

## ANALYTICAL INDEX 1890 VOL 4 A YEARLY REPORT OF THE PROGRESS OF THE GENERAL SANITARY SCIENCES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

After staring at the coins for a long moment, Kathleen said, "I don't think any mystery writer has ever done a series of novels about a priest detective who's also a magician." "Miss White," he continued, still facing the window, "not long before you arrived in surgery this morning, your sister died on the table. We hadn't delivered the baby yet, and perhaps couldn't have done so, by cesarean, in time to prevent brain damage, so for both the sake of the mother and child, heroic efforts were made to bring Phimie back and ensure continued circulation to the fetus until we could extract it." "No. But I'm sure as can be, the kid is better off undiscovered by the likes of him." Neither guilt nor remorse plagued him. Good and bad, right and wrong, were not issues to him. Actions were either effective or ineffective, wise or stupid, but they were all value neutral. "Did he say I'd met him?" Jacob asked, squinting past Edom toward the bright sunlight at the open door. "Not really. I love you, Mommy." He yawned and dropped into sleep with a quickness that always amazed her. And then everything changed in one stunning moment. Changed profoundly and forever. Uncle Jacob, cook and baby-sitter and connoisseur of watery death, cleaned off the table and washed the dishes while Barty patiently endured a rambling postbreakfast conversation with Pixie Lee and with Miss Velveeta Cheese, whose name wasn't an honorary tide earned by winning a beauty contest sponsored by Kraft Foods, as he had first thought, but who, according to Angel, was the "good" sister to the rotten lying cheese man in the television commercials. At the sight of her photograph, she felt herself flush. She hoped none of the pedestrians passing between her and the gallery would look from the photo to her face and recognize her. What had she been judging by the evidence, the nurse was home alone, but Junior raised his voice above the music and called out, "Hello? Is anyone here?" "All under here's worked out long since" Licky said. And Otter had begun to be aware of the strange country under his feet: empty shafts and rooms of dark air in the dark earth, a vertical labyrinth, the deepest pits filled with unmoving water. "Never was much silver, and the watermetal's long gone. Listen, young'un, do you even know what cinnabar is?" Phimie gazed upon the child briefly, then sought her sister's eyes again. Another word. The popeyed little toad smirked over there on the far side of his pretentious desk. Agnes remained mystified by this talk, but a week before, in the rain-swept cemetery, she had learned there was substance to it. She might have attributed his problem to eyestrain from all the reading he'd done during the past few days. She might have put drops in his eyes, told him to leave the books alone for a while, and sent him into the backyard to play. She might have counseled herself not to be one of those alarmist mothers who detected pneumonia in every snuffle, a brain tumor behind every headache. "And you're saying fear can fill his emptiness as well as sex or booze?" Kathleen wondered. Vanadium was dead. Pounded with pewter and sunk in a flooded quarry. Gone forever. Cradling the baby, the nun turned with it to Celestina, folding back a thin blanket to present her with a good look at the tiny girl. He sprang to his feet, or maybe only staggered up, depending on whether his image of himself right now was pulp or real, and surveyed the scene, looking for the bandaged man. A few neighbors crossed the lawn toward Grace, and others approached along the street. But the killer was gone. His musical abilities were most likely an offshoot of his more extraordinary talent for math. He said that music was numbers, and what he seemed to mean was that he could all but instantly translate the notes of any song into a personal numerical code, retain it, and repeat the song by repeating the memorized sequence of code. When he read sheet music, he saw arrangements of numbers. Frantically, he squirmed around on the floor until he was facing the entrance to the kitchen. Through tears of pain, he expected to see a Frankensteinian shadow loom in the hall, and then the creature itself, gnashing its fork-tine teeth, its corkscrew nipples spinning. The water shut off, and Junior heard the ratcheting noise of a paper-towel dispenser. Eventually he put the quarter on the nightstand, switched off the lamp, and slipped into bed. They were in the rain, the solid-glassy-pounding-roaring rain, every bit as much as Gene Kelly had been when he danced and sang and capered along a storm-soaked city street in that movie, but whereas the actor had been saturated by the end of the number, these two children remained dry. Tom's eyes strained to resolve this paradox, even though he knew that all miracles defied resolution. Agnes meant to stop Maria from turning the eleventh card, but her curiosity was equal to her apprehension. In his mind, Junior saw a quarter turning knuckle over knuckle, and he heard the maniac cop's droning voice: There's a fine George and Ira Gershwin song called "Someone to Watch over Me." You ever hear it, Enoch? I'm that someone for you, although not, of course, in a romantic sense. Although Celestina felt a little paranoid, being so security-minded in this safe neighborhood, nevertheless she searched, out the master control button and engaged the power locks. While always Agnes held fast to hope, she knew that easy hope was usually false hope, and she didn't allow herself to speculate, even briefly, that his problem had resolved itself. Other symptoms-halos and rainbows-had disappeared for a time, only to return. At the end, with the salt Tom and the pepper Tom standing side by side in their different but parallel worlds, Maria said, "Seems like science fiction." "Because He didn't want you to be a dog." She finished tying a bow in the drawstrings. "There. You look just like an M&M." Junior had expected these singular creatures, and he needed them to be as monstrous as they had always been in the past. Nonetheless, he shrank back against his pillows in dismay when they exploded into the hospital room. Their faces were as fierce as those of painted cannibals coming off a fast. They gestured emphatically, spitting expletives along with tiny bits of lunch dislodged from their teeth by the force of their condemnations. Those spike-sharp eyes, - tenpenny gray, nailed Junior to the bed, pinning him for scrutiny. He smiled and shrugged. "I used to be a fisher of men. Now I hunt them. One in particular." The busboy swept the empty appetizer plates away as the waiter arrived simultaneously with small salads. Fresh martinis followed. open grave. In his hand: the white rose, its thorns slick with his blood. He dropped the bloom, and it fell out of sight, into the gaping earth, atop Naomi's casket. The upper shelf of the closet held boxes and two inexpensive

suitcases: pressboard laminated with green vinyl. He took down the suitcases and put them on the bed. Now, here on this sunny ridge in Oregon, miles from any train and farther still from any nuns, Junior applied this artistic insight to his own situation, overcame his squeamishness, and regained some momentum of his own. He approached his fallen wife, stood over her, and stared down into her fixed eyes as he said, "Naomi!". "No," Otter said, and hesitated. He felt he owed this man an explanation. "See, it's not so much won't as can't. I thought of making plugs in the planking of that galley, near the keel-you know what I mean by plugs? They'd work out as the timbers work when she gets in a heavy sea." Hound nodded. "But I couldn't do it. I'm a shipbuilder. I can't build a ship to sink. With the men aboard her. My hands wouldn't do it. So I did what I could. I made her go her own way. Not his way." The following April, when he proposed to her, she wouldn't have him. "You're sweet, Paul, but I can't let you throw your life away on me. You're this ... this beautiful ship that will sail a long way, to fascinating places, and I'd only be your anchor." Sometimes, just the thought of getting in the car and venturing into the dangerous world was intolerable. Then he settled into his La-ZBoy and waited for the natural disaster that would soon scrub him off the earth as though he had never existed. 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. Neddy, dressed for work but overdressed for his own funeral, slumped against the wall, head bowed, chin on his chest. His pale hands were splayed at his sides, as though he were trying to strike chords from the floor tiles. She struggled, wept, pretended disgust, faked shame, swore to bring the police down on him. Another man, not as highly skilled at reading men as Junior, might have thought the girl's resistance was genuine, but her charges of rape were sincere. Any other man might have backed off, but Junior was neither fooled nor confused. Although he was a stranger, arriving unannounced, and something of an eccentric by anyone's definition, Paul was received by Grace and Harrison White with warmth and fellowship. At their doorstep, raising his voice to compete with the wailing weather, he hurriedly blurted out his mission, as if they might reel back from his wild windblown presence if he didn't talk quickly enough: "I've walked here from Bright Beach, California, to tell you about an exceptional woman whose life will echo through the lives of countless others long after she's gone. Her husband died the night their son was born, but not before naming the boy Bartholomew, because he'd been so impressed by 'This Momentous Day. And now the boy is blind, and I hope you'll be able and willing to give some comfort to his mother.'" The Whites failed to reel backward, didn't even flinch from his unfortunately explosive statement of purpose. Instead, they invited him into their home, later invited him to dinner, and later still asked him to stay the night in their guest room. If he had been any other three-year-old, she would have told a compassionate lie. He was her miracle child, however, her prodigy, and he would know a lie for what it was. "Come with me," Paul Damascus said at once. "To Bright Beach. It is far away from San Francisco, and he'd never think of looking for you there. Why would he? You've no connection to the place. I've got a house with enough room. You're welcome. And you wouldn't be among strangers." "Why should I care whether you have any peace?" she asked, and she seemed to be listening to a woman other than herself. Holding a shaker in each hand, Tom walked them forward, causing them to diverge slightly at first, but then moving them along exactly parallel to each other. "You know Mommy," Barty said, almost desperately sponging up the sight of his little girl's face and wringing the images into his memory to sustain him in the next long darkness. Grace, Celestina, and Paul expressed amusement and amazement at Angel's critical judgment. She was in Paul's arms again, as though by magic, and he ran as fire broke through the cedar-shake shingles and as the roof shuddered under them. Airborne through billowing smoke. Across flames that briefly caressed the soles of his shoes. "So I drew attention to myself. Raised suspicions. One night, in St. Louis, this rube recognized me from my performing days, even though I'd changed my looks. It was a high-stakes game, but the players weren't high-class. They ganged up on me, beat me, and then smashed my hands, one finger at a time, with a tire iron." In her features, the girl entirely resembled her mother. She was nothing whatsoever like Junior. Only the light brown shade of her skin provided evidence that she hadn't been derived from Seraphim by parthenogenesis. He woke several times that night, instantly alert for a ghostly serenade, but he heard no otherworldly crooning. Two soft-boiled eggs, one slice of bread neither toasted nor buttered, a glass of apple juice, and a dish of orange. "It's all right," Tom assured her. To Angel, he said, "No, I'm not sad. And you know why?". Occasionally he woke in the night and heard himself murmuring the mantra aloud, which apparently he had been repeating ceaselessly in his sleep. "Find the father, kill the son." In April, Junior discovered three Bartholomews. Investigating these targets, prepared to commit homicide, he learned that none had a son named Bartholomew or had ever adopted a child. Junior could only imagine how flattered Victoria would be to receive the attentions of a twenty-three-year-old stud, flattered and grateful. When he contemplated all the ways she could express that gratitude, there was barely enough room behind the wheel of the Suburban for him and his manhood. The two men detached and rolled up the pleated green skirt that hung from the rectangular frame of the graveyard winch on which the casket was suspended. Green, rather than black, because Naomi loved nature: Junior had been thoughtful about the details of the service. From childhood, Celestina was encouraged to be confident that life had meaning, and when she'd needed to share that belief with Dr. Lipscomb as he struggled to come to terms with his experience in the operating room, she'd done so without hesitation. Strangely, however, she herself was having difficulty absorbing these two small miracles. Friday brought Scamp again, all of Scamp, all day, every way, wall-to-wall Scamp, so on Saturday he hadn't enough energy to do more than shower. This comment left Tom nonplussed. He could only imagine that Jacob had known someone who died in that crash-yet the twin's tone of voice and his expression seemed to suggest that a world without the Bakersfield train wreck would be a less convivial place than one that included it. Exactly. The shock. The devastating loss. Junior felt it now, anew, and was afraid he might betray himself with tears, although he seemed to be done with vomiting. One of the paramedics knelt beside the body, checking Naomi for a pulse, although in

these circumstances, his action was such a formality that it was almost harebrained..Letting go of Maria, lowering her hand to her heart, Agnes said, "I want to see him." After making the sign of the cross, Maria said, "They must to have kepted him in the eggubator until he is not dangerous. When the nurse comes, I will make her to tell me when the baby is to be safe. But I can't be leave you. I watch. I watch over." "Ordinarily, I'd recommend that you apply hot compresses every two hours to relieve discomfort and to hasten drainage, and I'd send you home with a prescription for an antibiotic." First he tore two paper towels from a wall-mounted dispenser and held one in each hand, as makeshift gloves. He was determined to leave no fingerprints..Startled, Nolly checked his shirt pocket and withdrew a quarter. "It's not the same one." Lined up on the kitchen table were green-grape-and-apple pies. The thick domed crusts, with their deeply fluted edges, were the coppery gold of precious coins..The big trees on Vanadium's property also stood bare, allowing a relatively unobstructed view of the house. The back of the residence as dark, but a soft light warmed two windows at the front..Relieved but still wary, he toured the small house again to be sure doors and windows were locked..Although Zedd counsels living in the future, he recognizes the need to have full recollection of the past when absolutely needed. One of his favorite techniques for jolting memories loose when the subconsciously.Two high-quality deadbolt locks. Sufficient protection against the average intruder, but inadequate to keep out a self-improved man with channeled anger..Zedd endorses self-pity, but only if you learn to use it as a springboard to anger, because anger-like hatred--can be a healthy emotion when properly channeled. Anger can motivate you to heights of achievement you otherwise would never know, even just the simple furious determination to prove wrong the bastards who mocked you, to rub their faces in the fact of your success. Anger and hatred have driven all great political leaders, from Hider to Stalin to Mao, who wrote their names indelibly across the face of history, and who were-each, in his own way-eaten with self-pity when young..In Junior's estimation, this was not the way that a normal person lived. This was the home of a deranged loner, a dangerously obsessive man..In his seventies but vigorous and full of fun, Sparky liked to take an occasional jaunt to Reno, to pump the slot machines and try a few hands of blackjack. The off-the-record, tax-free monthly checks from Simon were gratefully received, ensuring the old man's cooperation with the conspiracy..With a portion of his profits from Tammy Bean's stock picks, Junior had bought a second painting by Sklent. Titled In the Baby's Brain Lies the Parasite of Doom, Version 6, it was so exquisitely repellent that the artist's genius could not be in doubt..The infant Bartholomew was here in San Francisco. He must be found. He must be dispatched. By the time Junior devised a plan of action to locate the child, he was so hot with anger that he was sweating, and he stripped off one of his two pairs of briefs..Overlaying the birthmark were brighter stains. The plain face, less homely now, was less flat, too, pocked and torn into a new and horrendous geography..Because she'd enjoyed some limited use of her right arm, it was less wasted than her left, although not normal. Paul pulled down that sleeve of her pajamas.."You sounded as though you were in a lot of distress. You were frightened of this Bartholomew."..His daughter, his affliction, his millstone, granddaughter of the boil-giving voodoo Baptist ....He stood watching until the car cruised out of sight, and even after it dwindled to a speck and vanished in the distance, he stared at the point in the street where it had last been, stared while a breeze turned playful, tossing eucalyptus leaves around his feet, stared until at last he turned and began the long walk home..Matching her fierce attention with a sudden intensity of his own, Joey said, "Bartholomew."..Orange firelight bloomed in the living room below, a wave of heat washed over Paul, and immediately behind the heat came greasy masses of roiling black smoke, drawn to the stairwell as to a flue..He smiled ruefully. "Might be ready for a wedding by then, but not a honeymoon."..The January air was crisp, fragrant with evergreens and with the faint salty scent of the distant sea. A curiously yellow moon glowered like a malevolent eye, studying him from between ragged ravelings of dirty clouds..This declaration was received seriously by Edom and Jacob, as if the devil often strolled the streets of Bright Beach and from time had been known to snatch little babies from their mothers' and eat them with mustard..In spring, summer, and fall, they brightened the grave with the roses that Edom grew in the side yard. In this less rose-friendly season, these Christmas bouquets had been purchased at a flower shop..NED--"CALL ME NEDDY"--Gnathic was as slim as a flute, with a flute-quantity of holes in his head from which thought could escape before the pressure of it built into an unpleasant music within I his skull. His voice was always soft and harmonious, but frequently he spoke allegro, sometimes even prestissimo, and in spite of his mellow tone, Neddy at maximum tempo was as irritating to the ear as bagpipes bleating out Bolero, if such a thing were possible..Grace, having just finished washing a sinkful of dishes, stood monitoring the application of the icing and drying her hands, when the telephone rang. She picked it up, and as she said, "Hello," the front of the house exploded..In retrospect, coming here wasn't a wise move. Evidently, the detective had been following him. Now, Vanadium would puzzle out a motive for this late-night graveyard tour.."Your father denies the rape ever occurred, apparently out of what I'd call a misguided willingness to trust in divine justice."..His waitress was a cutie. She flirted with him, and he knew he could have her if he wanted..No one had actually been here. And he still didn't believe in ghosts, so he didn't think that a spirit had been wandering his home in his absence..Reluctantly, Jacob finally returned the cards to the packs and admitted to himself that superstition had seized him and would not let go. Somewhere in the world was a knave, a human monster-even worse, according to Maria, a man as fearsome as the devil himself-and for reasons unknown, this beast wanted to harm little Barty, an innocent baby. By some grace that Jacob could not understand, they had been warned, through the cards, that the knave was coming. They had been warned..Her hands shook as she counted out the fare and the tip from her wallet. "I'm scared sick. Maybe you should just take me right back home."..Tragic. Her string's been cut too soon. Her music's ended prematurely," Junior said, feeling confident enough to dish a serving of the maniac cop's half-baked theory of life back to him. "There's a discord in he universe now, Detective. No one can know how the vibrations of that discord will come to affect you, me, all of us.".. "It doesn't have to be grand," she said, with a seductive leer,

"but if we're going to wait, then the wedding better be soon." Wally Lipscomb parked in his garage, switched off the engine, and started to get out of the Buick before he saw that Celestina had left her purse in the car. "Uncle Edom. Uncle Jacob. Aunt Maria. So I can remember faces after ... you know." Arriving home, he hesitated to open the door. He expected to find Vanadium inside. Sitting up in bed, he passed a little time reading favorite, marked passages in Zedd's *You Are the World*. The book presented a brilliant argument that selfishness was the most misunderstood, moral, rational, and courageous of all human motivations. By ones and twos, the festive crowd eventually deconstructed, but for Celestina, an excitement lingered in the usual gallery hush that rebuilt in their wake. He warily surveyed those around him as he walked, and looked over his shoulder from time to time. On one of these backward glances, he was unnerved but not surprised to see Vanadium's specter. "You should call San Francisco police, have them put your place under surveillance and nail him if he turns up." Nolly shrugged. "He can't know for sure. And anyway, he didn't get the pushed idea until he'd already taken the case." Each page comprised four columns of names and numbers, most with addresses. Approximately one hundred names filled each column, four hundred to a page. "I know Edom and Jacob have been a burden," said Vinnie, "you having to be responsible for them." He'd listened to the message and thought it incomprehensible, of no import. Suddenly, tardy intuition told him that it could not have been any more important to him if it had been dead Naomi calling from beyond the grave to leave testimony for the detective. Either Obadiah intuited Agnes's fear or he was motivated by her kindness to reveal his method, after all. "I'm embarrassed to say what you saw wasn't real magician's work. Crude deception. I chose the ace of diamonds exactly because it represents wealth in fortune-telling, so it's a positive card that people respond well to. The ace with your boy's name was prepared beforehand, inserted face up toward the bottom of the deck, so a middle cut wouldn't reveal it." The reverend couldn't easily escape church obligations on such short notice, but Grace wanted to be with her daughters. Phimie, however, pleaded that only Celestina accompany her. On the lawn, Koko, their four-year-old golden retriever, was lying on her back, all paws in the air, presenting the great gift of her furry belly for the rubbing pleasure of young Mistress Mary. The beast would find them one day, but she hadn't spoken of that possibility in perhaps two and a half years. Zedd constituted the most thoughtful, most rewarding, most reliable guide to life to be found anywhere. When Junior was Confused or troubled, he turned to Caesar Zedd and never failed to find enlightenment, guidance. When he was happy, he found in Zedd the welcome reassurance that it was all right to be successful and to love oneself. No longer able to judge the boy's degree of sleepiness by his eyes, she relied on him to tell her when to stop reading. At his request, she closed the book after forty-seven pages, at the end of Chapter 2. He wasn't wholly without feeling, of course. A poignant current of sadness eddied in his heart, a sadness at the thought of the love and the happiness that he and the nurse might have known together. But it was her choice, after all, to play the tease and to deal with him so cruelly. Maria's face gathered into a frown, like a piece of brown cloth cinched by a series of whipstitches. "Six lessons." Standing at graveside, Junior was in a foul mood. He was weary of pretending to be deep in grief. Altogether by taking slow deep breaths, slow deep breaths, and by remembering that each of us has a right to be happy, to be fulfilled, to be free of fear. She poured cold milk and drank it quickly. As she was rinsing the empty glass, she felt as if she might throw up, but she didn't. "That's correct," Parkhurst said. "Probably one or more small blood vessels ruptured from the extreme violence of the emesis." "I know what you're thinking," her mother said, reaching across the table and placing one hand over Celestina's. "I know how useless you feel, how helpless, how small, but you must remember this . . . And like John Kennedy's death, Zedd's passing was cloaked in mystery, inspiring widespread suspicion of conspiracy. Only a few believed that he had committed suicide, and Junior was certainly not one of those gullible fools. Caesar Zedd, author of *You Have a Right to Be Happy*, would never have blown his brains out with a shotgun, as the authorities preferred the public to believe. FOR AMERICANS OF Chinese descent-and San Francisco has a large Chinese population-1965 was the Year of the Snake. For Junior Cain, it was the Year of the Gun, though it didn't start out that way. "Nevertheless, even if Muffin assaulted you, she's otherwise such a sweet little thing. What would Maria think of you if you told her you'd smashed poor Muffin with a shovel?" 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. If he woke, however, and saw her sitting vigil, Barty would understand how terrible his condition might be. After the latest concerned nurse departed, Sheena leaned close. She cruelly pinched Junior's cheek between thumb and forefinger, as if she might tear off a goblet of flesh and pop it into her mouth. She was lost in his eyes: She wanted to pass through his eyes as Alice had passed through the looking glass, follow the beautiful radiance that was fading now, go with him through the door that had been opened for him and accompany him out of this rain-swept day into grace. Her name was Victoria Bressler, and she was an attractive blonde. She would never have been serious competition for Naomi, because Naomi had been singularly stunning, but Naomi, after all, was gone. Agnes wasn't able to interpret his expression, not because he was in the least difficult to read, but because her perceptions were skewed by sudden fear and a flood of adrenaline. Her heart seemed to spin like a flywheel in her breast. "Better. Fear doesn't require him even to seduce a woman or to buy a bottle of whiskey. He just needs to open himself to it, and he will be filled like a glass under a faucet. As difficult as this may be to comprehend, Cain would choose to be neck-deep in a bottomless pool of terror, desperately trying to stay afloat, rather than to suffer that unrelieved hollowness. Fear can give shape and meaning to his life, and I intend not merely to fill him with fear but to drown him in it." Junior must have shouted shut up more than he realized, because the neighbors began to pound on the wall to silence him. He pressed his right ear to the door, held his breath, heard nothing, and addressed the top lock first. Quietly, he slid the thin pick of the lock-release gun into the key channel, under the pin tumblers. "No, that's not necessary," Junior said, trying to sound casual. "Considering what you told me, I'm sure whoever's bothering

me here can't be Vanadium. I mean, him being on the run, with plenty of his own troubles, the last thing he'd do is follow me here just to screw with my head a little." In fact, although weak and aching, Junior felt mentally refreshed and wonderfully alert. "Well, Uncle Jacob doesn't understand kids. Anyway, this is pretty good stuff." Solitude, however, was his preference. He found the sympathy of friends unbearable, a constant reminder that Perri was gone. 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. He had been surprised to learn her age. She didn't appear to be that old. Thirty or not, Victoria was unusually attractive. "Done," Agnes said. "Now put away the three dollars, and let's have our lesson before my water breaks." With Angel at breakfast, instead of just Uncle Jacob, at least Barty had someone to talk to, even if she did insist on speaking more often through her dolls than directly. Apparently, the dolls were on the table, propped up with bowls. The first, Miss Pixie Lee, had a high-pitched, squeaky voice. The second, Miss Velveeta Cheese, spoke in a three-year-old's idea of what a throaty-voiced, sophisticated woman sounded like, although to Barty's ear, this was more suitable to a stuffed bear. In this case, he was sure that vanity was not a fault, not the result of a swollen ego, but merely healthy self-esteem. That he was irresistible to women wasn't simply his biased opinion, but an observable and undeniable fact, like gravity or the order in which the planets revolved around the sun. He repressed the scream, however, because he sensed that if he gave voice to it, he wouldn't be able to silence himself for a long long time. She started toward the door, stopped, and turned to him in the dark. "Kid of mine?" Maria, however, lived comfortably with both the Catholicism and the occultism in which she had been raised. In Hermosillo, Mexico, the latter had been nearly as important to the spiritual life of her family as had been the former.

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