. Apparently the bastard boy was effeminate, a quality he sure as hell hadn't inherited from his father..For a while he enjoyed being challenged to figure the number of seconds elapsed since a particular historical event. Given the date, he did the calculations in his head, providing a correct answer in as little as twenty seconds, rarely taking more than a minute..The wink startled and baffled Edom. Oddly, he thought of the mysterious, disembodied, and eternally unwinking eye in the floating pinnacle of the pyramid that was on the back of any one-dollar bill..Beyond the windows, the winter night sifted sootily down through the twinkling city, as he sat in his living room with a glass of Dry Sack in one hand and the picture of Celestina White in the other.. "Come with me," Paul Damascus said at once. "To Bright Beach. It is far away from San Francisco, and he'd never think of looking for you there. Why would he? You've no connection to the place. I've got a house with enough room. You're welcome. And you wouldn't be among strangers."..If the directory proved to be of no help, Junior would proceed next to the registry office at the county courthouse, to review the records of births going back to the turn of the century if necessary. Bartholomew, of course, might not have been born in the county, might have moved here as a child or an adult. If he owned property, he'd show up on the register of deeds. Whether a landowner or not, if he did his civic duty every two years, he would appear on the voter rolls.

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