

## THE EDUCATION OF THE NEER DO WELL

This claim wasn't true. His father, an unsuccessful artist and highly successful alcoholic, lived in Santa Monica, California. His mother, divorced when Junior was four, had been committed to an insane asylum twelve years ago. He rarely saw them. He hadn't told Naomi about them. Neither of his parents was a resume enhancer. Her father respected and admired Tom, so she was thankful for his presence. And anyone who could survive whatever catastrophe had left him with this cubistic face was a man she wanted on her team in a crisis. Otter shook his head. "I'm paying," Celestina insisted when they were seated. "I'm now a successful artist, with untold numbers of critics just waiting to savage me." With a bark of pain, chest to chest with defeat, the killer was borne downward by the fragrant weight, in a clink and clatter of brass handles. Griskin, a former convict, had served eleven years for second-degree murder before the lobbying efforts of a coalition of artists and writers had won his parole. He possessed a huge talent. No one before Griskin had ever managed to express this degree of violence and rage in the medium of bronze, and Junior had long kept the artist's work on his short list of desired acquisitions. The boy didn't at once answer, and when Agnes looked up from Red Planet, she saw that he was staring oddly at her. He squinted, as if puzzled, and said, "The twisty spots just jumped off the page right up on your face." He switched on his flashlight. In the beam, on the blacktop, a silver disc. Like a full moon in a night sky. This house was similar to the Kleftons'. Though stucco rather than clapboard, it had gone a long time without fresh paint. A crack in one of the front windows had been sealed with strapping tape. Junior drove them a little crazy by pretending not to understand their intent as they circled the issue like novice snake handlers warily looking for a safe grip on a coiled cobra. When Renee realized that this rejection was complete and final, she-he, whatever-was transformed from well-sugared southern lady to bitter, venomous reptile. Eyes glittering with fury, lips twisted and skinned back from her teeth, she called him all kinds of bastard, stringing epithets together so effortlessly and colorfully that she enhanced his vocabulary more than had all the home-study courses that he'd ever taken, combined. "And face it, pretty-boy, you knew what I was from the moment you offered to buy me a drink. You knew, and you wanted it, wanted me, and then when we got right down to the nasty, you lost your nerve. Lost your nerve, pretty-boy, but not your need." Maybe his pursuit of the matter sprang from mere curiosity, the desire to discover what a child of his might look like; however, if something else lay behind his interest, the motivation would not be benign. Whatever Cain's intentions, he would prove to be at least an annoyance to Celestina and the little girl-and possibly a danger. Celestina checked her wristwatch and saw that she was running late. With Angel's short legs and layers of red, there was no point in trying to hurry. Celestina was better equipped to embrace this transcendental experience for what it appeared to be. She was not one of those artists who celebrated chaos and disorder, or who found inspiration in pessimism and despair. Wherever her eyes came to rest, she saw order, purpose, exquisite design, and either the pale flicker or the fierce blaze of a humbling beauty. She perceived the uncanny not merely in old houses where ghosts were said to roam or in eerie experiences like the one Lipscomb had described, but every day in the pattern of a tree's branches, in the rapturous play of a dog with a tennis ball, in the white whirling currents of a snowstorm-in every aspect of the natural world in which insoluble mystery was as fundamental a component as light and darkness, as matter and energy, as time and space. Even though he now knew what a hateful person the nurse was, he remained strongly attracted to her. He was not the kind of man, however, who would take advantage of an unconscious woman. Barty whispered: "The North Pole Society of Not Evil Adventurers is now in session." Dropped cartridges gleamed on the carpet. Stoop to snatch them up? No. That was asking for a skull-cracking blow. Paul checked the back of the Suburban, since he fancied himself the wagonmaster. He wanted to be sure that the goods were loaded in such a way that they were unlikely to slide or be damaged. "Packed tight. Looks just fine," he declared, and closed the tailgate door. He swore that he would throw away all memory of this incident, as well. In Caesar Zedd's best-selling *How to Deny the Power of the Past*, the author offers a series of techniques for expunging forever all recollection of those events that cause us psychological damage, pain, or even merely embarrassment. Junior went to bed with his precious copy of this book and a snifter of cognac filled almost to the brim. "Better hold on tight to her," Wally warned Celestina, braking to a halt at the intersection. "She'll float up and away, then we'll have to call the fire department to get her down." No one could put him in prison because of his dreams. "I can't remember. Those are the worst, when you're not able to remember them-don't you think? They're always so silly when you can recall the details. When you draw a blank ... they seem more threatening." Clearly, the musician recognized him, which seemed unlikely, even extraordinary, considering that they'd never spoken to each other, and considering that Junior must be only one of thousands of customers who had passed through that lounge in the past three years. 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. He wasn't a marksman, anyway. He couldn't handle anything more than close-up work. Agnes wanted to tell them that all their efforts would be to no avail, that they should cease and desist, be kind and let her go. She had no reason to stay here anymore. She was moving on to be with her dead husband and her dead baby, moving on to a place where there was no pain, where no one was as poor as. The rain-washed street shimmered greasily under the tires, and the intersection lay halfway up a long hill, so gravity was aligned with fate against them. The driver's side of the Pontiac lifted. Beyond the windshield, the main drag of Bright Beach tilted crazily. The passenger's side slammed against the pavement. During the past week, he had ferreted out what he could about the nurse. She was thirty, divorced, without kids, and lived alone. Switching on the lights as he went, Junior sought the source of the serenade. He carried the 9-mm

pistol, which would have been useless against a spirit visitor; but his extensive reading about ghosts hadn't convinced him that they were real. His faith in the effectiveness of bullets and pewter candlesticks, for that matter-remained undiminished.."Another year," Edom said, "and instead of me, Barty can drive the car for you." You have the teeth to do it, Junior thought, but he restrained himself from saying it. "This can't be a dead end." We have inhabited both the actual and the imaginary realms for a long time. But we don't live in either place the way our parents or ancestors did. Enchantment alters with age, and with the age..Pain again, but not a mere contraction. Such an excruciation, unendurable. The hobnailed wheels ground through her once more, as though she were being broken on a medieval torture device..On Sunday, New Year's Eve, Edom and Jacob came for dinner. Following dessert, when Barty went to his room to continue reading Starman Jones, which he had begun late that afternoon, Agnes told her brothers the truth about their nephew's eyes..With the stocky detective looming, Junior wasn't able to stroke his imagination into an erotic mood. In his mind's eye, Victoria's ample bosom remained concealed behind a starched white uniform..As she turned away from him and continued along the hall toward the kitchen, Agnes said, "They'll be as good as new when she's mended them." Perhaps this particular worry was not ordinary maternal concern. If a sixth sense is at work in all of us, then perhaps subconsciously Apes was aware of the tragedy to come: the tumors, the surgery, the blindness..Golden lamplight gilded the front windows downstairs. He would sit with Victoria on the living-room sofa, sipping wine as they got to know each other. She might tell him to call her Vicky, and maybe he'd ask her to call him Eenie, the affectionate name Naomi had given him when he wouldn't tolerate Enoch. Soon, they would be necking like two crazy kids. Junior would disrobe her on the sofa, caressing her smooth pliant body, her skin buttery in the lamplight, and then he would carry her, naked, to the dark bedroom upstairs..What the commodifiers of fantasy count on and exploit is the insuperable imagination of the reader, child or adult, which gives even these dead things life-of a sort, for a while..Her mother and father still resided in a world where Phimie was alive. Bringing them from that old reality to this new one would be the second-hardest thing Celestina had ever done..The silence in this city of the dead was complete. The night lay breathless, stirring not one whisper from the stationed evergreens that stood sentinel over generations of bones..Hers were the most feminine hands he'd ever seen. Slender, soft, prettier than Naomi's. He had no idea what she was talking about..At last, as the sun slowly set, he arrived at the highest of the high redoubts, beyond which the branches were too young and too weak to support him farther. Against a sky red enough to delight the most sullen sailors, he rose and stood in a final crook of limbs, pressing his left hand against a balancing branch, right hand planted cockily on his hip, lord of his domain, having kicked off the trammels of darkness and fashioned from them a ladder..They were each down to one last sip of wine, studying dessert menus, when Celestina began to wonder if, in spite of all instincts and indications, she might be wrong about the state of Wally's heart. The signs seemed clear, and if his radiance wasn't love, then he must be dangerously radioactive-yet she might be wrong. She was a woman of some insight, quite sophisticated in many ways, with the raw-nerve perceptions of an artist; however, in matters of romance, she was an innocent, perhaps even more pitifully naive than she realized. As she perused the list of cakes and tarts and homemade ice creams, she allowed doubt to feed upon her, and as the thought grew that Wally might not love her that way, after all, she became desperate to know, to end the suspense, because if she didn't mean to him what he meant to her, then Daddy was just going to have to accept her conversion from Baptist to Catholic, because she and Angel would have to spend some serious heart-recovery time in a nunnery.."I was never Cary Grant, to begin with," said Vanadium, still ceaselessly rolling the quarter across his fingers, "so I had no big emotional investment in my appearance. Cosmetic surgery would have added another year of recuperation time, probably much longer, and I was anxious to get after Cain. Seemed to me this mug of mine might be just the thing to scare him into an incriminating mistake, even a confession." She cupped his face in both of her hands and was barely able to lift his head, for fear of what she would see..Barefoot, in midnight-blue silk pajamas, he walked through his rooms turning on lights in a considered pattern, which he had settled upon after much thought and planning.."That discord sets up lots of other vibrations, some of which will return to you in ways you might expect-and some in ways you could never see coming. Of the things you couldn't have seen coming, I'm the worst." The driver's door opened, shoving aside a damaged tea table, and a man climbed out of the Pontiac..Agnes discovered that watching her child be totally consumed by a new enthusiasm was an unparalleled delight. Through Barty, she had a tantalizing sense of what her own childhood might have been like if her father had allowed her to have one, and at times, listening to the boy exclaim about the space-faring Stone family or about the mysteries of Mars, she discovered that at least some part of a child still lived within her, untouched by either cruelty or time..When she complimented him on being such a good little soldier, abiding his cold with no complaint, he shrugged. Without looking up from the coloring book, he said, "It's just here." That night, in Barty's room, after Agnes had listened to his prayers and then had tucked him in for the night, she sat on the edge of his bed. "Honey, I was wondering.... Now that you've had more time to think, could you explain to me what happened?" "With this money, you won't have to cut back on the number of pies you give away--and all of that." Angel was lying on a towel on the convertible sofa, where Grace had just changed her diaper..Junior gave the Raisinets to him, and Google left the theater with his candy and his cash..Angel, however, focused on a point in the air above the table. Faint furrows marked her brow for a moment, but then the frown gave way to a smile..Needlepoint provided no sanctuary. Junior's hands trembled just badly enough to make accurate stitchery impossible..In the front seat, Edom and Jacob murmured agreement with the narrator's sentiments. Monday night, Edom and Jacob booked adjoining units in a motel near the hospital. They called Barty's room to give Agnes the phone number and to report that they had inspected eighteen establishments before finding one that seemed comparatively safe..Caesar Zedd recommended not merely seizing the day but devouring it. Chew it up, feed on the day, swallow the day whole. Feast, said Zedd, feast, approach life as a gourmet and as a

glutton, because he who practices restraint will have stored up no sustaining memories when famine inevitably comes. Gazing into the mirror, which ought to have been clouded with self-pity as though with steam, Junior Cain searched for his anger and found it. This was a black and bitter anger, as poisonous as rattlesnake venom; with little difficulty, his heart was distilling it into purest rage. From out of the fog and darkness came the slap of running feet on bricks. He was sprinting toward the back of the house. When Victoria failed to answer the door, this man would not simply go away. He had been invited. He was expected. Lights were on in the house. The lack of a response to his knock would be taken as a sign that something was amiss. In that slow, flat delivery with which Junior was becoming increasingly impatient, Detective Vanadium said, "We all were, Doctor. It was another election year, remember? More than once during that campaign, I could've chugged ipecac. What else would work if I wanted to have a good vomit?" 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. He vanished through some hole, some slit, some tear bigger than anything through which Tom flipped his quarters. Returning from his tests, he'd gotten into bed without stripping off the thin, hospital-issue robe. He was still wearing it over his pajamas. During the past few hours, he had changed his life again, as dramatically as he had changed it on that fire tower almost three years ago. He considered himself to be a thoroughly useless man, taking up space in a world to which he contributed nothing, but he did have a talent for baking. He could take any recipe, even one from a world-class pastry chef, and improve upon it. The candlestick was gone. The pedestal on which it had stood now held a Griskin bronze so devastatingly brilliant that one quick look at it would give nightmares to nuns and assassins alike. Mysteriously, on the first day of sunny weather in weeks, the 707 had crashed into Jamaica Bay, Queens, killing everyone aboard. Now, in 1965, it remained the worst commercial-aviation disaster in the nation's history, and because of the unprecedented dramatic television coverage, the story was a permanent scar in Celestina's memory, although she had been living a continent away at the time. They were driven to St. Mary's by Detective Bellini in a police sedan. Tom Vanadium—a friend of her father's whom she had met a few times in Spruce Hills, but whom she didn't know well—literally rode shotgun, tensed to react, wary of the occupants of other vehicles on. This was a good night for television. To Tell the Truth at seven-thirty, followed by I've Got a Secret, The Lucy Show, and The Andy Griffith Show. The new Lucy wasn't quite as good as the old show; Paul and Perri missed Desi Arnaz and William Frawley. Two things about him were remarkable, beginning with his face. His head was wrapped with white gauze bandages, so he looked like Claude Rains in *The Invisible Man* or like Humphrey Bogart in that movie about the escaped convict who has plastic surgery to foil the police and to start a new life with Lauren Bacall. Blond hair sprouted from the top of the elaborate wrappings. Otherwise, only his eyes, his nostrils, and his lips were uncovered. "You could also dream of bananas," Celestina suggested as she turned down the bedclothes. Dinner was available in the lounge. Junior enjoyed a superb filet mignon with a split of fine Cabernet Sauvignon. He had nothing against Negroes. He didn't wish them ill. He wasn't prejudiced. Live and let live. He believed that as long as they stayed with their own kind and abided by the rules of a polite society, like everyone else, they had a right to live in peace. And had Phimie, retrieved from death by the resuscitation procedures of the surgical team, repaid Nella's kindness with her own stunning message to Lipscomb? According to his wristwatch, the time was 9:05 in the morning on this momentous day. This Dry Sack-assisted effort at recollection, however, brought back to him one thing in addition to all the sweet lubricious images of Seraphim naked. The voice of her father. On the tape recorder. The reverend droning on and on as Junior pinned the devout daughter to the mattress. "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." 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. "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." Occasionally, when Junior returned home from a day of gallery hopping or an evening at a restaurant, Industrial Woman—the artist's title-scared away his mellow mood. More than once, he'd cried out in alarm before realizing this was just his prized Poriferan. "I love you, Daddy," she said, and put the palms of her hands flat against his temples. TALES FROM. Looking toward the nearest window, where the wet night kissed the glass, he said, "Lawn sprinklers?" Until Nolly, Kathleen's life had been as short on romance as a saltless saltine is short on flavor. Her childhood and even her adolescence were so colorless that she'd settled on dentistry as a career because it seemed, by comparison to what she knew, to be an exotic and exciting profession. She'd dated a few men, but all were boring and none was kind. Ballroom-dancing lessons—and ultimately competitions—promised the romance that dentistry and dating hadn't provided, but even dancing was somewhat a disappointment until her instructor introduced Kathleen to this balding, bull-necked, lumpy, utterly wonderful Romeo. "Was a priest," he corrected. "Might be again. At my request, I've been under a dispensation from vows and suspension from duties for twenty-seven years. Ever since those kids were killed." The hum, the buzz, the rattle, the grinding of machinery, power tools. Sheet steel and tougher structural steel snarling against the teeth of a metal-cutting saw. Crossing Spruce Hills with John, Paul, George, Ringo, and dead Thomas, Junior headed back toward Victoria's place, where Sinatra was no longer singing. The gray pewter appeared to be mottled with a black substance. Perhaps char. As though it had been soiled in a fire. "The princess is correct," he acknowledged, revealing that this hand was still empty. Then he reached to the girl and plucked the quarter from her ear. Behind her, he said, "And is that my gray cardigan? What did you do to my cardigan?" BASEBALL CAP IN HAND, he stood on Agnes's front porch this

Sunday evening, a big man with the demeanor of a shy boy..Convinced he was alone and unobserved, Junior leaned into the car and shifted it out of park. He released the hand brake..The boy fell and rolled even as he pitched the can, anticipating the shots that Cain fired, which cracked into the doorframe inches from Tom's knees..From late morning until dinner, people arrived and departed, raised toasts to a merry Christmas and to peace on earth, to health and to happiness, reminisced about Christmases past, marveled about the first heart transplant performed this very month in South Africa, and prayed that the soldiers in Vietnam would come home soon and that Bright Beach would lose no precious sons in those far jungles..All day, for reasons he couldn't quite put into words, Junior had carried that quarter in a pocket of his bathrobe. From time to time, he had taken it out to examine it..After taking a preliminary statement from Celestina, Bellini left to romance a judge out of bed and obtain a search warrant for Enoch Cain's residence, having already ordered a stakeout of the Russian Hill apartment. Celestina's description of her assailant was a perfect match for Cain. Furthermore, the suspect's Mercedes had been abandoned at her place. Bellini sounded confident that they would find and arrest the man soon..the floor, on a silk-covered pillow filled with goose down. With a sigh " he assumed the lotus position: spine straight, legs crossed, hands at rest with the palms up..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..She was a duplicitous bitch, too. After coming on to him, after teasing a reaction out of him, she had run off and gossiped about him as though he had instigated the seduction. Worse, to make herself feel important, she had told the police her skewed version, surely with much colorful embellishment..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.."-and whenever the good Pharaoh was here in San Francisco, a few times each year, he always stopped by St. Anselmo's to entertain the boys--".He hit Celestina with the big question, the huge question, just as she paused in her babbling to suck in a deep breath, the better to spout even more nonsense, whereupon this panicky inhalation caught in her breast, caught so stubbornly that she was certain she would need the attention of paramedics to start breathing again, but then Wally popped open the box, revealing a lovely engagement ring, the sight of which made the trapped breath explode from her, and then she was breathing fine, although snuffling and crying and just generally a mess. "I love you, Wally..".voice was flat, a drone; he had delivered not an emotional threat, but a quiet promise..To the alleyway again. Not through the clodhopper-cluttered gallery this time. Around the block at a brisk walk..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..But the boy played no tricks against his father. He took his beatings in silence and learned to hide his gift..Caring for her, in every sense of that word, had made him a far happier man than he would otherwise have been-and a far better one..Yet his heart slammed hard and heavy against his confining ribs, and fear stippled the nape of his neck..Junior wanted to kill her. Kill him. Whatever. But he sensed that Renee knew more than a little about dirty fighting and that the outcome of a violent confrontation would not be easy to predict..The detective was driven by this string theory of his, and maybe he also saw visions or even heard voices, like Joan of Arc. Joan of Arc with out beauty or grace, Joan of Arc with a service revolver and the authority to..Initially, lying drowsily in the sumptuous comfort of Pratesi cotton sheets with black silk piping, Junior assumed that he was in a twilight state between wakefulness and sleep, and that the singing must be a lingering fragment of a dream. Although rising and falling, the voice remained so faint that he didn't at once identify the tune, but when he recognized "Someone to Watch over Me," he sat up in bed and threw back the covers..to believe that any man with such a hard gut slung over his belt, with a bull neck..People like Enoch Cain, of course, never choose between the right and the wrong thing, but between two evils. For themselves, they create world after world of despair. For others, they make worlds of pain..".We were about to order dinner from room service," Tom said, handing a menu to Paul..Junior was impressed and delighted by her clever assumption of it strictly professional voice and demeanor, which convincingly masked her intense desire. Sweet Victoria was a worthy coconspirator..Harrison and Grace had welcomed him in spite of the fact that a friend and parishioner had died on Thursday, leaving them both bereft and with church obligations..".What was it like, Enoch? Did you look into her eyes when you pushed her?" Vanadium's uninflected monologue was like the voice of a conscience that preferred to torture by droning rather than by nagging. "Or doesn't a woman-killing coward like you have the guts for that? ".Nothing he had learned about the supernatural had led him closer to a belief in ghosts and in all that ghosts implied. His faith still reposed entirely in Enoch Cain Jr., and he refused to make room on his altar for anyone or anything other than himself..Tom didn't attribute supernatural powers to this killer. Enoch Cain was mortal, not all-seeing and all-knowing. Evil and stupidity often go together, however, and arrogance is the offspring of their marriage, as Tom had earlier told Celestina. An arrogant man, not half as smart as he thinks, with no sense of right and wrong, with no capacity for remorse, can sometimes be so breathtakingly reckless that, ironically, his recklessness becomes his greatest strength. Because he is capable of anything, of taking risks that mere madmen wouldn't consider, his adversaries can never predict his actions, and surprise serves him well. If he also possesses animal cunning, a kind of deep intuitional shrewdness, he can react quickly to the negative consequences of his recklessness and can indeed appear to be more than human..He was a man of medicine and science, who had been served well by hard logic and by an unwavering commitment to reason. He wasn't prepared easily to accept the notion that logic and reason, while essential tools to anyone hoping to lead a full and happy life, were nevertheless

sufficient to describe either the physical world or the human experience..Grace, proving again the aptness of her name, said the one thing most likely, in time, to bring true peace to Celestina. "Remember Bartholomew."..Hard experience had taught him, however, that killing someone he knew, while occasionally necessary, didn't release stress. Or if it did briefly release stress, then unforeseen consequences always contributed to even worse future stress..At home again, in the safety of the family, Barty collapsed in exhaustion from the sustained effort to see with eyes that he didn't possess. Abed for ten days, feverish, afflicted with vertigo and migraine headaches, nauseated, he lost eight pounds before his recovery was complete..The physician saw the look and understood it. A blush pinked his long, pale face. "Celestina, you're quite beautiful, and I'm sure you've learned to be wary of men, but I swear that my intentions are entirely honorable."..As she tucked the bedclothes around him again, she said, "Barty, I don't think you should let anyone else see how you can walk in the rain without getting wet. Not Edom and Jacob. Not anyone at all. And anything else special that you discover you can do ... we should keep it a secret between you and me."..Then the boy put new and puzzling shadings on his meaning when he said, "Daddy died here, but he didn't die every place I am."..When you called earlier in the year, to ask for a referral to a private investigator down there, the woman had recently turned up dead and Vanadium was gone, but no one put the two together at first."..Between his surgeries and for many months thereafter, Vanadium had devoted his energies to speech therapy, physical rehabilitation, and the concoction of periodic torments for Enoch Cain, which Simon Magusson was able to implement, every few months, through Nolly and Kathleen. The idea wasn't to bring Cain to justice by torturing his conscience, since he'd allowed his conscience to atrophy a long time ago, but to keep him unsettled and thereby magnify the impact of his first face-to-face encounter with the resurrected Vanadium.."You might as well beat a cloud for raining," said Otter's mother..Requital. Restitutional apology, which must have been learned in a law school where English was the second language. Even atonement..He hadn't heard the cop get out of the chair and cross the dark room. Difficult."It isn't just the rotten railing," Junior said, still paging through the report, his outrage growing. "The stairs are unsafe."..surreptitiously with Junior. He was accustomed to being an object of desire. This night, however, the only lady he cared about was San Francisco herself, and he wanted to be alone with her..Finished, she gave him a mirror, so he could admire his new bicuspid cap. After five years of dentistry, paced so as not to tax Nolly's tolerance, Kathleen had done well what nature had done poorly, giving him a perfect bite and a supernatural smile. This final cap was the last of the reconstruction..A MOMENTOUS DAY for Celestina, a night of nights, and a new dawn in the forecast: Here began the life about which she'd dreamed since she was a young girl..Magusson's idea of a laugh. "And they didn't even bother to post a warning. In fact, that sign was still up, inviting hikers to enjoy the view from the observation deck."..In spite of the gloom, the boy's miraculous accomplishment was evident: his clothes and hair were dry as though he'd worn a coat and hood..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..Although the girl was unable to articulate why she preferred not to have her mother at her side, they all understood the tumult in her heart. She couldn't bear to subject her gentle and proper mother to the shame and embarrassment that she herself felt so keenly and that she imagined would grow intolerably worse in the hours or days ahead, until and even after the birth..His attention, as morbid as a circling vulture, settled upon the pianist's right hand. The left was open, palm down. But the right was crumpled shut, palm up..It could only be made better by the presence of her parents. They had planned to fly down to San Francisco this morning, but late yesterday, a parishioner and close friend had died. A minister and his wife sometimes had duties to the flock that superseded all else.

[Adult Coloring Journal Family \(Floral Illustrations Polka Dots\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Mandala Illustrations Polka Dots\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Pet Illustrations Tribal Floral\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Family \(Floral Illustrations Bubblegum\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Family \(Mandala Illustrations Turquoise Marble\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Mandala Illustrations Blue Orchid\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Animal Illustrations Watercolor Herringbone\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Mandala Illustrations Springtime Floral\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Animal Illustrations Clear Skies\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Mandala Illustrations Springtime Floral\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Family \(Floral Illustrations Turquoise Stripes\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Animal Illustrations Pastel Floral\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Animal Illustrations Pastel Stripes\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Pet Illustrations Nautical Floral\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Mandala Illustrations Pastel Stripes\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Family \(Mandala Illustrations Simple Flowers\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Family \(Pet Illustrations Tribal\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Pet Illustrations Tribal\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Animal Illustrations Turquoise Stripes\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Floral Illustrations Watercolor Herringbone\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Mandala Illustrations Pastel Stripes\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Mandala Illustrations Le Fleur\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Mandala Illustrations Purple Mist\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Sea Life Illustrations Cats\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Sea Life Illustrations Tribal Floral\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Addiction \(Pet Illustrations Turquoise Stripes\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Addiction \(Sea Life Illustrations Purple Bubbles\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Family \(Floral Illustrations Blue Orchid\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Sea Life Illustrations Blue Orchid\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Mandala Illustrations Polka Dots\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Mandala Illustrations Bubblegum\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Family \(Floral Illustrations Clear Skies\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Sea Life Illustrations Tribal\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Pet Illustrations Polka Dots\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Mandala Illustrations Le Fleur\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Mandala Illustrations Nautical Floral\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Family \(Floral Illustrations Le Fleur\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Addiction \(Sea Life Illustrations Turquoise Marble\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Sea Life Illustrations Abstract Trees\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Mandala Illustrations Blue Orchid\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Mandala Illustrations Clear Skies\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Pet Illustrations Eiffel Tower\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Animal Illustrations Pastel Floral\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Family \(Floral Illustrations Abstract Trees\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Family \(Floral Illustrations Watercolor Herringbone\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Addiction \(Pet Illustrations Watercolor Herringbone\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Pet Illustrations Abstract Trees\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Animal Illustrations Purple Bubbles\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Mandala Illustrations Abstract Trees\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Sea Life Illustrations Abstract Trees\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Animal Illustrations Watercolor Herringbone\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Floral Illustrations Pastel Elegance\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Mandala Illustrations Le Fleur\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Floral Illustrations Cats\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Floral Illustrations Peach Poppies\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Floral Illustrations Eiffel Tower\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Floral Illustrations Pastel Floral\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Animal Illustrations Springtime Floral\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Animal Illustrations Abstract Trees\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Sea Life Illustrations Color Burst\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Animal Illustrations Le Fleur\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Mandala Illustrations Tribal Floral\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Floral Illustrations Tribal\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Floral Illustrations Pastel Elegance\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Sea Life Illustrations Cats\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Animal Illustrations Color Burst\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Animal Illustrations Cats\)](#)

[Adult Coloring Journal Anxiety \(Animal Illustrations Blue Orchid\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Mandala Illustrations Nautical Floral\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Depression \(Floral Illustrations Simple Flowers\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Parenting \(Floral Illustrations Turquoise Marble\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Animal Illustrations Ladybug\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Health Wellness \(Animal Illustrations Turquoise Stripes\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Sea Life Illustrations Bubblegum\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Health Wellness \(Animal Illustrations Pastel Floral\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Animal Illustrations Eiffel Tower\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Health Wellness \(Animal Illustrations Watercolor Herringbone\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Pet Illustrations Pastel Floral\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Floral Illustrations Blue Orchid\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Mandala Illustrations Springtime Floral\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Animal Illustrations Purple Mist\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Relationships \(Sea Life Illustrations Bubblegum\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Sea Life Illustrations Ladybug\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Animal Illustrations Watercolor Herringbone\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Animal Illustrations Pastel Elegance\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Floral Illustrations Cats\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Mandala Illustrations Polka Dots\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Relationships \(Mandala Illustrations Blue Orchid\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Floral Illustrations Turquoise Marble\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Relationships \(Floral Illustrations Simple Flowers\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Health Wellness \(Animal Illustrations Nautical Floral\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Health Wellness \(Animal Illustrations Color Burst\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Animal Illustrations Clear Skies\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Relationships \(Mandala Illustrations Nautical Floral\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Positive Thinking \(Mandala Illustrations Purple Bubbles\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Self-Reflection \(Mandala Illustrations Cats\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Positive Thinking \(Animal Illustrations Abstract Trees\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Pet Illustrations Bubblegum\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Mindfulness \(Animal Illustrations Rainbow Canvas\)](#)  
[Adult Coloring Journal Positive Thinking \(Floral Illustrations Bubblegum\)](#)

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