

TACIONES PARA LA HISTORIA DEL HISTRIONISMO ESPAÑOL EN LOS SIGLOS XVI

Symptoms of food poisoning usually appear within two hours of dining. The hideous intestinal spasms had rocked him at least six hours after he'd eaten. Besides, if the culprit were food poisoning, he would have vomited; but he hadn't felt any urge to spew. On a positive note, the apartment was heated by a gas furnace. A leak, a spark, an explosion, and he would never have to see poor Agnes in her misery. Oregon State Police might find at least one reason to be suspicious of the tragic scenario that he was creating. He didn't know much about the technology that police might employ at a crime scene, and he knew even less about forensic pathology. He was just doing the best job he could. Throughout lunch and, indeed, during his hours as an outpatient at the hospital, Barty gave no indication that he understood the gravity of his situation. He remained cheerful, charming the doctors and technicians with his sweet personality and precocious chatter. The boy-wonder physician turned to Junior again and assumed an expression of compassion so inauthentic that if he'd been playing a doctor on even the cheesiest daytime soap opera, he'd have been stripped of his actor's-union card, fired, and possibly horsewhipped on a live television special. "We'll be doing the procedure this afternoon, so I wouldn't want to give you anything much for the pain just prior to anesthesia and sedation. But don't you worry, Mr. Pinchbeck. Once we've lanced these boils, when you wake up, ninety percent of the pain will be gone." Two staff members were at the front desk, when last he'd seen them, out of sight now and too far away to hear the crooning. Junior had been waiting at the doors when the library opened, and thus far he'd encountered no other patrons. Junior stood at the window for a long time, not because he was pretending to rest, and not because any of the attending nurses was a looker. He was transfixed, and for awhile he didn't know why. The report on the tower forced Junior to consider his mortality; fear, hurt, and self-pity roiled in him. His voice trembled with offense: "You do know, Mr. Magusson, what happened to my Naomi was an." "Not so bad, two thousand," Tom heard himself say idiotically. "I mean, compared to nearly four million." "There must be something important I'm supposed to do here that I don't need to do everywhere I am, something I'll do better if I'm blind." The Finder. Beside her, the passenger's door barked and shrieked as though alive as though suffering, and these sounds were uncannily like the cries of torment that only Agnes could hear in the haunted chambers of her heart. She devoted half her work time to the neighbors-in-need route that Agnes had established and steadily expanded, the other half to her painting. She was in no rush to mount a new show; anyway, she didn't dare renew contact with the Greenbaum Gallery or with anyone at all from her past life, until the police found Enoch Cain. During the walk home: slow and deep, breathing slow and deep, moving not at a brisk clip, but strolling, trying to let the tension slide away, striving to focus on good things like his full exemption from military service and his purchase of the Sklent painting. Kathleen watched him with obvious amusement, aware that he was savoring her suspense as much as he was the appetizer. Waking from a bad dream, he sometimes thought he heard the ratcheting of gear-wheel feet. The scrape and creak of rusted iron joints. The clink of rake-tine fingers rattling against one another. When he came to himself, sick and weak from the poison and with an aching skull, he was in a room with brick walls and bricked-up windows. The door had no bars and no visible lock. But when he tried to get to his feet he felt bonds of sorcery holding his body and mind, resilient, clinging, tightening as he moved. He could stand, but could not take a step towards the door. He could not even reach his hand out. It was a horrible sensation, as if his muscles were not his own. He sat down again and tried to hold still. The spellbonds around his chest kept him from breathing deeply, and his mind felt stifled too, as if his thoughts were crowded into a space too small for them. Frankness and tough talk pleased her, because too many people dealt with her as though her spirit were as frail as her limbs. She laughed with delight-but still refused him. Grace, proving again the aptness of her name, said the one thing most likely, in time, to bring true peace to Celestina. "Remember Bartholomew." To his surprise, when Naomi expressed an interest in romance, Junior was a bull again. He would have thought he had left his best stuff at Reverend Harrison White's parsonage. "If he gets back within the next hour, better ring me at his place so I can scoot." Indeed, even the distinct fragrance of pulp paper, yellow with age, was alone sufficient to start him fantasizing. "Thank you, Dr. Lipscomb. I'll keep track of what you're losing every month, and someday I'll pay it back to you." Having survived the night, Edom and Jacob were waiting in the hall. Each kissed his nephew, but neither could speak. By his twelfth month, he was toilet-trained, and every time that he had the need to use his colorful little bathroom chair, he proudly and repeatedly announced to everyone, "Barty potty." Suddenly and seriously creeped out, Junior wanted to get away from this nut case. Yet he was frozen by morbid fascination. Her strength was the strength of stones only in the sense that she felt as immovable as rock, yet she found the resources to raise one arm, to place her left hand over Maria's bead-tangled fingers. "But the baby's dead." "Who...who're you?" Junior rasped, still badly rattled by the nightmare and by Vanadium's presence, but quick-witted enough to stay within the clueless character that he had been playing. By lunch, he had turned the final page, and he was so full of the tale that he seemed to have no room for food. While his mother kept reminding him to eat, he regaled her with the details of John Thomas Stuart's great adventures with Lummo, as though every word that Heinlein had written were not science fiction, but truth. Turning, turning, turning, the mysterious warning in his mind: The spirit of Bartholomew ... will find you ... and mete out the terrible judgment that you deserve. Junior realized that thick drool oozed out of the right corner of his mouth. Shakily, he raised one hand to wipe his face. "No. Charming," she disagreed. "There's a meaning to it. Everything has a meaning, dear." "Well, you're sweet, aren't you? And you're all bright red on the outside and milk chocolate inside," Celestina said, gently tweaking the girl's light brown nose. "Ah, evidently you can read my mind. Scariest than heart reading any day. Maybe there's a thin line between minister's daughter and witch." The odds against drawing a jack of spades four times in a row out of four combined and randomly shuffled decks were

forbidding. Jacob didn't have the knowledge necessary to calculate those odds, but he knew they were astronomical..The blue vault above, cloudless now, was the most threatening sky that Edom had ever seen. The air was astonishingly dry so soon after a storm. And still. Hushed. Earthquake weather. Before this momentous day was done, great temblors and five-hundred-foot tidal waves would rock and swamp the coast..Off with the cap. Yellow capsules in the bottle, also blue. He managed to shake one of each color into the palm of his left hand without spilling the rest on the floor..Instead, he imagined Vanadium's blunt fingers moving over the intravenous apparatus with surprising delicacy, reading the function of the equipment as a blind man would read Braille with swift, sure, gliding fingertips. He imagined the detective finding the injection port in the main drip line, pinching it between thumb and forefinger. Saw him produce a hypodermic needle as a magician would pluck a silk scarf from the ether. Nothing in the syringe except deadly air. The needle sliding into the portConcerned that Junior's crying jag would trigger spasms of the abdominal muscles and ultimately another attack of hemorrhagic vomiting, the nurse had with her a tranquilizer. She wanted him to use the apple juice to wash down the pill..Tom himself had decided to build a new life here, as well, assisting Agnes with her ever-expanding work. He was not yet sure whether this would include the rededication to his vows and a return to the Roman collar, or whether he would spend the rest of his days in civvies. He was delaying that decision until the Cain case was resolved..But the other learning he had been given had made Otter touchy in these matters, delicate of conscience. The big galley they were building now would be rowed to war by Losen's slaves and would bring back slaves as cargo. It galled him to think of the good ship in that vicious usage. "Why can't we build fishing boats, the way we used to?" he asked, and his father said, "Because the fishermen can't pay us." Maybe every accidental death was suspicious to Vanadium. His obsessive hounding of Junior might be his standard operating procedure..When he killed the Bartholomew, this haunting would finally end, too. In Junior's mind, Vanadium and Bartholomew were inextricably linked, because it was the maniac cop who first heard Junior calling out Bartholomew in his sleep. Did that make sense? Well, it made more sense at some times than at others, but it always made a lot more sense than anything else. To be rid of the dead-but-persistent detective, he must eliminate Bartholomew..In the morning, after their first night together, without either of them suggesting what must be done, Barty and Angel went in silence into the backyard and, together, climbed the oak, to watch the sunrise from its highest bower. Three years later, on Easter Sunday in 1986, the fabled bunny brought them a gift: Angel gave birth to Mary. "It's time for a nice ordinary name in this family," she declared..This soiling of Naomi's memory was a sadness so poignant, so terrible, that he wondered if he could endure it. He felt his mouth tremble and go soft, not with the urge to throw up again, but with something like grief if not grief itself. His eyes filled with tears..Inexplicably, each repetition of Bartholomew heightened Junior's anxiety. The name resonated not just in his ear, but in his blood and bones, in body and mind, as if he were a great bronze bell and Bartholomew the clapper..Glorying in the cloudless day and the warmer than usual weather, he drove seventy miles north, through phalanxes of evergreens that marched down the steep hills to the scenic coast. All the way, he monitored the traffic in his rearview mirror. No one followed him..In the kitchen again, Junior spread the blanket on the floor, to one side of the blood. He rolled Vanadium onto the blanket, and drew the ends of it together, fashioning a sled with which to drag the detective out of the house.. "Sometimes these sympathetic vibrations are very apparent, but alot of the time, they're so subtle that you can hear them only if you're unusually perceptive." She refused to look at him, the way her mother had refused to look at him when he'd been making love to her in the parsonage. She began twisting a red pencil in a handheld sharpener, making sure that the shavings fell into a can kept for that purpose. "I saw it here." "He's a wonderful boy, so very bright, so very full of life. Blindness will be hard, but it won't be the end. He'll cope without the light. It'll be so difficult at first, but this boy ... eventually he'll thrive." He raised one hand to halt the genteel debate. "The whole reason I stopped here first, before taking you folks on to my place, is so I wouldn't have to bring your suitcases back after Agnes won you over. This is where you'll be happiest, though you're always welcome if she tries to work you to death." Dishes dried and put away, Jacob retired to the living room and settled contentedly into an armchair, where he would probably become so enthralled with his new book of dam disasters that he would forget to make luncheon sandwiches until Barty and Angel rescued him from the flooded streets of some dismally unfortunate town..Without the pillow, she wouldn't have been able to lift her head to look toward the back of the ambulance.. "Well, it's true," he said, finally turning the key in the proper direction and firing up the engine..With her rock of faith under her, and breathing hope as much as ever, she was nevertheless unable to be as strong for him as she wanted to be. She felt her face go soft, her mouth tremble, and when she tried to repress a sob, it burst from her with wretched force.. "Mom always says that pigs will surely fly one day if ever Daddy chooses to convince them that they've got wings." Magically, a shiny quarter appeared in Thomas Vanadium's right hand. It turned end over end, knuckle to knuckle, disappeared between thumb and forefinger, and reappeared at the little finger, beginning its cross-hand journey once more..His in-laws' chances of receiving compensation for their pain and suffering over Naomi's death were seriously compromised if her husband did not hold the state or county responsible. In this, as in nothing previously, they felt the need to stand united as a family..Startled, Nolly checked his shirt pocket and withdrew a quarter. "It's not the same one." Posing as a counselor with Catholic Family Services, he phoned each listed Bartholomew, with a question related to his or her recent adoption. Those who expressed bafflement, and who claimed not to have adopted a child, were generally stricken from his list..The car shuddered, wrenched steel screamed, and a cry of triumph rose from the rescuers..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." Sitting on the edge of the bed, Maria lightly salted the runny eggs and spooned them into Agnes's mouth. "Eggs is as chickens does." "By the close of business tomorrow," said the lawyer, "I expect to have an offer for your consideration." Lying on his

side in bed, clothed and shod, knees drawn up, arms folded across his chest, hands pressed under his chin, like a precocious fetus dressed and waiting for birth, Junior tried to recall the chain of logic that had led to this long and difficult pursuit of Bartholomew. That chain led three years into the past, however, which to Junior was an eternity, and not all the links were still in place..The modulated electronic brrrrr was similar to the sound of the telephone in Vanadium's cramped study, on Sunday night. Junior was transported back to that place, that moment in time.. "This was back on January 24, 1556," said Edom with unhesitating authority, for he had memorized tens of thousands of facts about the worst natural disasters in history.. "That's kind of you," Panglo stammered, "but I have little time for reading, very little time." "I thought there was a burglar," Junior groaned, but he knew better than to spit out his entire story at once, for then he would appear to be reciting a script..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." Simon Magusson, lacking family, had left his estate to Tom. This came as a surprise. The sum was so considerable that even though Tom was on a dispensation from his vows, which included his vow of property, he was uncomfortable with his fortune. His comfort was quickly restored by contributing the entire inheritance to Pie Lady Services. They had been brought together by two extraordinary children, by the conviction that Barty and Angel were part of some design of enormous consequence. But more often than not, God weaves patterns that become perceptible to us only over long periods of time, if at all. After the past three eventful years, there were now no weekly miracles, no signs in the earth or sky, no revelations from burning bushes or from more mundane forms of communication. Neither Barty nor Angel revealed any new astonishing talents, and in fact they were as ordinary as any two young prodigies can be, except that he was blind and she served as his eyes upon the world.. "Most tornadoes stay on the ground twenty miles or less," Edom explained, "but this one kept its funnel to the earth for two hundred nineteen miles! And it was one mile wide. Everything in its path--torn, smashed to bits. Houses, factories, churches, schools--all pulverized. Murphysboro, Illinois, was wiped off the map, erased, hundreds killed in that one town." Off the hard surfaces of cabinets, refrigerator, and ovens, the twin reports crashed and rattled. The windowpanes briefly thrummed.. "Three hundred and ninety-six of the dead were children under the age of ten," Jacob continued. "A passenger train was tumbled off the tracks, killing twenty. Another train with tank cars got smashed around, and oil spilled across the flood waters, ignited, and all these people clinging to floating debris were surrounded by flames, no way to escape. Their choice was being burned alive or drowning." Agnes saw no arc of color from candle to candle, and she thought that he must mean for her to look at the many cut-crystal wineglasses and water glasses, in which the lambent flames were mirrored. Here and there, the prismatic effect of the crystal rendered reflections of the flames into red-orange-yellow-green-blue-indigo-violet spectrums that danced along beveled edges..By habit, she shifted her attention to his eyes, because though the scientific types insist that the eyes themselves are incapable of expression, Agnes knew what every poet knows: To see the condition of the hidden heart, you must look first where scientists will not admit to looking at all.. "He'll just think I'm an incompetent detective. If he comes around wanting his five hundred bucks back, I'll give it to him." The fact that Barty saw twisty spots with either eye closed had prepared Agnes for this bleak news. Yet in spite of the defense that foreknowledge provided her, the teeth of sorrow bit deep.. "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." The wedding reception--big, noisy, and joyous--spread across the three properties without fences. His mother's name was so often mentioned, her presence so strongly felt in all the lives that she had touched, that sometimes it seemed that she was actually there with them.. Celestina didn't hear gunfire, but she couldn't mistake the bullets for anything else when they cracked through the door.. Junior and Naomi had taken their dried apricots from the same bag. Reached in the bag without looking. Shook them out into the palms of their hands. She could not have controlled which pieces of fruit he received and which she ate.. During the first months, the journeys were eight or ten miles: along the shoreline north and south of Bright Beach, and inland to the desert beyond the hills. He left home and returned the same day.. All three of these sorry excuses for human beings were money mad. Rudy owned six successful used-car dealerships and--his pride--a Ford franchise selling new and used vehicles, in five Oregon communities, but he liked to live large; he also visited Vegas four times a year, pouring money away as casually as he might empty his bladder. Sheena enjoyed Vegas, too, and was a fiend for shopping. Kaitlin liked men, pretty ones, but since she might be mistaken for her father in a dimly lighted room, her hunks came at a price.. Now, however, he was thinking not about what Agnes's story might mean to Reverend White, but about what the minister might be able to do to provide at least a small degree of comfort to Agnes, who spent her life comforting others.. Of firm but pliable rubber, custom-formed to his disfigured foot, a shoe insert filled the void left by his missing toe. This simple aid ensured that virtually all footwear was comfortable, and by November, Junior walked with no discernible limp.. They didn't mind, and down they went in a controlled descent that was nevertheless too quick for Agnes.. Allowing one month for the job might be optimistic. On the other hand, he'd had a long time to perfect a strategy.. 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.. A pianist or saxophonist could go a long way on his talent and self instruction, but a would-be stage magician eventually needed a mentor to reveal the most closely guarded secrets of illusion and to help him master the skills of deception needed for the highest-level prestidigitation. In a craft practiced almost exclusively by white men, a young man.. Even though the detective was on the wrong track,

Junior was beginning to feel aggrieved. As any good citizen, he was willing, even eager to cooperate with responsible policemen who conducted their investigation by the book. This Thomas Vanadium, however, in spite of his monotonous voice and drab appearance, gave off the vibes of a fanatic..About ten feet from the trunk of the oak, Barty departed his straight route and began to circle the tree..In the morning, at breakfast, from this calmer perspective, he looked back at his tantrum in the middle of the night and wondered if he might be in psychological trouble. He decided not. In November and December, Junior studied arcane texts on the supernatural, went through new women at a pace prodigious even for him, found three Bartholomews, and finished ten needlepoint pillows..She lost track of him. Fear knocked, knocked, on the door of her heart, because she was sure that he had vanished the way ships supposedly disappeared in the Bermuda Triangle..Because of his blindness and his intellectual gifts, Barty was home schooled; besides, no teacher was a match for his autodidactic skills, nor could anyone possibly inspire in him a greater thirst for knowledge than the one with which he had been born. Angel went to this same informal classroom, and her sole fellow student was also her teacher. They aced the periodic equivalency tests that the law required. Their constant companionship seemed to be all play, yet was filled with constant learning, too..Nevertheless, his sense of violation grew as he paced these now songless rooms, mystified and frustrated. On April 19, the unmanned Surveyor 3, after landing on the lunar surface, began transmitting photos to Earth, and when Junior stepped out of his morning shower, he again heard the eerie singing, which seemed to arise from a place more distant, more alien, than the moon..Nothing in his reading offered a satisfactory explanation for what had been happening to him. None of the women filled the hole in his heart, and all of the Bartholomews were harmless. Only the needlepoint offered any satisfaction, but though Junior was proud of his craftsmanship, he knew that a grown man couldn't find fulfillment in stitchery alone..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..Walking rather than riding was now nothing more than a matter of habit. And by walking, he could delay his arrival at a house that had grown strange to him, a house in which every noise he made, since Monday, seemed to echo as if through vast caverns..As best he could, he examined his clothes. They were better pressed than he expected, and not noticeably soiled.. "My God," Junior said, pretending that his befuddlement had faded and that his mind had just now clarified, "you think Naomi was murdered, don't you?". Celebration of course, would lead to incarceration and perhaps to electrocution. With Vanadium, the maniac cop, likely to be found lurking under the bed or masquerading as a nurse to catch him in an unguarded moment, Junior had to recover at a pace that his physician would not find miraculous. Dr. Parkhurst expected to discharge him no sooner than the following morning..Wednesday morning, January 10, he wired one and a half million dollars from the Gammoner account to Pinchbeck in Switzerland. Then he closed out the account in the Grand Cayman bank..Refusing to give the cop the satisfaction of a reply to the news of the unborn baby's paternity, Junior stared unwaveringly into the grave and said, "Whose funeral were you attending?". With a shiver, Kathleen said, "We'd like to know more about why we did the things we did for you. Why the quarters? Why the song?". Celestina finally zipped shut the satchel. "You better watch out for the big bad wolf..". Admitting to the likelihood that he would never again devote himself seriously to his business, Paul sold it to Jim Kessel, long his good right hand and fellow pharmacist.. "Well, you see, that's the funny thing about all the important choices we make. If we make a really big wrong choice, if we do the really awful wrong thing, we're given another chance to continue on the right path. So the very moment I stupidly stepped off the curb without looking, I created another world where I did look both ways and saw the rhinoceros coming. And so-". Junior took one of the boxed guns, a 9-mm semiautomatic. Months would probably pass before she noticed the pistol missing from the back of her closet, and by then she wouldn't know who had taken it..Because he kept imagining the stealthy sounds of a dead cop rising in vengeance behind him, Junior switched on the radio. He tuned in a station featuring a Top 40 countdown..The detective shrugged. "The girl might've had her baby at a third rate hospital, one with poor control of patients' records and a less professional staff. Or the kid might have been placed for adoption through some baby brokerage in it strictly for the money. Then there would've been opportunities to learn something. But as soon as I discovered it was St. Mary's, I knew we were screwed..". "Now, I'm doubtless," Vanadium said, his voice returning to the uninflected drone that Junior had come to loathe but that he now preferred to the unsettling voice of quiet passion. "No matter what the situation, no matter how knotty the question, I always know what to do..Heart racing, Tom produced another quarter from a pants pocket. For the benefit of the adults, he performed the proper preparation-a little patter and the ten-finger flimflam-because in magic as in jewelry, every diamond must have the proper setting if it's to glitter impressively..IN NEED OF OIL, the hand crank squeaked, but the tall halves of the casement window parted and opened outward into the alleyway..-Dumpsters and delivery trucks hulked against the building walls. Steam billowed out of street grates. The gray shadows were no longer disturbed by a running shade in a tweed sports jacket..Because the upper part of the hospital bed was somewhat raised, he didn't have to lift his head from the pillow to study the corner where the phantom waited. He peered beyond the IV rack, past the foot of the..The coin stopped turning, pinched flat between the knuckles of the cops middle and ring fingers. He retrieved a box of Kleenex from the nightstand and offered it to his suspect. "Here..".same," Agnes admonished. "Who's been raising you, sugarpie, if you don't know that? Are you going to pretend you've been brought up by wolves for nine years?". In spite of major earthquakes pending, explosions of dynamite hauling trucks on the highway, tornadoes somewhere churning, the grim likelihood of a great dam bursting along the route, freak ice storms stored up in the unpredictable heavens, crashing planes and runaway trains converging on the coastal highway, and the possibility of a sudden violent shift in the earth's axis that would wipe out human civilization, they risked crossing the boundaries of Bright Beach and traveled north into the great unknown of territories strange

and perilous..As Junior stood at Seraphim's grave, his breath smoked from him in the still night air, as though he were a dragon..He decided to use the tool just three times on each deadbolt before trying the door. The less noise the better. Maybe luck would be with him..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..Holding on to the jamb with one hand, Barty leaned across the threshold, listening to the day. Birds. Softly rustling leaves. Nobody on the porch. Even trying hard to be quiet, people always made some little noise..The ball of sodden Kleenex was gripped so tightly in Junior's left hand that had its carbon content been higher, it would have been compacted into a diamond. He saw Vanadium staring at his clenched fist and sharp white knuckles. He tried to ease up on the wad of Kleenex, but he wasn't able to relent..Maybe the watch wouldn't be discovered with the corpse. Maybe it would settle into the trash and not be found until archaeologists dug out the landfill two thousand years from now..Dr. Zedd's death, just last Thanksgiving, had been a blow to Junior, a loss to the nation, to the entire world. He considered it a tragedy equal to the Kennedy assassination one year previous..The possibility that he'd left a clear fingerprint on the watch crystal had to be judged remote. And the band had been too textured to take a print useful to the police..Alone again with Wally, Celestina said, "They told me that once you regained consciousness, I can only visit ten minutes at a time, and not that often, either." He looked at the two cards following the four of clubs in the stack. Neither of these was a jack of spades, either, and both were what he anticipated..Holding his precious face between her hands, she kissed him. She met his gaze, and furiously she blinked away her tears, for she wanted to be clear-sighted, to be looking into his eyes, to see him, the truest part of him in there beyond his eyes, until that very last moment when she could not have him anymore..stopped by to help Agnes, and some offered to stay with her at night. She gratefully accepted assistance with the housecleaning, laundry, and shopping, but she declined the all-night company because of her dreams..Through the door came the sound of running water splashing in a sink. Neddy washing his hands..Better still, he was able to have the girl to the accompaniment of her father's voice, which was even kinkier than doing her in the parsonage. When Junior rang the bell, Seraphim had been in her room, listening to a tape of a sermon her father was composing. The good reverend usually dictated a first draft, which his daughter then transcribed. For three hours, Junior went at her mercilessly, to the rhythms of her father's voice. The reverend's "presence" was deliciously perverse and stimulating to his sense of erotic invention. When Junior was finished, there was nothing sexual that Seraphim could ever do with a man that she had not learned from him..He could have killed someone named Henry or Larry, without risk of creating a Bartholomew pattern that would prickle like a pungent scent in the hound-dog nostrils of Bay Area homicide detectives. But he restrained himself.."Science. Quantum mechanics. Which is a theory ... of physics. But by theory, I don't mean just wild speculation. Quantum mechanics works. It underlies the invention of television. Before the end of this century, perhaps even by the '80s, quantum-based technology will give us powerful and cheap computers in our homes, computers as small as briefcases, as small as a wallet, a wristwatch, that can do more and far faster data processing than any of the giant lumbering computers we know today. Computers as tiny as a postage stamp. We'll have wireless telephones you can carry anywhere. Eventually, it will be possible to construct single-molecule computers of enormous power, and then technology-in fact, all human society-will change almost beyond comprehension, and for the better."The musician's eyes met Junior's for an instant, widening with surprise. Obviously he knew that Gammoner was a lie. So he must be aware of Junior's real identity..Through the remainder of his dinner, he was entirely future focused, the past put safely out of mind. Until ...

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