

THE SIMPLE LITTLE RULE THE GOLDEN RULE REDISCOVERED

"I'm sure you would be, yes, but I'm afraid I don't have the patience to teach, I'm a performer, not an instructor. I suppose I could give you the name of a good teacher." Soundlessly, reluctantly, Agnes pulled the bedroom door nearly shut, and went down to the kitchen, where she sat alone, drinking coffee and nibbling at mysteries. Of all the gifts that Barty opened on Christmas morning, the hardback copy of Robert Heinlein's *The Star Beast* was his favorite. Instantly enchanted by the promise of an amusing alien creature, space travel, an exotic future, and lots of adventure, he seized every opportunity throughout the busy day to crack open those pages and to step out of Bright Beach into stranger places. **BASEBALL CAP IN HAND**, he stood on Agnes's front porch this Sunday evening, a big man with the demeanor of a shy boy. Wet cobblestones and tattered blacktop. Hurry, hurry. Past the lighted casement window in the gallery men's room. The doors slid open, and they rolled Barty corridor to corridor, past the scrub sinks, to a waiting surgical nurse in green cap, mask, and gown. She alone effected his transfer into the positive pressure of the surgery. When he returned to the kitchen to add ice and sherry to his glass, he looked up White, Celestina in the San Francisco phone directory. Her number was listed; her address was not. hands as she had seen surgeons do in movies, and she could almost believe that she was still at home, in bed, in the fevered throes of a terrible dream. Reminding himself that nature was merely a dumb machine, utterly devoid of mystery, and that the unknown would always prove familiar if you dared to lift its veil, Junior discovered he could move. Each of his feet seemed to weigh as much as one of Wroth Griskin's cast bronzes, but he crossed the sidewalk and went into Galerie Coquin. Munching an Almond Joy, Junior returned to the phone book, with no choice but to find Bartholomew the hard way. The moonlight had faded and the gentle waves had ebbed out of his mind's eye. He concentrated, trying to force the phantom sea to flow back into view, but this was one of those rare occasions when a Zedd technique failed him. After just twenty-one days, the boy's adaptation to blindness was amazing but clearly the gathered audience stood in anticipation of something more remarkable than his unhalting progress and unerring sense of direction. The search for Cain was secondary. Getting to the revolver took Priority. Regain the gun and then proceed room by haunted room to hunt him down. Hunt him down, if he was here. And if Cain didn't do the hunting first. "Of all the things I might be meant to do with my life," he told Agnes, "I believe nothing will matter more than the small part I've had in bringing together these two children." "You can learn em." "Bartholomew, huh?" asked Wally as he piloted them through banks of earthbound clouds. hooves. This was no demon child. Its father's evil wasn't visibly reflected in its small. 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. No hesitation preceded Grace's response. "That's very generous of you, Paul. And I, for one, accept. Is this the house where you lived with your Perri?" They hadn't been close to Naomi, who'd once said she felt like Romulus and Remus, raised by wolves, or like Tarzan if he'd fallen into the hands of nasty gorillas. To Junior, Naomi was Cinderella, sweet and good, and he was the love-struck prince who rescued her. "There's a fine George and Ira Gershwin song called 'Someone to Watch Over Me.' Turning in circles, he tipped his head back, presenting his face to the streaming sky, laughing. Edom and Jacob came to the house, asking what Dr. Chan had said, and Agnes lied to them. "There are some test results we won't have until Monday, but he thinks Barty is going to be all right." She thought all that, but she closed her eyes and said: "I'll be okay. Give me a second here, all right?" "Last time I looked, Miss Galloway lived to the south of us. Retired. Never married. No children." That happened ten years ago, the first and last time anyone shot at Nolly. The real work of a private eye had nothing in common with the glamorous stuff depicted on television and in books. This was a low-risk profession full of dull routine, as long as you chose your cases wisely--which meant staying away from clients like Enoch Cain. When Junior cut open a grapefruit for breakfast, he didn't find a quarter in it. The operator attempted to calm him, but he remained hysterical. Between gasps and sharp squeals of pretended pain, he shakily rattled off his name, address, and phone number. Alone, Junior sat in the breakfast nook with a pot of coffee and an entire Sara Lee chocolate fudge cake. "Oil and natural-gas pipelines will fracture, explode. A sea of fire will wash cities, killing hundreds of thousands more." "Only for a little while. Then he is joining me at the gallery, and after the show's over, we're having dinner together." To the right first. Kick the door open, simultaneously firing two rounds, because maybe this was her bedroom, where she kept a gun. Mirrors shattered: a tintinnabulation of falling glass on porcelain, glass on ceramic tile, a lot more noise than the shots themselves. **TALES FROM** "But nothing equals a quake for killing. Big one in Shaanxi, China, killed eight hundred thirty thousand." Junior had seen the silvery coin snapping off the cop's thumb and spinning upward. Now it was gone, as though it had vanished in midair. Thursday evening, his third in the hotel, he returned to the lounge for cocktails and another steak. The same tuxedoed pianist provided the entertainment. The two bereaved women huddled at one end of the living room, tearful, touching, talking quietly, wondering together if there was any way that each could help the other to fill this sudden, deep, and terrible hole in their lives. Incredibly, Renee came after him, slinky and seductive, trying to calm him and lure him back into an embrace. He waited for Otter to nod, but Otter stood motionless. To prove himself, he read a little of Dickens when she requested it, a passage from *Great Expectations*. Then a passage from Twain. Waking from a starry night in the Old West into electric light, gazing up into a blur of faces sans cowboy hats, Agnes felt someone moving a piece of ice in slow circles over her bare abdomen. Shivering as the cold water trickled down her sides, she tried to ask them why they were applying ice when she was already chilled to the bone, but she couldn't find her voice. Eventually, he settled on a mental image of a bowling pin as his "seed." This was a smooth, elegantly shaped object that invited languorous contemplation, but it did not

tease his libido..He must begin by learning as much as possible about ghosts, hauntings, and the vengeance of the dead. During the remainder of 1966, only two apparently paranormal events occurred in Junior Cain's life, the first on Wednesday, October 5..He met her eyes, but at once shifted his gaze to the porch floor again. "I've come to say ... how sorry I am, how miserably sorry." Although this was perhaps the happiest evening of Celestina's life, it wasn't without a note of melancholy. She couldn't avoid thinking about Phimie..This was one of many things about Agnes that amazed Edom. If he had dared to make a list of all the qualities that he admired in her, he would have sunk into despair at the consideration of how much better she had coped with adversity than either he or Jacob..Even Rudy, as huge as Big Foot and as amoral as a skink, was afraid of this woman..Back in January, when he received the disappointing report from Nolly Wulfstan, Junior was not convinced that the private detective had exercised due diligence in his investigation. He suspected that Wulfstan's ugliness was matched by his laziness..Still relishing her little pretense of rejection, Victoria did not touch the rose. "What kind of woman do you think I am?" "I'm wondering," Nolly said, "if you're not an officer of the law anymore, in what capacity are you going to pursue Cain?" "For one thing, jurors might conclude that the authorities never really suspected you and tried to frame you for murder to conceal their culpability in the poor maintenance of the tower. By far, most of the cops think you're innocent anyway." 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..Junior was vigilant. He took note of all those who approached the piano, whether they dropped money in the fishbowl or not..Junior blinked and dared not speak, because he didn't know any Bartholomew, and now he was certain the cop was weaving an elaborate web of deceit, setting a trap. Why would he have spoken a name that meant nothing to him?.At the foot of the bed: a cedar chest. Four feet long, two feet wide, perhaps three high. Brass handles..Junior took one of the boxed guns, a 9-mm semiautomatic. Months would probably pass before she noticed the pistol missing from the back of her closet, and by then she wouldn't know who had taken it..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..In spite of his dumpy appearance-and especially in the dark, where appearances didn't count-Vanadium had the aura of a mystic. Although Junior didn't believe in mystics or in the various unearthly powers they claimed to possess, he knew that mystics who believed in themselves were exceptionally dangerous people.. "But let's pretend it's me, okay? So here I am, stepping off the curb without looking both ways-" Surprisingly, he received a lot of gratification from voicing this insult, even though Vanadium was too dead to hear it.. "You might as well beat a cloud for raining," said Otter's mother..St. Mary's social workers did not arrive with dawn, so Celestina was given the privacy of one of their offices, where the wet face of the morning pressed blurrily at the windows, and where she phoned her parents with the terrible news. From here, too, she arranged with a mortician to collect Phimie's body from the cold-storage locker in the hospital morgue, embalm it, and have it flown home to Oregon..The nurse noted that the maximum weight capacity of the elevator allowed all of them to take the same cab, if they didn't mind being squeezed a little..He'd never taken too much from any one game. He was a discreet thief, charming his victims with amusing patter. Because he was so ingratiating and seemed only mildly lucky, no one begrudged him his winnings. Soon, he was more flush than he'd ever been as a magician..The young man raised his voice to be heard above the gobbling of the art turkeys. "No, sir. He just asked where the men's room was." As kids-living in a house that was run like a prison, stifled by the oppressive rule of a morose father who believed that any form of entertainment was an offense against God-they conducted secret card games as their primary act of rebellion. A deck of cards was small enough to hide quickly and to keep hidden successfully even during one of their father's painstakingly thorough room searches..He had visited the library primarily to confirm that Harrison White was unquestionably dead. He'd shot the man four times. Two bullets 'in the gas tank of the stolen Pontiac destroyed the parsonage and should have incinerated the reverend. When you were dealing with black magic, however, you could never be too cautious..Now, here, all three on the street and vulnerable at once-the man, Celestina, the bastard boy..The third-floor apartment directly over Enoch Cain's unit had been leased by Simon Magusson, through his corporation, ever since it became available in March of '66, twenty-two months ago.. "No member of the society ever violates a secret confidence," Agnes assured him..the grass, silent because he is barely conscious, too badly beaten to protest or to plead for mercy, but also..Her hands were locked together in her lap, gripped so tightly for so long that the muscles in her forearms ached. "What's wrong?" 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.. "If I ever have trots, you'll know." And then in the Cheese voice: "CAN WE LISTEN TO THE BOOK TALK IN YOUR ROOM?" Angel. A less exotic synonym for her own name. Seraphim's angel. The angel of an angel..Wally-Dr. Walter Lipscomb, who delivered Angel and who became her godfather-never worried when the girl seemed to be developing too slowly, counseling that every child was an individual, with his or her particular learning pace. Wally's double specialty--obstetrics and pediatrics-gave him credibility, of course, but Celestina had worried, anyway..THIS IS THE FIRST PAGE of the Book of the Dark, written some six hundred years ago in Berila, on Enlad..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..At Tom

Vanadium's request, the taxi dropped him one block from his new-and temporary-home shortly before ten o'clock in the evening..The night was holding its breath again, the previous breeze now pent up in the breast of darkness.."I could have been killed," Junior Cain repeated, suddenly so horrorstruck by this realization that an iciness welled in his gut, and for a while he wasn't able to feel his extremities..Junior remembered the very words the detective had used: They say she died in a traffic accident..Agnes supposed Jacob trembled in anticipation of the crash of an airliner or at least a light aircraft. Edom might be calculating the odds that this serene place-at this specific hour-would be the impact point for one of those planet-killing asteroids that reputedly wiped most life off the earth every few hundred thousand years or so.."He came through the surgery well. He'll be in post-op for a while, then brought here to the ICU. His condition's critical, but there are degrees of critical, and I believe we'll be able to upgrade him to serious long before this day is over. He's going to make it."..His daughter, his affliction, his millstone, granddaughter of the boil-giving voodoo Baptist"To support my eyelids. And because without anything in the sockets, I look gross. People barf. Old ladies pass out. Little girls like you Pee their pants and run screaming."..Junior leaned forward and slid the packet of cash across the desk, toward the detective. "There's more where this came from."..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."..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..Glaring and red-faced, lowering his voice almost to a whisper, Neddy said, "I'm sorry, but you've got me all wrong. I'm not like Renee and you."..Junior was tempted to experiment with the controls. Maybe other messages were recorded on the machine. Listening to them would be delicious-even if every one of them turned out to be as meaningless to him as Max's--a little like browsing through a stranger's diary..The guy was carrying a purse, whatever that meant, and when he walked through the door, he had a goofy look on his face, but his expression changed when he saw Junior.."Chateau Le Bucks, 1886. We can have a bottle of that or you could buy a new car, and personally I believe thirst comes before transportation."..Thick fog distorted all sense of time and place. At each end of the block, pearly hazes of light marked intersections with main streets but didn't illuminate this narrower passage in between. A few security lamps-bare bulbs under inverted-saucer shades or caged in wire--indicated the delivery entrances of some businesses, but the dense white shrouds veiled and diffused these, as well, until they were no brighter than gaslights..Darkrose and Diamond.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..Nevertheless, when the points of soreness in his brow and cheeks gradually grew worse, he stopped at a service station near Courtland, bought a bottle of Pepsi from a vending machine, and washed down yet another capsule of antihistamines. He also took another antiemetic, four aspirin, and-although he felt no trembling in his bowels-one more dose of paregoric..Edom's twin, Jacob, who had never held a job, lived in the second apartment. He'd been there since graduating from high school..On January 2, 1968, four days before his birthday, Bartholomew Lampion gave up his eyes that he might live, and accepted a fife of blindness with no hope of bathing in light again until, in his good time, he left this world for a better one..Barty stood in the rain, surrounded by the rain, pummeled by the rain, with the rain. Saturated grass squished under his sneakers. The droplets, in their millions, didn't bend-slip-twist magically around his form, didn't hiss into steam a millimeter from his skin. Yet he remained as dry as baby Moses floating on the river in a mother-made ark of bulrushes..Meanwhile, as attorneys met on Tuesday afternoon, Junior, having taken leave from work, phoned a locksmith to change the locks at his house. As a cop, Vanadium might have access to a lock-release gun that..Edom removed two of the pies from the table and put them on the counter near the ovens..The street in front of the gallery was as flooded by a sea of fog as the alleyway at the back. The headlights of passing traffic probed the gloom like beams from deep-salvage submersibles at work on the ocean floor..He stashed two suitcases full of clothes and toiletries-plus the contents of Pinchbeck's safe-deposit box-in the van, and then added those precious items that he'd be loath to lose if the hit on Bartholomew went wrong, forcing him to leave his Russian Hill life and flee arrest. The works of Caesar Zedd. Sklent's three brilliant paintings. The needlepoint pillows, to which he'd colorfully applied the wisdom of Zedd, constituted the bulk of this collection of bare essentials: 102 pillows in numerous shapes and sizes, which he had completed in just thirteen months of feverish stitchery~.These weren't lakes of blood, just smears, so Junior could wipe them up quickly, once he got the corpse out of the hallway, but the sight of them further infuriated him. He was here to bring closure to all the unfinished business of Spruce Hills, to free himself from vengeful spirits, to better his life and plunge henceforth entirely into a bright new future. He wasn't here, damn it, to do building maintenance..Martinis were ordered all around. None here observed a vow of absolute sobriety.."Did they rush you straight in here or did you arrange all the insurance matters at reception, Mr. Pinchbeck?"..On the third of June, he found another useless Bartholomew, and on Saturday, the twenty-fifth, two deeply disturbing events occurred. He switched on his kitchen radio only to discover that "Paperback Writer," yet another Beatles song, had climbed to the top of the charts, and he received a call from a ea woman..I also wanted information on various things that had happened back then, before Ged and Tenar were born. A good deal about Earthsea, about wizards, about Roke Island, about dragons, had begun to puzzle me. In order to understand current events, I needed to do some historical research, to spend some time in the Archives of the Archipelago.."Fifty died in London, in '57, when two trains crashed. And a hundred twelve were crushed, torn, mangled, in '52, also England."..Not that he failed to perform well. As always, he was a bull, a stallion, an insatiable satyr. None of his lovers complained; none had the energy for complaint when he'd finished with them..Why Cain, even if he was the father, should be interested in the little

girl was a mystery to Tom Vanadium. This totally self-involved, spookily hollow man held nothing sacred; fatherhood would have no appeal for him, and he certainly wouldn't feel any obligation to the child that had resulted from his assault on Phimie.. "All right," Agnes said, and as she voiced her acceptance, she was shivered by a sudden fear for which she couldn't at once identify a cause.. In the city again, he stopped long enough to donate the raincoat to a homeless man who didn't notice the few odd stains. This pathetic hobo happily accepted the fine coat, donned it-and then cursed his benefactor, spat at him, and threatened him with a claw hammer.. Opening his eyes, still not daring to meet Victoria's gaze, Junior knew she had registered and properly interpreted his response to her seductive spooning. She had frozen, the utensil in midair, and her breath had caught in her throat. She was thrilled.. The sound-suppressor didn't render the pistol entirely silent, but the three soft reports, each like a quiet cough muffled by a hand, wouldn't have carried beyond the hallway.. Paul stayed with her, sometimes wincing at the ground as though the danger were there, not above-which, in a sense, it was, because impact rather than the fall itself is the killer-and at other times putting his arms around her, staring up at the boy above. But he, too, was silent.. The narrow brick-paved serviceway lay five feet below. The maniac had knocked over trash cans while making his escape, but he wasn't tumbled among the rest of the garbage.. Spinning off the stool, the bun cap in one hand and the mustard dispenser clutched in the other, Junior surveyed the long narrow diner. Looking for the maniac cop. The dead maniac cop. He half expected to see Thomas Vanadium: head crusted in blood, face bashed to pulp, caked in quarry silt, and dripping water as though he'd climbed out of his Studebaker coffin just minutes ago.. She could have used the chair. Sitting, however, she wouldn't be able to see his face.. "So where he threw the quarter," Barty said, as Angel listened intently and nodded her head, "wasn't really into Gunsmoke, 'cause that's not a place, it's just a show. See, maybe he threw it into a place where I'm not blind, or into a place where he doesn't have that messed-up face, or a place where for some reason you never came here today. There's more places than anybody could ever count, even me, and I can count pretty good. That's what you feel, right-all the ways things are?" Exactly. The shock. The devastating loss. Junior felt it now, anew, and was afraid he might betray himself with tears, although he seemed to be done with vomiting.. Although not quite as young as Bavor Poriferan, this artist was equally adored by critics and widely regarded as a genius. He went by a single and mysterious name, Sklent, and in the publicity photo of him that was posted in the gallery, he looked dangerous.. After a while, he dared to crack his eyelids. Pressing against his eyes was a blackness as smooth and as unrelenting as any known by a blind man. Not even a ghost of light haunted the night beyond the window, and the slats of the venetian blind were as hidden from view as the meatless ribs under Death's voluminous black robe.. when red aces weft followed by disturbing jacks, Agnes had pretended to take her son's card-told fortune lightly, especially the frightful part of it. In fact, a coldness had twisted through her heart.. More than once, a passing nurse stopped to check on him and to advise him not to exhaust himself. "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." Sad symbols of a romance not meant to be, the red rose and the bottle of wine lay on the floor of the foyer. With the corpse gone, no signs of violence remained.. His precious wife had fallen from the tower and died only hours before this girl was born. This girl ... this vessel.. Rudy Hackachak--Big Rude to his friends--was six feet four, as rough-hewn as a log sculpture carved with a woodsman's ax. In a green polyester suit with sleeves an inch too short, an unfortunate urine yellow shirt, and a tie that might have been the national flag of a third world country famous for nothing but a lack of design sense, he looked like Dr. Frankenstein's beast gussied up for an evening of barhopping in Transylvania.. "When your hands are bigger," Tom agreed, "I'm sure you could. In fact, one day I'll teach you." As Celestina settled on the sofa with the phone in her lap, hesitating to dial until she worked up a bit more courage, Angel said to Tom, "So what happened to your face?" "Bet I could, and sell it, too," she said. "I might not be as good at it as I am at teeth, but I'd be better than some I've read." With the dead woman's guest on the way, minutes were precious. Attention to detail was essential, however, regardless of how much time was required to properly stage the little tableau that might disguise murder as a domestic accident.. "It's even worse," Junior rasped, convinced that he was losing some indefinable advantage if the cop left without playing out this moment as it would usually unfold in an intellectual television crime drama like Perry Mason or Peter Gunn.. The old woman crumpled with a papery rustle, as though she were an elaborately folded piece of origami. She would be unconscious for a while, and after she came around, she probably wouldn't remember who she was, let alone what make of car she'd been driving, until Junior was well out of Eugene.. The time had come for him to think more seriously about his situation and his future. Self-improvement remained a laudable goal, but his efforts needed to be more focused.. She sat on the end of the table, where Barty had sat, now at eye level with the standing physician.. He was uncomfortable, achy, thirsty, but he remained utterly still and observant. After a while, he realized that the sense of oppression with which he'd awakened was not entirely a psychological symptom: Something heavy lay across his abdomen. And it was cold-so cold, in fact, that it had numbed his middle to the extent that he hadn't immediately felt the chill of it. Shivers coursed through him. He clenched his jaws to prevent his teeth from chattering and thereby alerting the man in the chair. Although he never took his eyes off the comer, Junior became preoccupied with trying to puzzle out what was draped across his midsection. The mysterious observer made him sufficiently nervous that he couldn't order his thoughts as well as usual, and the effort to prevent the shivers from shaking a sound out of him only further interfered with his ability to reason. The longer that he was unable to identify the frigid object, the more alarmed he became. He almost cried out when into his mind oozed an image of Naomi's dead body, now past the whitest shade of pale, as gray as the faint light at the window and

turning pale green in a few places, and cold, all the heat of life gone from her flesh, which was not yet simmering with any of the heat of decomposition that would soon enliven it again..Magusson was a small man behind a huge desk. His head appeared too large for his body, but his ears seemed no bigger than a pair of silver dollars. Large protuberant eyes, bulging with shrewdness and feverish with ambition, marked him as one who'd be hungry a minute after standing up from a daylong feast. A button nose too severely turned up at the tip, an upper lip long enough to rival that of an orangutan, and a mean slash of a mouth completed a portrait sure to repel any woman with eyesight; but if you wanted an attorney who was angry at the world for having been cursed with ugliness and who could convert that anger into the energy and ruthlessness of a pit bull in the courtroom, even while using his unfortunate looks to gain the jurors' sympathy, then Simon Magusson was the counselor for you..could not be a person of the best intentions. Doctors and nurses wouldn't monitor their patients with the lights off..Along the hall to his room. Fast and low through the doorframe. Wary of the closet door standing two inches ajar..force open Edom's mouth. "Eat your sin, boy, eat your sin!" Edom resists eating his sin, but he's afraid for his eyes,.honor and family. This was life, and everyone lived his life in the shadow of one solemn obligation or another..When he was baking, the world seemed to be a less dangerous place. Sometimes, making a cake, he forgot to be afraid..Later, as Bonita and Francesca proudly served their mother's individually molded Christmas-tree-shaped servings of flan, which they themselves had plated, Barty leaned close to his mother and, pointing to the table in front of them, said softly but excitedly, "Look at the rainbows!".The boy never mentioned what he'd done, and his mother ceased worrying about him falling out of bed.."We have dams, though," said Jacob, gesturing with his fork. "The Johnstown Flood, 1889. Pennsylvania, sure, but it could happen here. And that was a one, let me tell you. The South Fork Dam broke. Wall of water seventy feet high totally destroyed the city. Your tornado killed almost seven hundred, but my dam killed two thousand two hundred and nine. Ninety-nine entire families were swept from the earth. Ninety-eight children lost both parents.".In his light backpack, he carried one change of clothes, spare socks, candy bars, bottled water. He planned his journeys to be in a town every nightfall, where he washed one set of clothes and donned the other.

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