

SELWYN HOUSE SCHOOL MAGAZINE VOL 8 FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 1935 1936

Admittedly, she had allowed herself to be disturbed by the fall of the cards, too. According them any credibility at all opened the door to full belief. She closed her eyes, and he thought that she was gone, but then she opened them again. "There is one place beyond all the ways things are." This momentous day, he thought, and he shook with sudden terror at the inevitability of new beginnings. He found himself looking over his shoulder more than once. By the time he returned to his room, he felt half crushed by anxiety. "I'm sure you would be, yes, but I'm afraid I don't have the patience to teach, I'm a performer, not an instructor. I suppose I could give you the name of a good teacher." He was no longer in his scrubs, but wore gray wool slacks and a blue cashmere sweater over a white shirt. Face somber, he looked less like an obstetrician engaged in the business of life than like a professor of philosophy forever pondering the inevitability of death. His throat was still so raw from the explosive vomiting, seared by stomach acid, that he sounded like a character from a puppet show for children on Saturday-morning television, hoarse and squeaky at the same time. If not for the pain, he would have felt ridiculous, but the hot and jagged scrape of each word through his throat left him unable to. Although Junior continued to feel threatened, continued to trust his instinct in this matter, he didn't devote his every waking hour to the hunt. He had a life to enjoy, after all. Self-improvements to undertake, galleries to explore, women to pursue. He used the kitchen phone, at the corner secretary. The blood had been cleaned up long ago, of course, and the minor damage from the ricocheting bullet had been repaired. She slipped into her shoes and stood for a moment watching his lips move as he gave thanks for his blessings and as he asked that blessings be given to others who needed them. 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. "You're heaven-sent," Grace assured Paul at breakfast Saturday morning. "With all your stories, you lifted our hearts when we most needed to be lifted." He returned to the house and extinguished the three blown-glass oil lamps on the living-room coffee table. Out, as well, the silk-shade lamp. The two men introduced themselves. The physician was Dr. Jim Parkhurst. His manner was easy and affable, and his soothing voice, either by nature or by calculation, was as healing as balm. Eventually she discovered within herself all the light that she needed to find her way through the crucial hours immediately ahead. At last she knew what she must do, but she was not certain that she possessed the fortitude to do it. For the past two days, Junior had eaten only binding foods, and late this afternoon, he had taken a preventive dose of paregoric, as well. Wickedly sharp silver scimitar suspended by a filament more fragile than a human hair. 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. There was an otter in our brook. 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." Because the glass wings of the open window didn't lie flat against the exterior wall, they blocked his view. He had to thrust himself farther through the opening, until he seesawed on the sill, before he could see the length of the entire block, in which the gallery stood at approximately the middle. Junior examined the music collection. The policeman's taste ran to big band music and vocalists from the swing era. "Go home. Sleep," he said. "You'll be no help to your sister if you wind up a patient here yourself." He was surprised they had come so soon, less than twenty-four hours after the tragedy. This was especially unusual, considering that a homicide detective was obsessed with the idea that rotting wood, alone, was not responsible for Naomi's death. "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?" Neighbors might not be home. And by the time he knocked, asked to use the phone, dialed ... Too great a waste of time. He slept outdoors rarely and otherwise stayed in inexpensive motels, boardinghouses, and YMCAs. 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. Again, he cast his line of memory into murky waters nearly four years in the past, to the night of passion that he had shared with Seraphim in the parsonage. As before, he could recall nothing she'd said, only the exquisite look of her, the nubile perfection of her body. In the front wall of the living room, where once had been a fine bay window, the parsonage lay open to the sunny day. Tom shrubbery, carried in from outside, marked the path of destruction. In the very middle of the room, plowed against a toppled sofa and a thick drift of broken furniture, a battered red Pontiac sagged to the left on broken springs and blown tires. A portion of the crazed windshield quivered and collapsed inward, while plumes of steam hissed from under the buckled hood. For a moment, none of them spoke. The silence was as flawless as the preternatural hush reputed to precede the biggest quakes. The busboy swept the empty appetizer plates away as the waiter arrived simultaneously with small salads. Fresh martinis followed. Everyone agreed, and the order was placed when their waiter brought appetizers: crab cakes for Nolly, scampi for Kathleen, and calamari for Tom. Because they knew the date of the rape, and because that attack had been Phimie's sole sexual experience, the day of impregnation could be fixed, delivery calculated with more precision than usual. Tammy--the stock analyst, broker, and cat-food-eating feline fetishist-whom he had dated from Christmas of '65 through February of '66, had given him the timepiece in return for all the trading commissions and perfect sex that he had given her. As to the distressing matter of Seraphim's daughter, Junior at first decided to return to San Francisco to torture the truth out of Nolly Wulfstan. Then he realized that he'd been referred to Wulfstan by the same man who had told him that Thomas Vanadium was missing and was believed to be Victoria Bressler's killer. In the dark dumpster, tormented by ceaseless torrents of what-ifs, convinced that the spirit of Vanadium was going to slam the lid and lock him in with a revived corpse, Junior had for a while been reduced to the condition of a helpless child. Paralyzed by fear, withdrawn to the corner of the dumpster farthest from the putrefying pianist,

squatting in trash, he had shaken with such violence that his castanet teeth had chattered in a frenzied flamenco rhythm to which his bones seemed to knock, knock, like boot heels on a dance floor. He had heard himself whimpering but couldn't stop, had felt tears of shame burning down his cheeks but couldn't halt the flow, had felt his bladder ready to burst from the needle prick of terror but bad with heroic effort managed to refrain from wetting his pants..Convinced that the house was playing tricks on him, Barty went downstairs, step by measured step, to the foyer and the ground-floor hall..The slur faded from his voice in minutes, but he suspected that straining too long to sustain this borrowed vision could result in a stroke or worse..Twice would indicate a dangerous mania. Three times would be indefensible. But once was healthy experimentation. A learning experience..She told him to stay on the line, stay on no matter what, told him to keep talking to her, and he hung up..The glimmering bay and the shimmering amber candlelight provided the perfect atmosphere for the song that arose now from the piano in the bar..When he got no response, he wedged the toe of his right loafer under the guy's chest and, with some effort, rolled him onto his back..As Tom reached Celestina, she said, "Shots." She said, "Gunshots." She held the receiver in one hand and pulled at her hair with the other, as if with the administration of a little pain, she might wake up from this nightmare. She said, "He's in Oregon." "I know what you mean. Mr. Cain, I'd never turn my back on that much money if there was any damn way at all I could earn it." Only two explanations occurred to him. First, bureaucracies slavishly follow the rules even when the rules make no sense. Second, the Ugliest Private Detective in the World, Nolly Wulfstan, was an incompetent dunce.. "What car?" Celestina asked, stopping at the bottom of the steps and turning to look..The house was empty, silent. Hanna worked only days. Nellie Oatis, Perri's companion, was not employed here anymore.. "I only told you about that," said Grace, "because it was a very handsome shirt, and I thought you might want to get one for Wally." He was a patriotic guy, and he preferred American rock to the British brand. He had nothing against the English, no prejudices against people of any nationality. Nevertheless, he believed that the American Top 40 ought to feature American music exclusively..Downstairs, two shots cracked, and an instant after the second, an explosion shook the parsonage as though the long-promised Judgment were at hand. This was a real explosion, not the impact of another runaway Pontiac..This night in Weott, with the high solemn silence of the redwood forests out there now and waiting to embrace him in the morning, he slept without dreams..pride, his one great shining moment but also his sinful pride. Clubbed with the trophy first, fists later. And now, here..His dry tongue, his parched mouth, his desiccated throat felt packed fall of sand, and his voice lay buried alive down there..If the sight of his daughter almost drove him to his knees, the sight of his wife, also his first in seven years, lifted him until he was virtually floating across the grass..She hadn't looked up from her sketching. Although Junior thought she hadn't seen him, she'd apparently been aware of him all along.. "All right," Celestina conceded, and looked relieved. "Thank you, Paul. You're not only an exceptionally brave man but a gracious one, as well." "You know," Tom said when the second round of drinks arrived, "hard as it is to believe, some places never heard of martinis." He raised the window in the kitchen and climbed outside, onto the landing of the fire escape. Feeling like a high-roaming cousin to the Phantom of the Opera, bearing the requisite fearsome scars if not the unrequited love for a soprano, Vanadium descended through the foggy night, down two flights of the switchback iron stairs to the kitchen at Cain's apartment..The kiss was lovely, long and easy, full of restrained passion that boded well for nights to come in the marriage bed..summoned an expression no less dubious than that of a policeman listening to the alibi of a suspect with bloody hands. Then: "I'm quite sure that Wroth Griskin does not make candlesticks. If that's what you're looking for, I'd recommend the housewares department at Gump's." For a while, leaning forward in his chair and staring at the floor with an intensity and an expression that could not have been inspired by the insipid vinyl tiles, Tom mulled over what she'd told him. Then: "The connection is there, but it's still not entirely clear to me. So he took perverse pleasure in raping her with her father's sermon as accompaniment . . . and maybe without his realizing it, the reverend's message got deep inside his head. I wouldn't think our cowardly wife killer has the capacity for guilt ... although maybe your dad worked a sort of miracle and planted that very seed." Now that Tom knew what to look for, the gloom couldn't conceal the incredible truth.. "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." During the first year of her illness, she had been slowly weaned off an iron lung. Until she was seventeen, she required the chest respirator, but gradually gained the strength to breathe unassisted..Following a splendid lunch, having just left the fourth gallery on his list and strolling toward the fifth, Junior didn't at once see the source of the quarters. Indeed, when the first three rapid-fire coins hit the side of his face, he didn't even know what they were. Startled, he flinched and looked down as he heard them ring off the sidewalk..The full nature of the nightmare continued to elude him, but he became convinced that good reason for his fear existed, that the dream had been more than a dream. He had a nemesis named Bartholomew not merely in dreams, but in the real world, and this Bartholomew had something to do with ... babies..The wine tasted bitter, but Celestina knew that it was sweet. The bitterness was in her, not in the legacy of the grape.. "Well, as years pass, they're going to be a financial burden, if nothing else, so I'm glad I've got a little surprise for you." Drawn one after the other, two knaves of spades didn't signify two deadly enemies, but meant that the enemy already predicted by the first would be unusually powerful, exceptionally dangerous..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..Only madmen were capable of such butchery. Hopeless lunatics like Ed Gein, out there in Wisconsin, arrested just seven years ago, when Junior had been sixteen. Ed, the inspiration for Psycho, had constructed mobiles out of human noses and lips. He used human skin to make lampshades and to upholster furniture. His soup bowls had once been human skulls. He ate the hearts and selected other organs of his victims, wore a belt fashioned from nipples, and occasionally danced under the moon while masked by the scalp and face of a woman he had murdered.."What's this?" the man asked her, as Sinatra swooped through "Come Fly with Me." 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..During the past week, he had ferreted out what he could about the nurse. She was thirty, divorced, without kids, and lived alone.."And, of course, you'll need to make arrangements for the body," said Dr. Lipscomb. "Sister Josephina will provide you with a room, a phone, privacy, whatever you need, and for however long you need." "Well, the lab could detect abnormally high salt levels, but that wouldn't matter in court. He could say he ate a lot of salty foods.."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 syphilitic-monkey comparison struck Tom Vanadium as bizarre, but it turned out to be a sober judgment based on experience. In his fifties, Sparky had worked as the chief of maintenance at a medical-research laboratory, where-among other projects-monkeys had been intentionally infected with syphilis and then observed over their life span. In the terminal stages, some of the primates engaged in such out? behavior that they had prepared Sparky for his eventual encounter with Enoch Cain..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..Maybe he would get lucky, and an airliner would fall out of the sky right now, right here, obliterating him in an instant..The popeyed little toad smirked over there on the far side of his pretentious desk.."Thank you, Dr. Lipscomb. I'll keep track of what you're losing every month, and someday I'll pay it back to you."..Some listings didn't include first names, only initials. Every time he came across the initial B, he put a red heck mark beside it with a fine point felt-tip pen..Otter was silent a while. Then he said in a low voice, "Clay, and gravel, and under that the rock that bears garnets. All under this part of the city is that rock. I don't know the names."..On the serving tables, the canap? trays held only stained paper doilies, crumbs, and empty plastic champagne glasses..Extending his hand, watching the pianist closely, Junior said, "My name's Richard Gammoner."..NOLLY WULFSTAN, private detective, had the teeth of a god and a face so unfortunate that it argued convincingly against the existence of a benign deity..Just as Celestina snapped shut the latches on the suitcase and turned to the door, a nurse's aide entered, pushing a cart loaded with towels and bed linens.."A wonderful wedding," Celestina promised her, taking a pair of pajamas from a dresser drawer..This seemed to be a statement of great mystery and beauty, and Agnes was still contemplating it when the last of the ice melted on her tongue. Instead of more ice, sleep was spooned into her, as dark and rich as baker's chocolate..room, heavier and colder than the ice bags that were draped across Junior's midsection..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..He had not yet disposed of her personal effects. In the dark, he went to the dresser, opened a drawer, and found a cotton sweater that she had worn recently..Waking from a starry night in the Old West into electric light, gazing up into a blur of faces sans cowboy hats, Agnes felt someone moving a piece of ice in slow circles over her bare abdomen. Shivering as the cold water trickled down her sides, she tried to ask them why they were applying ice when she was already chilled to the bone, but she couldn't find her voice..That was the first-and until now the last-long walk he made with a purpose in mind. He went to see a hero..Tom pointed to the nearly finished martini that stood on the table before him. Balanced on the thin rim of the glass: impossibly, precariously--the coin..As the afternoon waned toward a portentous dusk and toward the gallery reception for Celestina White, Junior prepared his knives and guns..Monitoring Barty from the corner of -her eye, Agnes paced herself to the strides of his short legs, so she was drenched and chilled when she reached the station wagon..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..To celebrate, Junior went to a gallery and purchased the second piece of art in his collection. Not sculpture this time: a painting..Junior hadn't suffered a paranormal experience since the early- morning hours of October 18, when he'd drifted up from a vile dream of worms and beetles to hear the ghostly singer's faint a cappella serenade. Shouting at her to shut up, he had awakened neighbors..When Agnes turned her head and saw Maria Elena Gonzalez, she thought she must be dreaming again.."What do you think of the exhibition," Junior asked, taking one step toward the musician, crowding him..This time, he vowed never to kill again, except in self-defense, regardless of the provocation. This tougher condition pleased him. No one achieved significant self-improvement by setting low standards for himself..As the last of the flan was served and Maria's girls took their seats once more, Barty blinked at the candles and said, "Gone now," even though the tiny spectrums still shimmered in the cut crystal. He turned his full attention to the flan with such enthusiasm that his mother soon stopped puzzling over rainbows.."Yes, you did, and it's exactly what experience has no doubt taught you to think. But I'm forty-seven and you're twenty-".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..The previously flat, monotonous voice had in it now a subtle but undeniable new roundness of tone: "And every human being, every living thing, is a string on that instrument."."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.."Not so bad, two thousand," Tom heard himself say idiotically. "I mean, compared to nearly four million."..On the short return trip to the ophthalmologist, Agnes crazily considered driving past Chan's office building, cruising onward--ever onward-into the sparkling December night, not just back to Bright Beach, where the bad news would simply come by phone, but to places so far away that the diagnosis could never catch up to them, where the disease would remain unnamed and therefore would have no power over Barty..Barty, at the head of the table, sensed Mary's approach only as she was about to touch him. She put a hand on his arm and said, "Daddy, will you turn your chair away from the table and let me sit on your lap?".For Junior, 1968-the Chinese Year of the Monkey--would be the Year of the Plastic Surgeon. He would require extensive dermabrasion to restore the smoothness and tone to his skin, to be as irresistibly kissable as he had been before. While at it, he would need surgery to make subtle changes in his features. Tricky. He didn't want to trade perfection for anonymity. He must take care to ensure that his postsurgery look, when he let his hair grow in and perhaps dyed it, would be as devastating to women as his previous appearance.."He's an attorney, and this grieving husband comes to him with a big liability case. There's money to be made."..Of course, there was no possibility whatsoever of 'drawing four identical jacks from combined decks that had been exquisitely manipulated and meticulously arranged by a master mechanic-unless the effect of the jacks was intended, which in this case it was not. The odds couldn't be calculated because it could never happen. No element of chance was involved here. The cards in that stack should have been as predictably ordered-to Jacob-as were the numbered pages in a book..Since the cops believed that Junior accidentally shot himself while searching for a nonexistent burglar, he was already in their book as an idiot. If he tried to explain how Vanadium had tormented him with the quarter, and how a quarter turned up, of all places, in his cheeseburger, they would figure him for a hopeless hysteric..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..AFTER THE ENCOUNTER with the quarter-spitting vending machines, Junior wanted to kill another Bartholomew, any Bartholomew, even if he had to drive to some far suburb like Terra Linda to do it, even if he had to drive farther and stay overnight in a Holiday ay Inn an eat steam-table food off a buffet crawling with other diners' cold germs and garnished with their loose hairs..Needlepoint, meditation, and even sex had not recently provided him with significant relief of tension. The paintings of Sklent and the works of Zedd were packed in the van, where he couldn't at the moment take solace from them.."Well, Uncle Jacob doesn't understand kids. Anyway, this is pretty good stuff."..He followed an alleyway to the building's service entrance, for which he possessed a key that wasn't provided to other tenants. He unlocked the steel door and stepped into a small, dimly lighted receiving room with gray walls and a speckled blue linoleum floor.."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?"..Beyond the windows, the winter night sifted sootily down through the twinkling city, as he sat in his living room with a glass of Dry Sack in one hand and the picture of Celestina White in the other.."We don't believe it does, do we, Daddy? We don't believe blood tells. We believe we're born to hope, under a mantle of mercy, don't we?". "You did just fine, Tom, just fine," Agnes said in a consoling tone that she might have used with a boy whose performance, at a piano recital, had been earnest but undistinguished. "We were all quite impressed."..Jell-O were served to Agnes Lampion as, on farms farther inland from the coast, roosters still crowed and plump hens clucked contentedly atop their early layings.."Would you pretend to wake up if I tried to smother you?" asked Detective Vanadium..The wink startled and baffled Edom. Oddly, he thought of the mysterious, disembodied, and eternally unwinking eye in the floating pinnacle of the pyramid that was on the back of any one-dollar bill..He had been walking ever since, two and a half years, with brief respites in Bright Beach..The painkiller was not morphine-based, and it did not signal its presence in the system by inducing sleepiness or even a faint blurring of the senses. After forty minutes, however, he was sure that it must be effective, and he put the book aside..The living room no longer doubled as sleeping quarters. Perri's hospital bed had been taken away. Paul's bed had been moved to a room upstairs, where for the past three nights, he had tried to sleep..The narrow brick-paved serviceway lay five feet below. The maniac had knocked over trash cans while making his escape, but he wasn't tumbled among the rest of the garbage..by the ferocity of the beating and by years of fear and humiliation. So he opens his mouth, just to end it, just to be..Now Junior threw back the covers and sprang out of bed. In double briefs, he restlessly roamed the hotel room..As they rolled along the coast, Agnes began to read to Barty from Podkayne of Mars: "'All my life I've wanted to go to Earth. Not to live, of course-just to see it. As everybody knows, Terra is a wonderful place to visit but not to live. Not truly suited to human habitation."..Jacob Isaacson--twin brother of Edom-knew nothing negative about Panglo, but he didn't trust him. If the mortician had been caught prying gold teeth from the dead and carving satanic symbols in their buttocks, Jacob would have said, "It figures." If Panglo had saved bottles of infected blood from diseased cadavers, and if one day he ran through town, splashing it in the faces of unsuspecting

citizens, Jacob would not have raised one eyebrow in surprise.. "Fourteen. It's usually the family that's behind an expression of the calling at such a young age, but in my case, I had to argue my folks into it.. "Maria brought that from Mexico," Barty said. "She thought it was pretty funny. So do I. It's a hoot. Mom says it isn't really blasphemous, because it wasn't meant to be by the people who made it, and because Jesus would want you to have cookies, and, besides, it reminds us to be thankful for all the good things we get.. Pecan cakes, cinnamon custard pies boxed in insulated coolers, gifts wrapped with bright paper and glittery ribbons. Agnes Lampion made deliveries to those friends who were on her list of the needful, but also to friends who were blessed with plenty. The sight of each beloved face, each embrace, each kiss, each smile, each cheerfully spoken "Merry Christmas" at every stop fortified her heart for the sad task awaiting her when all gifts were given.. "I was raised to understand it," said Celestina, and when she looked across the room, she saw that her words had moved her mother.. The funeral director and his assistant were the only people, other than Junior, remaining at the grave. They asked if they might lower the casket or if he would rather that they wait until he was gone.. In his room, he settled on the bed with his constipating snacks and the county telephone book. Because he had packed the directory with the Zedd collection, the thief hadn't gotten it.. In spite of her nature, Agnes could not find forgiveness in her heart this time. Words of absolution clotted in her throat. Her bitterness dismayed her, but she could not deny it.. Previously, Miss Pixie Lee had been from Texas, but Angel had recently heard that Georgia was famous for its peaches, which at once captured her imagination. Now Pixie Lee had a new life in a Georgia mansion carved out of a giant peach.. Most of these firearms were loaded and ready for use, but five remained in their original boxes, in the back of her bedroom closet. Evidently, considering the original bill of sale taped to each of the five boxed handguns, she must have acquired all the weapons legally.. Junior actually raised his trembling left hand to his ear, expecting to find the quarter tucked in the auditory canal, held between the tragus and the antitragus, waiting to be plucked with a flourish.. 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.

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