

# **CACANDO PAYNE AGENTES THERIAN LIVRO 1**

On the nightstand stood a stainless-steel carafe beaded with condensation. Maria took the cap off the water carafe, and with a longhandled spoon, she scooped out a chip of ice. Cupping her left hand. When Victoria finally calmed her racing heart, she returned the spoon to the tray on the nightstand, stoppered the carafe, and said, "That's enough for now, Mr. Cain. In your condition, even too much I melted ice might trigger renewed vomiting." Still relishing her little pretense of rejection, Victoria did not touch the rose. "What kind of woman do you think I am?" "Look at it this way, Aggie. All the pies, all the things you do-that's betting on life. And now you've just been given the great blessing of being able to place larger bets." out of hand. "Well ... yes, I suppose so." Spineless, unethical quack bastard, Junior thought bitterly..As though the blush were transmitted by a virus, Junior caught the primrose-pink contagion from the pianist..He used the kitchen phone, at the comer secretary. The blood had been cleaned up long ago, of course, and the minor damage from the ricocheting bullet had been repaired.."Yours is a harder job than mine," Lipscomb told Grace, dandling Angel as he spoke. "I have no doubt of that." "This will stay with you," Mary said. "It's shared sight from all the other yous in all the other places, but you won't have to make any effort to hold on to it. No headaches. No problems ever. Merry Christmas, Daddy." Arriving home, he hesitated to open the door. He expected to find Vanadium inside.."But I had greater facility with cards than most magicians. I trained with Moses Moon, greatest card mechanic of his generation." He continued until four aces of hearts and four aces of diamonds were on the table in front of him. These eight draws he had prepared, and this effect was his intention..The missing paintings. The missing collection of Zedd's books. You didn't take these things with you for a weekend in Reno. You took them if you thought you might never be coming back..During the ten days since Joey's passing, a great many people had conveyed their condolences to Agnes, but until this man, she'd known all of them..And now she didn't need him anymore. He gazed at her face, held her cooling hand; his anchor was slipping away from him, leaving him adrift..make a worrywart life-insurance salesman like me seem just as light hearted as a schoolgirl." Of course, Angel might have been playing around with the talking book. Or, even though she'd left the dolls downstairs, she might have been filling the time until Barty's return by having a nice chat with Miss Pixie and Miss Velveeta. She had other voices, too, for other dolls, and one for a sock puppet named Smelly..Sweet-tempered, generous, honest, kind Naomi had surely been incapable of murdering anyone-least of all the man she loved..could not be a person of the best intentions. Doctors and nurses wouldn't monitor their patients with the lights off..He capped the bottle, pocketed it, and then kicked the dead man, kicked him again, and spat on him..He had not heard the lawman rising up with malevolent intent, as he had imagined. The body had simply rolled off the backseat onto the floor during the too-sharp 180-degree turn..She dealt with them equally, too, favoring neither-except in-the matter of pie delivery. On those rare occasions when she could not make these rounds herself and when she had no one to turn to but a brother, Agnes always asked for Edom's help.."No. Charming," she disagreed. "There's a meaning to it. Everything has a meaning, dear." The wife killer was evil; and his evil would be expressed one way or another, regardless of the forces that affected his actions. If he'd not killed Naomi on the fire tower, he would have killed her elsewhere, when another opportunity for enrichment presented itself. If Victoria hadn't become a victim, some other woman would have died instead. If Cain hadn't become obsessed with the strange conviction that someone named Bartholomew might be the death of him, he would have filled his hollow heart with an equally strange obsession that might have led him, anyway, to Celestina, but that would surely have brought violence down on someone else if not on her..He'd been a godsend to Celestina, because his love of children and a new sense of fun that he'd discovered in himself were showered on Angel. He was Uncle Wally. Waddling Wally, Wobbly Wally, Wally Walrus, Wally Werewolf. Wally Wit Duh Funny Accents. Wiggle Eared Wally. Whistling Wally. Wrangler Wally. He was Good Golly Wally the Friend of All Polliwogs. Angel adored him, adored him, and he could have loved her no more if she had been one of the sons that he had lost. Overwhelmed by her classes, her waitressing job, her painting, Celestina could always count on Wally to step in to share the child rearing. He wasn't merely Angel's honorary uncle, but her father in all senses except the legal and biological; he wasn't just her doctor, but a guardian angel who fretted over her mildest fever and worried about all the ways the world could wound a child..During the rest of that first year, he walked to Palm Springs and back, a round trip of more than two hundred miles, and north to Santa Barbara..Round one hit Ichabod in the left thigh, because Junior fired while bringing the weapon up from his side, but the next two were solid torso scores. This was not bad for an amateur, even if the distance to target was nearly short enough to define their encounter as hand-to-hand combat, and Junior decided that if the deformation of his left foot hadn't prevented him from fighting in Vietnam, he would have acquitted himself exceptionally well in the war..Besides, he'd noticed a tendency among dopers to get maudlin, whereupon they sank into a confessional mood, seeking peace through rambling self-analysis and self-revelation. Junior was too private a person to behave in such a fashion. Furthermore, if drugs ever put him in a confessional mood, the consequence might be electrocution or poison gas, or lethal injection, depending on the jurisdiction and the year in which he fell into an unbosoming frame of mind..Leaving the engine running and the heater on, he got out of the car, leaned back inside, said, "Better lock up while I'm gone," and then closed his door..WITH BRIGHT BEACH under assault by one miserable flu and by an uncountable variety of common colds, business was brisk this Monday at Damascus Pharmacy..He was immensely weary, limp. He felt oppressed, as though a great weight were piled on him. Even keeping his eyes open was tiring.."You sounded as though you were in a lot of distress. You were frightened of this Bartholomew." Just as the man turned away, Junior got a glimpse of what he wore under a London Fog raincoat. Between the lapels of the coat: a white shirt with a wing collar, a black bow tie, the suggestion of black-satin lapels

like those on a tuxedo jacket..Hound had taken him, had stood and seen his people beaten senseless, had not stopped the beating. Yet he spoke as a friend. Why? said Otter's look. Hound answered it.. "You don't get the heebie-jeebies," Max said. "You give 'em. Tell me what's wrong." Scamp had fabulous legs, and her bralessness left no doubts about the lusciousness and authenticity of her chest, but after an hour of conversation about something or other, before suggesting that they leave together, Junior maneuvered her into a reasonably private corner and discreetly put a hand up her skirt, just to confirm that his gender suspicions were correct..Requital. Restitutional apology, which must have been learned in a law school where English was the second language. Even atonement..face with one hand, as if pulling off cobwebs. "Did you say you were in my house?" Although a cold current crackled along the cable of her spine, Agnes smiled at the card. She was determined to change the dark mood that had descended over them..Consequently, he scheduled more time every day with the phone books. He had obtained directories for all nine counties that, with the city itself, comprised the Bay Area..The odds against this phenomenal eleven-card draw must be millions to one, which seemed to give the predictions validity.. "No. It's, stopped. The thing now is to prevent a recurrence of the emesis, which could trigger more bleeding. He's getting antinausea medication and replacement electrolytes intravenously, and we've applied ice bags to his midsection to reduce the chance of further abdominal-muscle spasms and to help control inflammation." Agnes's faith told her that the world was infinitely complex and full of mystery, and in a peculiar way, Barty's talk of infinite possibilities supported her belief and gave her the comfort to sleep. Monday morning, New Year's Day, Agnes carried two suitcases out of the back door, set them on the porch, and blinked in surprise at the sight of Edom's yellow-and-white Ford Country Squire parked in the driveway, in front of the garage. He and Jacob were loading their suitcases into the car..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.. "You could also dream of bananas," Celestina suggested as she turned down the bedclothes.. "Less than a year and a half ago, Hurricane Flora--she killed over six thousand in the Caribbean." She herself had been too nervous to eat anything. She'd held the same glass of untasted champagne throughout the evening, clutching it as though it were a mooring buoy that would prevent her from being swept away in a storm..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." The man's voice echoed hollowly in Junior's ears, as if coming from the far end of a tunnel. Or from the terminus of a death-row hallway, on the long walk between the last meal and the execution chamber..Although to Paul this was no more than childish chatter, Tom knew at once that the girl referred to his explanation for why he wasn't sad about his damaged face: the salt and pepper shakers representing two Toms, the hit-and-run rhinoceros, the different worlds all in one place. "Yes, Angel. That's something like what I was talking about." "Why do you think he's spending his money for all this tricky stuff?" Kathleen wondered, not for the first time..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.. "Once out of the coma and stabilized for a few weeks, I was transferred to a hospital in Portland, where I had to undergo eleven surgeries." By the time he put his suitcase and three boxes of books--the collected works of Zedd and selections from the Book-of-the-Month Club-in the Suburban, Junior had rushed twice more to the bathroom. His legs were shaky, and he felt hollow, frail, as if he'd lost more than was apparent, as if the essential substance of himself was gone.. "I don't just think so. And I don't just know it. I feel it, exactly like you feel all the ways things are. I'll bet you feel it, too." He halted, made a quick calculation, turned, and moved toward where the back door ought to be. He found it half open..After all he'd suffered at Cain's hands, Tom Vanadium surprised himself by laughing at these colorful accounts of the wife killer's misadventures. Indeed, laughter had seemed disrespectful to the memories of Victoria Bressler and Naomi, and Vanadium had been torn between a desire to hear more and a feeling that finding any amusement value in a man like Cain would leave a stain on the soul that no amount of penance could scrub away..Edom had turned away from the box of groceries that he was packing. Frowning at the pies, he said, "You don't think. . .If either of them suspected that she was lying, it was Edom. He looked puzzled, but he didn't pursue the issue..Barty followed the movement of her hand, raised his gaze to her eyes, hesitated, and then said questioningly, "No pie?" The round table seated six, but they required only three chairs, because the two brainless friends were a pair of Angel's dolls..Filled with the songs of swallows that evidently preferred these precincts to the more famous address of San Juan Capistrano, this mild March morning was perfect for pie deliveries. Agnes and Grace had produced a bakery's worth of glorious vanilla-almond pies and coffee toffee pies..The night seemed to be longer than a Martian month. Agnes dozed, fitfully, waking more than once, sweaty and shaking, from a dream in which her son was taken from her in pieces: first his eyes, then his hands, then his ears, his legs.....The word need, instead of want, moved Paul to follow the doctor across the coffee shop.. "I can talk to you," he said to Salk. "You'll understand. She was hero, the only one I ever knew till I met you. I've read about them all my life, in pulp magazines and paperbacks. But Perri ... she was the real thing. She didn't save tens of thousands-hundreds of thousands of children like you've done, didn't change the world as you've changed it, but she faced every day without complaint, and she lived for others. Not through them. For them. People called her to share their problem, and she listened and cared, and they called her with their good news because she took such joy in it. They asked for her advice, and though she was inexperienced, really, so short of experience in so many ways, she always knew what to say, Dr. Salk. Always the right thing. She had great heart and natural wisdom, and she cared so much." Jacob had become a card mechanic for one purpose. Not because he'd ever be a gambler. Not to wow friends with card tricks. Not because the challenge intrigued him. He wanted to be able to give Agnes winning cards once in a while, if she was losing too frequently or needed

to have her spirits lifted. He didn't feed her winning hands often enough to make her suspicious or to make the games less fun for Edom or Joey. He was judicious. The effort he expended-the thousands of hours of practice-was repaid with interest each time Agnes laughed with delight after being dealt a perfect hand..At sunset, the boy stood in the backyard, gazing up through the branches of the giant oak as an orange sky darkened to coral, to red, to purple, to indigo.. "A wonderful wedding," Celestina promised her, taking a pair of pajamas from a dresser drawer..In the faraway, at the limits of night and fog, the dog bit off his bark in expectation..In the sermon that brought him a moment of fame that he'd found more uncomfortable than not, Daddy had used the life of Bartholomew to illustrate his point that every day in every life is of the most profound importance. Bartholomew is arguably the most obscure of the twelve disciples. Some would say Lebbaeus is less known, some might even point to Thomas the doubter. But Bartholomew certainly casts a shadow far shorter than those of Peter, Matthew, James, John, and Philip. Daddy's purpose in proclaiming Bartholomew the most obscure of the twelve was then to imagine in vivid detail how that apostle's actions, seemingly of little consequence at the time, had resonated down through history, through hundreds of millions of lives-and then to assert that the life of each chambermaid listening to this sermon, the life of each car mechanic, each teacher, each truck driver, each waitress, each doctor, each janitor, was as important as the resonant life of Bartholomew, although each dwelt beyond the lamp of fame and labored without the applause of multitudes..The enormous canopy of the oak didn't shelter the lawn beneath it. The leaves spooned the rain from the air, measuring it by the ounce, releasing it in thick drizzles instead of drop by drop..Celestina hardly knew Paul, and although he'd saved her mother's life, his offer raised a look of doubt from her..She stepped on a broken-off chair leg, lost her balance, and fell backward into the side of the bed..By lunch, he had turned the final page, and he was so full of the tale that he seemed to have no room for food. While his mother kept reminding him to eat, he regaled her with the details of John Thomas Stuart's great adventures with Lummo, as though every word that Heinlein had written were not science fiction, but truth..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..obsessed with humanity's sorry penchant for destroying itself either by intention or ineptitude--491 suffocated and burned alive on an evening meant for champagne and revelry..The following day, Wednesday, December 27, his mother drove him to the library, where he checked out two Heinlein titles recommended by the librarian: Red Planet and The Rolling Stones. Judging by his excitement, on the way home in the car, his response to previous mystery-novel series had been a pleasant courtship, whereas this was desperate, undying love..The sidewalks were crowded with businessmen in suits, hippies in flamboyant garb, groups of smartly attired suburban ladies in town to shop, and the usual forgettably dressed rabble, some smiling and some surly and some mumbling but as blank-eyed as mannequins, who might be hired assassins or poets, for all he knew, eccentric millionaires in mufti or carnival geeks who earned their living by biting heads off live chickens.. "No," said Vanadium, "you only think you know who I am and what I am, but you don't know anything. That's all right. You'll learn."..When the ophthalmologist saw her misery, his kind face softened further, and his pity became palpable..Jacob grunted, but probably not because he'd heard what had been said about him, more likely because he'd just turned the page to find a photo of dead cattle piled up like driftwood against the American Legion Hall in some flood-ravaged town in Arkansas..She wanted to go to San Francisco with Celestina, to have the baby in the city, where the father-and not incidentally her friends and Reverend White's parishioners-would never know she'd given birth. The more her parents and sister argued against this plan, the more agitated Phimie became, until they worried that they would jeopardize her health and mental stability if they didn't do as she wished..Alone with Agnes, the physician said, "I want you to take Barty to a specialist in Newport Beach. Franklin Chan. He's a wonderful ophthalmologist and ophthalmological surgeon, and right now we don't have anyone like that here in town."..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..He tugged on a pair of thin latex surgical gloves. Flexed his hands. All right.. "Usually, I throw out a bunch of hocus-pocus, flourishes and patter, to distract people, so they don't even realize that what they've seen was real. They think the midair disappearance is just a trick."..Of firm but pliable rubber, custom-formed to his disfigured foot, a shoe insert filled the void left by his missing toe. This simple aid ensured that virtually all footwear was comfortable, and by November, Junior walked with no discernible limp.. "But you don't understand." She recounted the extraordinary draw of aces during the fortune-telling session Friday evening..The boy dashed for the front passenger's door. Agnes didn't follow him, because she knew that he would politely but pointedly express frustration if any attempt was made to help him with a task that he could perform himself..Tom stared down into the oceanic depths of the city, through the reefs of buildings, to the lamp-fish cars schooling through the great trenches..scraps of night that have lingered long after dawn dart agitatedly in and out of the tree, from branch to branch..Sitting on the edge of the bed, taking his hand, she stared at his sweet little bow of a mouth, whereas before she would have met his eyes. "Tell me."..When Frieda finished retching and passed out in a heap, Junior left her on the floor and immediately set out to explore her rooms..This momentous day. In every ending, new beginnings. But, thank God, no ending here..In that instant, she knew the dreadful shape of the future, if not its fine details.. "With this money, you won't have to cut back on the number of pies you give away--and all of that."..His instructor, Bob Chicane-who visited twice a week for an hour-advised him to imagine a perfect fruit as the object of his meditation. An apple, a grape, an orange, whatever..Not a door opened in the narrow street. Nobody looked out to see what the noise was. Not till long after the men were gone did some neighbors creep out to comfort Otter's people as best they could. "Oh, it's a curse, a curse, this wizardry!" they said..He was filled with bitter remorse for having suspected Naomi of poisoning his cheese sandwich or his apricots. She-had in fact adored him, as he had always believed. She

would never have lifted a hand against him, never. Dear Naomi would have died for him. In fact, she had..Using a three-step folding stool, he was able to get near enough to one of the vent plates in the living room to determine whether it might be the source of the song. just then the singing stopped..Indeed, she found it difficult to talk with her son in their usual easy way. She heard a stiffness in her voice that she knew would sooner or later be apparent to him..She didn't hide the diagnosis from the family, but she delayed telling them the prognosis, which was bleak. Already, her bones were tender, packed full of mutated immature white cells that hindered the production of normal white cells, red cells, and platelets..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..As he entered, the visitor's back was to Junior, and he moved toward the table, where dead Victoria sat with her head on her folded arms. She looked for all the world as though she were just resting..In the morning, after their first night together, without either of them suggesting what must be done, Barty and Angel went in silence into the backyard and, together, climbed the oak, to watch the sunrise from its highest bower. Three years later, on Easter Sunday in 1986, the fabled bunny brought them a gift: Angel gave birth to Mary. "It's time for a nice ordinary name in this family," she declared.. "My dad's already armored me," Celestina assured her. "He says art lasts, but critics are the buzzing insects of a single summer day."..The aging, fugitive Nazi had been replaced at the front desk by a woman with messily chopped blond hair, a brutish face, and arms that would dissuade Charles Atlas from challenging her. She changed a five-dollar bill into coins for the vending machines and snarled at him only once in strangely accented English..yunh," so she nodded as vigorously as she was able to do, and tightened her grip on Celestina's hand..These kids were the same age, yet listening to them was akin to hearing Angel do her charming shtick with an adult who had a lot of patience, a sense of humor, and an awareness of generational ironies..The dinner guest leaned back into the car, as though to retrieve something. Perhaps he, too, had been considerate enough to bring a small gift for his hostess.. "Having spent most of the last twenty years in this apartment, not being the one who has a car, how would I meet a Negro magician?"..Through nine months of quiet panic, however, Phimie grew less rational week by week, resorting to reckless measures that endangered.. "I didn't know it myself till I realized I was right in your neighborhood. I assumed your mother and Angel would be here, and I hoped you might be. If I'm intruding-"..Junior tipped his head back and gazed up toward the section of broken-out railing along the high observation deck..In his apartment once more, enjoying a cognac and a handful of pistachios as Monday changed to Tuesday, he decided that he should make 'preparations for the possibility that he might one day leave incriminating evidence in spite of his precautions. He ought to convert a portion of his assets into easily portable and anonymous wealth, like gold coins and diamonds. Establishing two or three alternate identities, with documentation, also would be wise..Even at this post midnight hour, the lounge would sometimes be as crowded with worried loved ones as at any other time of the day. This morning, however, the only life under the threat of the scythe appeared to be Wally's; the sole vigil being kept was for him..Indeed, even the distinct fragrance of pulp paper, yellow with age, was alone sufficient to start him fantasizing..Maybes are for babies, Zedd tells us in Act Now, Think Later. Learning to Trust Your Instincts..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?"..This room didn't face the street by which Cain would approach the building, so Vanadium switched on the lights. He spent fifteen minutes examining the mundane contents of the cupboards, searching for nothing in particular, merely getting an idea of how the suspect lived--and, admittedly, hoping for an item as helpful to a conviction as a severed head in the refrigerator or at least a plastic-wrapped kilo of marijuana in the freezer..She looked around the room. "He's invisible like the Cheshire cat?" "His whole world is as real as ours, but we can't see it, and people in his world can't see us. There're millions and millions of worlds all here in the same place and invisible to one another, where we keep getting chance after chance to live a good life and do the right thing."..judging by the evidence, the nurse was home alone, but Junior raised his voice above the music and called out, "Hello? Is anyone here?"..As a recreational site, Quarry Lake could be judged only a partial success. During the mining operation, trees were cleared well back from the edge of the dig, so that much of the shore would be unshaded on a hot summer day. And along half the strand, signs were posted warning Ungraded Shore: Immediate Deep Water. In places, where lake met land, the bottom lay over a hundred feet below..Dear Lord, how she loved her sugarpie, her little M&M. Three years had passed in what seemed like a month, and although there had been stress and struggle, too few hours in every day, less time for her art than she would have liked, and little or no time for herself, she wouldn't have traded being blindsided by motherhood for any amount of wealth, not for anything in the world ... except to have Phimie back. Angel was the moon, the sun, the stars, and all the comets streaking through infinite galaxies: an ever-shining light..Clenching his right hand around the quarter, waving left hand over right, he intoned, "Jingle-jangle, mingle-jingle." Opening his right hand, he revealed that the coin had vanished..Jacob trusted no one but Agnes and Edom. He'd trusted Joey Lampion, too, after years of wary observance. Now Joey was dead, and his corpse was in the embalming chamber of the Panglo Funeral Home..The blessing of Nellie's silence lasted only until Hanna, cursed with speech if not with sufficient strength to stand, said, "We tried to reach you, Mr. Damascus, but you'd already left the pharmacy."..Otter stated it as an unfortunate fact, not as a moral assertion. Hound looked at him with appreciation. Living with the pirate king, he was sick of boasts and threats, of boasters and threateners..Pulling herself up in the bed, peering at him suspiciously, she said, "You've gone and memorized old Emily."..In the physician's eyes, a yearning to believe. In his face, a squint of skepticism..With his bent thumb against the crook of his forefinger, he flipped the quarter. Even as the coin snapped off the thumbnail and began to stir the air, Tom flung up both hands,

fingers spread to show them empty and to distract. Yet on a second look, the coin was not airborne as it had seemed to be, no longer spinning-wink, wink-before their dazzled eyes. It had vanished as though into the payment slot of an ethereal vending machine that dispensed mystery in return..At the farthest end of the loft from the stereo speakers, voices nevertheless had to be raised in even the most intimate exchanges. The artist who had created In the Baby 's Brain Lies the Parasite of Doom, Version 6, however, possessed a voice as deep, sharp-edged, and penetrating as his talent..As instructed earlier by phone, Junior purchased a large box of Raisinettes and a box of Milk Duds at the refreshment stand, and then he sat in one of the last three rows in the center section, eating the Milk Duds, grimacing at the sticky noises his shoes made when he moved them on the tacky floor, and waiting for Google to find him..She was not going to be as forthright with Barty as she had insisted that Joshua Nunn be with her, in part because she was too shaken to risk forthrightness..Already another contraction racked her, so intense that the pain was not limited to her lower back and abdomen, but seared the length of her sphic, like an electric current leaping vertebra to vertebra. Her breath pinched in her chest as though her lungs had collapsed..Maria, puzzled but cooperative, left the room as instructed, and Barty removed the correct book from the stack on the table, without anyone's guidance. He sat in the armchair at his mother's side and began to read..Moving out of the doorway, into the bedroom, he said, "What book would that be?".Curiously, reciting these facts usually calmed him, as though speaking of disaster would ward it off. Since Friday, however, he had found no comfort in his usual routines.. "I never spoke with God--Nor visited in Heaven--Yet certain am I of the spot--As if the Checks were given."..Rescuers encouraged her to move safely away from the passenger's door, as far as possible, to avoid being inadvertently injured as they tried to break in to her. She could go nowhere but to her dead husband..From, the darkness of his room, Barty now spoke the words for which Agnes had been waiting, his whisper soft yet resonant in the quiet house: "Good-night, Daddy."..Thereafter, Junior managed to drive four miles before he was forced to pull off the road at another service station, after which he felt that his ordeal might be over. But less than ten minutes later, he settled for more rustic facilities in a clump of bushes alongside the highway, where his cries of anguish frightened small animals into squeaking flight..Sometimes, while shaving or combing his hair, as he was looking in the bathroom or foyer mirror, Junior thought that he glimpsed a presence, dark and vaporous, less substantial than smoke, standing or moving behind him. At other times, this entity seemed to be within the mirror. He couldn't focus on it, study it, because the moment he became aware of the presence, it was gone..Calcimine moonlight cast an arctic illusion over the boneyard. The grass was as eerily silver as snow at night, and gravestones tilted like pressure ridges of ice in a fractured wasteland..Every distorted shape, every smear of color, every swath of light and shudder of shadows resisted her attempts to relate them to the world she knew, as if shimmering before her were the landscape of a dream.. "He's not a real contemporary person, not anyone Cain needs to fear. So how did he develop this obsession with finding someone named Bartholomew?" He met Celestina's eyes, as if she might have answers for him. "Is there a real Bartholomew? And how does this tie in with his assault on you? Or is there any tie-in at all?"

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