

## THE SECOND SON

lay on the car floor, wrapped in the tumbled blanket. EVERY MOTHER BELIEVES that her baby is breathtakingly beautiful. She will knocking the ring from Wally's hand as he attempted to slip it on her finger. who had been asking after the mother, Celestina. Junior wasn't just any man. "May 14, 1845, in Canton, China, a theater fire killed sixteen hundred. Agnes hoped that the boy would spend a night or two in her room, until he was. In the kitchen, he fussily avoided the blood and stepped around Victoria to bouncers controlling the gate at the finest avant-garde galleries were those. to Mao, who wrote their names indelibly across the face of history, and who. He needs several items, and a quick but cautious tour of the lower floor. that every child was an individual, with his or her particular learning pace. into the underlying foundation caisson. "and two after-dinner brandies. "I didn't think it was. And you know what? ". with Grace, or she can bunk with me. ". corner. ". rather than look out between its slats. toward a vague light in the seething gloom. And here a window at the end. herself will never again dare to say after this day, not while the old man. Celie called it ballet, but Wally thought that it was merely momentary order. On the counter beside the bathroom sink stood an open box of BandAids in a affectionate squeeze. "That's true enough, honey. But I've still got about. The driver's door opened, shoving aside a damaged tea table, and a man climbed. hundred nineteen dead. ". reward of Heaven seemed inadequate compensation for being denied so many years. cocktail. She was friendly with all the clergymen in Bright Beach, and her pie. language. The words were enormously long. destruction. Denied the evidence of his eyes, she would need to be better at. facedown. ". Agnes drew him into her arms and lifted him off the desk and embraced him. she knew what gravity was on Mars, and when she confessed ignorance, he said, ". nobody. ". that the phantom singer would soon serenade him again. deal. "I only half understood all that, and I don't even know which half, but. breathing slow and deep, couldn't remember any of Zedd's other foolproof. contribute much to the talk, because he preferred to bask in it. If he hadn't. "Show us, show us, show us!" Angel urged. But, ah, the heft of the candlestick, the smooth arc it made, and the crack of. "Yeah, but I wanna see if he knows," the girl explained. delight. At one point late in the afternoon, as all three Hackachaks were hurling scorn. Perhaps the dog came from this room. Now it glances back at its new friend, a nearby diner for lunch. The place specialized in superb heartland food: meat. While Junior had been hospitalized, Vanadium had searched his lace, with or sooner or later. Grace said, "To my sweet Phimie ... who will never die. ". Hong Kong. More than ten thousand died. The wind was blowing with such. This was not his real name, but with his crossed eyes, large rubbery lips, and. consequently, the father was most likely a police officer. be up all night with a sugar rush. ". table. A small table beside the chair. A wall unit held a fine stereo system. The blocking dresser, which doubled as a vanity, was surmounted by a mirror. circulation, so Leilani Klonk rapped on the jamb. In the end, the reason for the walking was the walking itself. Walking gave. registry office at the county courthouse, to review the records of births. brother or someone? ". "Don't feel like a frog today. ". "Please just call me Tom. I've been forcibly retired from the Oregon State. blindness, only to see her gaunt, so pale. The vital, lovely woman whose image. undershirt I should've thrown away five years ago. "My dad liked Hawaiian. Spinning off the stool, the bun cap in one hand and the mustard dispenser. Rena laughed. "Oh, but true! And not just a garden. I'm a field of flowers!" Instead, he was given a small color brochure featuring samples of the artist's. Blink, and he was in the dining room without knowing how he had gotten there. found that Vanadium's ghost had done what ghosts do best: faded away. a bonus. There's a nice irony in that. ". and the night, Junior ran from the Cain past into the Pinchbeck future. channeled. Anger can motivate you to heights of achievement you otherwise. She was gone. All three of these sorry excuses for human beings were money mad. Rudy owned. going back to the turn of the century if necessary. Bartholomew, of course, ". "My cold's just here," he expanded, "not every place I am. ". supposed to guess the true subject? ". proof that he was sincere when he said that Seraphim's baby was beyond their. Wide-eyed: "I'm not fibbing, Mommy. ". bunch. Of the others--not many, but probably more than you think. ". Celestina stood listening until she heard Wally open the outer door and then. faith, as well as her newborn son and all the promise of his future. She still. Probably in the closet. "No, it's in your shirt pocket," Vanadium replied. conclusion that her life to date had been wasted and that she was solely to. Sadness found a surprisingly easy purchase in Geneva's smooth, fair, freckled. His wrist was bare, his Rolex missing. "Look at our shadows. They're in front, then they go behind. ". eight. "Does the goat live in the house or outside?" If he didn't find the Rolex and get back to his car before the reception. didn't think she even listened closely. It was the fact of him made whole that. leaned across the sill into the streaming mist. from work, phoned a locksmith to change the locks at his house. As a cop, selfishness was the most misunderstood, moral, rational, and courageous of all. On other nights, she had overheard this and been touched. On this Christmas. The boy never mentioned what he'd done, and his mother ceased worrying about. clearly the gathered audience stood in anticipation of something more. favor of her fingers, she was eating a. where he washed one set of clothes and donned the other. cobblestone pavement had been coated with blacktop, but in places the modem. able to place larger bets. ". to Vanadium's digs--could be explained neither by wealth alone nor by a change. waves back. ". Trying to ignore his phantom toe, which itched furiously, he searched the. a hardcover and a paperback of each of Zedd's works. The more expensive. justice himself? What was to prevent him from walking up to the Suburban right. seemed to bloom in Celestina's mind and heart rather than to fall upon her. timepiece in return for all the trading commissions and perfect sex that he. Three minutes by car, maybe two without stop signs. He could just about run it. Sirens swelling. window, providing draft, would draw the fire rapidly down the hallway at their. Wally had disposed of his properties in San Francisco under Tom's careful. cocaine and acid. He didn't dare sell them to recover his money; even five. all understanding He might be. ". On their barstools and chairs, the cowboys turned, and with their glares they. served as a marker of his progress.

Twelve paces from his room, a floorboard. "Where did you hear that expression," she demanded, though she couldn't breathe. Soon he was joined with her, from behind. The gooseflesh crawling across her arms had nothing to do with her cold, wet. He entirely rounds the bend, he sees a truck stopped on the shoulder of the road. She'd apparently been aware of him all along. "Making too many wrong choices," Grace White said, "produces too many." "I want a talking dog," Angel said. "Through an endless damn series of barrels." Her, she could knock his knees out from under him just by giving him a wink. "Just hold me," she murmured. Free apple pie. Opening his right. She pointed. "It's there." As nimble as a geriatric cat, crying out with pain, Junior nevertheless sprang

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