

THINK RIGHT LIVE RIGHT

Junior didn't find anything to explain her paranoia-though, to his surprise, he discovered six books by Caesar Zedd in her small library. The pages were dog-eared; the text was heavily underlined..His mouth was dry when he said to Angel, "Well, it seems pretty magical to me-that flipped-coin trick."..By mid-March, he had exhausted the possibilities of Bartholomew as a surname. By the time that he shot himself in September, he had combed through the first quarter million listings in the directory in search of those whose first names were Bartholomew.."Please try not to be alarmed, Miss White, but I have a patrol car on the way to your address."..Professional magic was not a field in which many Negroes could find their way to success. Obadiah was one of a rare brotherhood..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..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..What he learned working with his father and uncle in the shipyard he could use, at least; and he was becoming a good craftsman, even his father would admit that..ice bags. I almost laughed at his tendency to morbidness and self dramatization. The living dead had not come to get him: just some rubber ice bags..A pink spot in the center of Victoria's forehead marked the point of impact. Soon it would be an ugly bruise. The skull bone did not appear to have been cratered..In the kitchen, a delicious aroma wafted from the oven. On the stove stood a large pot over a low flame, and nearby was pasta to be added to the water when it came to a boil..They were inseparable, her son and this cherished girl, as they had been virtually since the moment they had met, more than six years ago. The special perception that they shared--all the ways things are-accounted for part of their closeness, but only part. The bond between them was so deep that it defied understanding, as mysterious as the concept of the Trinity, three gods in one.."Yes?" the silver-haired eminence replied, wrinkling his nose as though he suspected that this customer would ask if the display pedestal was included in the price..Blind he remained until an afternoon in May 1993, when at last the miracle occurred, and the meaning that Tom Vanadium had foreseen so long ago began to manifest.."After the quake," Edom said, "forty thousand people took refuge in a two-hundred-acre open area, a military depot. A quake-related fire swept through so fast they were killed standing up, so tightly packed together they died as a solid mass of bodies.".."Wally," Celestina said, without hesitation, because suddenly she saw something of a Wally in his green eyes, which were livelier than they had been before..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..The container-eye-level at the top, battered, rust-streaked, beaded with condensation-was larger than some in the alleyway, with a bifurcated lid. Both halves of the lid were already raised.."Sometimes it's sad here, Mommy. But it's not sad every place you are. Lots of places, Daddy's with you and me, and we're happier, and everything's okay."..Only madmen were capable of such butchery. Hopeless lunatics like Ed Gein, out there in Wisconsin, arrested just seven years ago, when Junior had been sixteen. Ed, the inspiration for Psycho, had constructed mobiles out of human noses and lips. He used human skin to make lampshades and to upholster furniture. His soup bowls had once been human skulls. He ate the hearts and selected other organs of his victims, wore a belt fashioned from nipples, and occasionally danced under the moon while masked by the scalp and face of a woman he had murdered..Piano music drifted into the restaurant from the adjacent bar, so soft and yet sprightly that it made the clink of silverware seem like music, too..No. Ridiculous. Naomi wasn't slumped across him. He wasn't sharing his bed with a corpse. That was E.C. Comics stuff, something from a yellowed issue of Tales from the Crypt..Worse, the people who adopted Seraphim's baby might be anywhere in the nine-county Bay Area. Millions of phone listings to scan..A matronly nurse arrived, alerted to the patient's return to consciousness by the telemetry device associated with the heart monitor..Applying his intelligence now, he employed simple meditation techniques to calm himself and to slow his heartbeat. The cop was trying to rattle him into making a mistake, but calm men did not incriminate themselves..Fed up with them and with this exhibition, Junior half wished that he would again be stricken by violent nervous emesis. Even in his suffering, he would enjoy spraying these insistently appealing canvases with the reeking ejecta of his gut: criticism of the most pungent nature..64 just a little bit ago," the girl said. "I was sitting on the porch, having a Popsicle, and I just figured it out."..On the fourth floor, at Dr. Klerkle's suite, the hall door stood ajar. Past office hours, the small waiting room was deserted..Joey rested not under the stern watch of the cypresses, but near a California pepper tree. With its graceful, cascading boughs, it appeared to stand in meditation or in prayer..Junior assumed the dead girl had come from a family of stature in the Negro community, which would explain the stonemason's accelerated service. Vanadium, according to his own words, was a friend of the family; consequently, the father was most likely a police officer..Certain that he was overreacting, Tom nevertheless left the kitchen as a cop, not a priest, would leave it: staying low, knife thrust in front of him, clearing the doorframe fast..demons: hypodermoclysis ... intravenous oxytocin ... maintain perfect asepsis, and I mean perfect, at all times ... a few oral preparations of ergot as soon as it's safe to give her anything by mouth..In the neatly ordered bedroom, he removed his shoes. Stretching out on the bed, he stared at the ceiling, feeling useless..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..Embarrassed, Kathleen stopped singing, but to the other woman, Nolly said, "It is a lovely voice, isn't it? Haunting, I think."..Minutes later, once more in a corridor conference with

Dr. Daines, she was forced to temper her new optimism..Junior Cain felt as if his heart had been lanced by a needle so thin that the muscle still contracted rhythmically but painfully around it. She did? She. . . she wrote that?."Well, you ought to be," Grace said, taking her pies out to the Suburban that Wally had bought solely for this enterprise..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."."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."..On a positive note, the apartment was heated by a gas furnace. A leak, a spark, an explosion, and he would never have to see poor Agnes in her misery..Granted that he was only three going on four, nevertheless Barty had never met anyone with as much cheerful imagination as Angel. He intended to marry her in, oh, maybe twenty years..The pair of sliding doors at the living-room archway stood half open. Beyond, voices drew Paul against his will.. "Nick," he suggested, as though any reason existed for her to be on a first-name basis with the man who killed her husband. "I wasn't drinking. ".Returning to his apartment, Edom had to pass under the limbs of the majestically crowned oak that dominated the deep yard between the house and the garage..They ordered martinis, and when Kathleen, perusing a menu, asked her husband what looked good for dinner, he suggested, "Oysters?".Tom Vanadium was no alarmist, and the most logical explanation came to him first. Paul had wanted to learn how to roll a quarter across his knuckles, and in spite of being dexterously challenged, he practiced hopefully from time to time. No doubt, he had sat at the table this morning--or even last evening, before bed-dropping the coin repeatedly, until he exhausted his patience.. "September 20, 1902, Birmingham, Alabama, church fire--one hundred fifteen dead. March 4, 1908, Collinwood, Ohio, school fire, one hundred seventy-six dead."."Oh, that's me, all right. I'm on the FBI's most-wanted list for criminal pie jostling."..By dawn, when the intestinal paroxysms finally passed, this bold new man of adventure felt as flat and limp as road kill..On December 18, as the Beatles' "Hello Goodbye" rocketed up the charts, Junior boiled over with frustration at his inability to find either love or Seraphim's baby, so he drove across the Golden Gate Bridge, to Marin County and all the way to the town of Terra Linda, where he killed Bartholomew Prosser..Heedless of the rules of standard police procedure, Tom raced to the doorway, crossed the threshold, and saw Barty throw a can of soda at the shaved head and pocked face of a transformed Enoch Cain..Beyond the window, behind veils of rain and fog, the metropolis appeared to be more enigmatic than Stonehenge, as unknowable as any city in our dreams..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..The minister's threat had been forgotten, repressed. At the time, only half--heard, merely kinky background to lovemaking, these words had amused Junior, and he'd given no serious thought to their meaning, to the message of retribution contained in them. Now, in this moment of extreme danger, the inflamed boil of repressed memory burst under pressure, and Junior was shocked, stunned, to realize that the minister had put a curse on him!.Pecan cakes, cinnamon custard pies boxed in insulated coolers, gifts wrapped with bright paper and glittery ribbons. Agnes Lampion made deliveries to those friends who were on her list of the needful, but also to friends who were blessed with plenty. The sight of each beloved face, each embrace, each kiss, each smile, each cheerfully spoken "Merry Christmas" at every stop fortified her heart for the sad task awaiting her when all gifts were given..Thrusting his finger toward the table with each repetition of the word, Barty happily insisted, "Pie, pie, pie, pie, pie, pie, pie, pie."."She was a hero, just like you. I wanted you ... I wanted you to see her and to know her name. Perri Damascus. That was her name."..The apartment had been furnished with only two padded folding chairs and a bare mattress in the living room. The mattress was on the floor, without benefit of a bed frame or box springs..He desperately needed closure in the matter of Naomi's death. That was what these past three years and these supernatural events were all about..She worried that her anxiety would prove contagious, that when her fear infected her boy, he would be less able to fight whatever hateful thing had taken seed in his right eye..He decided that he must never again kill so impetuously. Never. In fact, he vowed never again to kill at all, except in self-defense. Soon he would be rich--with much to lose if he was caught. Homicide was a marvelous adventure; sadly, however, it was an entertainment that he could no longer afford..AGNES ALWAYS ENJOYED Christmas Eve dinner with Edom and Jacob, because even they tempered their pessimism on this night of nights. Whether the season touched their hearts or they wanted even more than usual to please their sister, she didn't know. If gentle Edom spoke of killer tornadoes or if dear Jacob was reminded of massive explosions, each dwelt not on horrible death, as usual, but on feats of courage in the midst of dire catastrophe, recounting astonishing rescues and miraculous escapes..Wishing he had left the gauze wrappings on his face, but afraid that the airwaves might already be carrying news of the bandaged man who had killed a minister in Spruce Hills, Junior abandoned the Dodge and hurriedly walked back to the private-service terminal, where the pilot from Sacramento waited. At the sight of his passenger, the pilot blanched and said, Allergic reaction to WHAT? And Junior said, Camellias, because Sacramento was the Camellia Capital of the World, and all that he wanted was to get back there, where he'd left his new Ford van and his Sklents and his Zedd collection and everything he needed to live in the future. The pilot couldn't conceal his intense revulsion, and Junior knew that he would have been stranded if he hadn't paid the round-trip charter fare in advance..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." 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. On the day that Vanadium attended the graveside service for Seraphim and subsequently stopped at Naomi's grave to needle Cain, he had suspected that Phimie didn't die in a traffic accident, as claimed, but he hadn't for a moment thought that the wife killer was in any way connected. Now, finding this gallery brochure in the nightstand drawer seemed to be one more bit of circumstantial proof of Cain's guilt...Zedd taught in this world where dishonesty is the currency of social acceptance and financial success, you must practice some deceit to get along in life, but you must never lie to yourself, or you are left with no one to trust. The rain was colder than it had been earlier, almost as icy as sleet. Or perhaps she was far hotter than before and felt the chill more keenly on her fevered skin. Each droplet seemed to hiss against her face, to sizzle against her hands, with which she tightly gripped her swollen abdomen as if she could deny Death the baby that it had come to collect. Junior wasn't concerned that the shots would attract unwanted attention. These large rural properties and a plenitude of muffling trees made it unlikely that the nearest neighbor would hear anything. "You did just fine, Tom, just fine," Agnes said in a consoling tone that she might have used with a boy whose performance, at a piano recital, had been earnest but undistinguished. "We were all quite impressed." He almost laughed at himself, but he recalled the disconcerting laugh that earlier had trilled from him in the men's room, when he'd thought about stuffing Neddy Gnathic into the toilet. Now he pinched his tongue between his teeth almost hard enough to draw blood, hoping to prevent that brittle and mirthless sound from escaping him again. "Retinoblastoma is usually unilateral," Dr. Chan continued, "occurring in one eye. Bartholomew has tumors in both." 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. For eight months following that night, until late September of 1965, Vanadium had been in a coma, and his doctors had not expected him to regain consciousness. A passing motorist had found him lying along the highway near the lake, soaked and muddy. When, after his long sleep, he awakened in the hospital, withered and weak, he'd had no memory of anything after walking into Victoria's kitchen-except a vague, dreamlike recollection of swimming up from a sinking car. She stood just inside the front door of the apartment, admiring herself in a full-length mirror, waiting patiently for Celestina, who was packing dolls, coloring books, tablets, and a large collection of crayons into a zippered satchel. Although she was aware that these extraordinary events would shape the rest of her life, beginning with her actions in the hours immediately ahead of her, she could not clearly see what she ought to do next. At the core of her confusion was a conflict of mind and heart, reason and faith, but also a battle between desire and duty. Until she was Rubbermaid container from his own pantry. Junior would never again use it to store leftover soup. In the noble ruin of his face, Thomas Vanadium's smoke-gray eyes were striking, filled with a beautiful ... sorrow. Not self-pity. He clearly didn't regard himself as a victim. This, Kathleen felt, was the sorrow of a man who had seen too much of the suffering of others, who knew the evil ways of the world. These were eyes that read you at a glance, that shone with compassion if you deserved it, and that glared with a terrifying judgment if compassion wasn't warranted. He knew she wouldn't just step back to calculate her batting average, so he rolled at once, out of her way, immensely relieved that he could move, because judging by the pain coruscating across his back, he wouldn't have been surprised if she had broken his spine and paralyzed him. The chair crashed down again, exactly where Junior had been sprawled an instant before. "I'm a less philosophical sort than Kathleen," Nolly said, "so what I've been wondering is where you learned the tricks with the quarter. How is it you're priest, cop-and amateur magician?" The accountant lived in a white Georgian house on a street lined with huge old evergreens. Reflections of those tracks appeared as stigmatic tears on the long face of the physician. The musician's bird-sharp gaze grew dull. His pink tongue protruded from his mouth, like a half-eaten worm. So that my mind could move about among the years and centuries without getting things all out of order, and to keep contradictions and discrepancies at a minimum while I was writing these stories, I became (somewhat) more systematic and methodical, and put my knowledge of the peoples and their history together into "A Description of Earthsea." Its function is like that of the first big map I drew of all the Archipelago and the Reaches, when I began to work on A Wizard of Earthsea over thirty years ago: I needed to know where things are, and how to get from here to there-in time as well as in space. He ran gasping, praying, feet slapping the concrete sidewalk, frightening birds out of the purple brightness of blossom-laden jacarandas and out of Indian laurels, terrorizing a tree rat into a lightning sprint up the bole of a phoenix palm. The few people he encountered reeled out of his way. Brakes shrieked as he crossed intersections without looking both ways, risking cars and trucks and rhinoceroses. Other rooms were furnished as sparsely as those in a monastery. Indeed, the dining room contained nothing whatsoever. Maybe the watch wouldn't be discovered with the corpse. Maybe it would settle into the trash and not be found until archaeologists dug out the landfill two thousand years from now. Upon arriving at the creche window, he had been in a buoyant mood. As he studied the quiet scene, however, he grew uneasy. AS THE WULFSTAN PARTY was being seated at a window table, slowly tumbling masses of cottony fog rolled across the black water, as if the bay had awakened and, rising from its bed, had tossed off great mounds of sheets and blankets. For Agnes and Barty, one stop remained, where some of the joy of Christmas would always be buried with the husband that she still missed every day and the father that he would never know. Those spike-sharp eyes, - tenpenny gray, nailed Junior to the bed, pinning him for scrutiny. "Please take the cards from the pack and put them on the coffee table in front of you," Obadiah directed. THE SANDMAN WAS powerless to cast a spell of sleep while Junior spent the night flushing away enough water to drain a reservoir. "Too bad. You

might have used that to bargain with." Had Kathleen Klerkle been a man, she would have enjoyed larger quarters in a newer building in a better part of town. She was more gentle and respectful of the patient's comfort than any male dentist Nolly had ever known, but prejudice hampered women in her profession..Agnes rubbed noses with him again, kissed him, and rose from the edge of the bed.."I never spoke with God--Nor visited in Heaven--Yet certain am I of the spot--As if the Checks were given." Fortunately, just as he was about to declare his gut feelings to his superior and risk dismissal, he saw his potential patient. At fifteen, Seraphim was breathtakingly beautiful, in her own way as striking as Naomi, and instinct told Junior that the chance of being physically or morally polluted by her was negligible..which was tied a gift tag bearing a hand-printed message: With our compliments. Thanks for your business..Wally had disposed of his properties in San Francisco under Tom's careful supervision. Any attempt to trace him from the city to Bright Beach would fail. His vehicles were purchased through a corporation, and his new house had been bought through a trust named after his late wife..From her Volkswagen bus in the middle of the line, Maria joined them. "In case we get separated, Agnes, I don't have an itinerary." Angel cocked her head and studied his left hand, which he had closed while opening his right. She pointed. "It's there." The paramedic pulled shut the door, leaving Joey outside in the night, in the storm, in the wind between worlds..Then it would stop. The torment would stop. Surely. His sense of drift, of sliding aimlessly through the days, would lift from him, and he would find purpose once more in determined self-improvement. He would definitely learn French and German. He would take cooking classes and become a culinary master. Karate, too..The odds against this phenomenal eleven-card draw must be millions to one, which seemed to give the predictions validity..Robert Heinlein saved her. Over hot dogs and chips, she read to Barty from Red Planet, beginning at the top of page 104. He had previously shared enough of the story with Agnes so that she felt connected to the narrative, and soon she was sufficiently involved with the tale that she was better able to conceal her anguish..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..Someone she had known. Someone Celestina, too, might know. He lived in or around Spruce Hills, because Phimie had considered him still to be a threat..Bellini assured Celestina that they didn't expect Enoch Cain to be so brazen as to follow police vehicles and to renew his assault on her at St. Mary's. Nevertheless, he assigned a uniformed police officer to the hall outside of the waiting room that served friends and family of the patients in the intensive-care unit. And judging by that guard's high level of vigilance, Bellini had not entirely ruled out the possibility that Cain might show up here to finish what he started in Pacific Heights..The odds against drawing a jack of spades four times in a row out of four combined and randomly shuffled decks were forbidding. Jacob didn't have the knowledge necessary to calculate those odds, but he knew they were astronomical.."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." "I don't know anyone named Bartholomew." He decided that the truth, in this instance, could not harm him..The three adults exclaimed at the disappearance of the quarter, applauded again, and looked knowingly at Tom's hands, which had closed at the sudden conclusion of all the flourishes..The decision had already been made that Grace would move in with Celestina and then-following the wedding-with Celestina and Wally. In Spruce Hills, she had dear friends whom she would miss, but there was nothing else in Oregon to draw her back, other than the narrow plot beside Harrison, where she expected eventually to be buried. The parsonage fire had destroyed all her personal effects and every family treasure from Celestina's grade-school spelling-bee medals to the last precious photograph. She wanted only to be close to her one remaining daughter and her granddaughter, to be part of the new life that they would build with Wally Lipscomb..Turning around in his seat, watching with amusement as Celestina fumbled nervously with the currency, the cabbie said, "You're not scared, not you. Sitting back there so silent most all the way, you weren't thinking about being famous. You were thinking about that girl of yours." This brilliant mouthful was not nature's work alone. With what Nolly must have spent to obtain this smile, some fortunate dentist had kept a mistress in jewelry through her most nubile years..She rushed on: "I'm one of the best waitresses they have, so if I ask for dinner shifts only, I'll get them. Tips are better at dinner. And working the one shift, four and a half to five hours, I'll have a regular schedule." Nellie found the strength to rise, but having risen, she was unable to speak. Her mouth shaped words, but her voice deserted her..being careful to place the point of impact precisely where the bottle had struck her..He was still her boy. As always, her boy. Bartholomew. Barty. Her sweetie. Her kiddo..She slammed it shut before he could stop her, whether he had intended to stop her or not, and she engaged the deadbolt lock..Unfortunately, Caesar Zedd had not written a self-help book on how to commit homicide and escape the consequences thereof, and as before, Junior was entirely on his own..Neddy talked when Celestina paused for breath, talked over her when she didn't pause, heard only his own mellifluous voice and was pleased to conduct both sides of the conversation, wearing her down as surely as-though far more rapidly than-the sand-filled winds of Egypt diminished the pharaohs' pyramids. He talked through the first polite "Excuse me" of the tall man who stepped into the open doorway behind him, through the second and third, and then with an abruptness that was as miraculous as any cure at the shrine of Lourdes, he fell silent when the visitor put a hand on his shoulder, eased him gently aside, and entered the apartment..With no clear awareness of having left the guest room, Paul looked down the enclosed stairs..The white padded eye patches rebuffed her, and she realized how profoundly the boy's double enucleation would affect how easily she could read his moods and know his mind. Here was a littler loss until now shadowed by the greater destruction. Denied the evidence of his eyes, she would need to be better at noting and interpreting nuances of his body language-also changed by blindness-and his voice, for there

would be no soul revealed by hand-painted, plastic implants.. "Thank you, Dr. Lipscomb. I'll keep track of what you're losing every month, and someday I'll pay it back to you." In the living room, he removed a decorative pillow from the sofa. He carried it into the foyer.. Somewhere in the world he had a deadly enemy: Bartholomew, who had something to do with babies, a total stranger yet an implacable foe.. He had been surprised to learn her age. She didn't appear to be that old. Thirty or not, Victoria was unusually attractive.. body on the flight out of San Francisco. When finally her obligations were met, she.. 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.. With no job to return to, he dawdled over lunch. He was actually tumescent with a growing sense of freedom that was as thrilling as sex.. Now, without realizing when it had happened, he had been lowered from his knees to his right side. Head elevated and tilted by one of the paramedics. So he could expel the bile, the blood, rather than choke on it.. Now that Tom knew what to look for, the gloom couldn't conceal the incredible truth.. She could have gone at him with the chair once more, but it was falling apart. Instead, she abandoned furniture for the promise of a firearm, dropped to her knees, and snatched the discarded pistol magazine off the floor.. Junior had walked along the big show windows, studying the two White paintings displayed to passersby, appalled by their beauty, when suddenly the door had opened and a gallery employee had invited him to come in. No printed invitation needed, no cool test to pass, no bouncers keeping the gate. Such easy accessibility served as proof, if you needed it, that this was not real art.. Closing her eyes, Agnes whispered, "Bartholomew," in a reverent voice full of wonder, full of awe.. Junior's heart knocked so hard and fast that he wouldn't have been surprised if Vanadium, at the far end of the room, had begun to tap his foot in time with it.. He spat on his right thumb, scrubbed the thumb against one of the dried drips on the floor, rubbed thumb and forefinger together, and brought the freshened spoor to his nose. He smelled blood.

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