

# BEYOND THE VEIL BEING A COMPILATION WITH NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS

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Three lay on the floor at her gear wheel-and-meat-cleaver feet. They had not been here earlier..The muffling fog quieted the city as much as obscured it, and the alley was surprisingly still. Many of the businesses were closed for the night, and as far as Junior could discern, no delivery trucks or other vehicles were parked the length of the block.."We were about to order dinner from room service," Tom said, handing a menu to Paul..The can struck Junior hard in the face, breaking his nose, before he could duck.."I'm not. I'm just going to be the conscience that Enoch Cain seems to have been born without." "Would you like a little tea and a piece of crumb cake?" Grace asked as smoothly as if, in *The Big Book of Etiquette for Ministers' Wives*, this were the preferred response to the announcement of a startling career change..Junior said nothing. He was still upset with Naomi for hiding the pregnancy from him, but he was delighted that the baby would have been his. Now Vanadium couldn't claim that Naomi's infidelity and the resultant bastard had been the motive for murder.."Nicholas Deed." On her tongue, the name was as bitter as a dissolving aspirin..The traffic light turned green. Now onward home. Rolex recovered and bright upon his wrist, Junior Cain drove his Mercedes with a restraint that required more self-control than he had realized he could tap, even with the guidance of Zedd..Junior had seen the silvery coin snapping off the cop's thumb and spinning upward. Now it was gone, as though it had vanished in midair.."Be quiet, sugarpie," she said, crossing the bedroom to the door, which stood only slightly ajar..So runs the water away, away..Deciduous black oaks lined the street. All were leafless at this time of year, gnarled limbs clawing at the moon..If Junior had not been such a rational man, schooled in logic and reason by the books of Caesar Zedd, he might have snapped there in the street, before the photograph of Seraphim, might have begun to shake and sob and babble until he wound up in a psychiatric ward. But although his trembling knees felt no more supportive than aspic, they didn't dissolve under him. He couldn't breathe for a minute, and his vision darkened at the periphery, and the noise of passing traffic suddenly sounded like the agonized shrieks of people tortured beyond endurance, but he held fast to his wits long enough to realize that the name under the photo, which served as the centerpiece of a poster, read Celestina White in four-inch letters, not Seraphim..After taking a minute to steel himself, Junior squatted next to the dead detective..He continued until four aces of hearts and four aces of diamonds were on the table in front of him. These eight draws he had prepared, and this effect was his intention.."Yes, but it's a Catholic hospital, and they offer this option to all unwed mothers-doesn't matter what their religion." He slapped her hands, knocking the sharpener and the pencil out of her grasp. They clattered against the window, fell onto the window-seat cushions..The striking resemblance between this artist and Seraphim, as well as the facts in the biographical sketch under the photo, argued that the two were sisters..judging by the evidence, the nurse was home alone, but Junior raised his voice above the music and called out, "Hello? Is anyone here?".The rough massage had only just begun to bring a little relief to Junior's legs when Sparky returned with six stoppered rubber bags full of ice. "This was all the bags they had down at the drugstore."..Atop the dead woman, Vanadium's leather ID holder ignited. The identification card would bum, but the badge was not likely to melt. The police would also identify the revolver..The Selective Service physician quickly declared Junior to be maimed and unfit. Quietly but with passion, Junior pleaded for a chance to prove his value to the armed forces, but the examiner was unmoved by patriotism, interested only in keeping the cattle line of other potential draftees moving past him at a steady pace..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..One of the gifts of power is to know power. Wizard knows wizard, unless the concealment is very skillful. And the boy had no skills at all except in boat-building, of which he was a promising scholar by the age of twelve. About that time the midwife who had helped his mother at his birth came by and said to his parents, "Let Otter come to me in the evenings after work. He should learn the songs and be prepared for his naming day."..Griskin, a former convict, had served eleven years for second-degree murder before the lobbying efforts of a coalition of artists and writers had won his parole. He possessed a huge talent. No one before Griskin had ever managed to express this degree of violence an rage in the medium of bronze, and Junior had long kept the artist's work on his short list of desired acquisitions..He was still her boy. As always, her boy. Bartholomew. Barty. Her sweetie. Her kiddo..Junior was impressed and delighted by her clever assumption of it strictly professional voice and demeanor, which convincingly masked her intense desire. Sweet Victoria was a worthy coconspirator..Maybes are for babies, Zedd tells us in *Act Now, Think Later*. Learning to Trust Your Instincts..Although, to her eyes, the natural world had an ominous cast this morning, she was also aware of its great beauty. She wanted Barty to store up every magnificent vista, every exquisite detail..Sunday, Junior hid out from Scamp, using his Ansaphone to screen her calls, and worked with such astonishing focus on his needlepoint pillows that he forgot to go to bed that night. He fell asleep over his needles at ten o'clock Monday morning..On January 3, 1968, Paul was fewer than 250 miles from Spruce Hills, Oregon. He wasn't aware of that town's proximity, however, and he didn't, at the time, have it as his destination..In spite of the urgency of his desire, he followed a circuitous route to Victoria's, doubling back on himself twice, watching for surveillance as he drove. If he were being followed, his tail was an invisible man in a ghost car..In the passenger's seat, Barty was cushioned in his mother's arms. At times, the boy cooed or gurgled, or made a wet chording sound..Two more uniformed officers had entered the kitchen, fresh from their search of the apartment. They were amused..Agnes had believed that through this ordeal, she'd largely spared her child from an awareness of the awful depth of her misery. In this, however, as in so many other instances, the boy proved to be more perceptive and more mature than she'd realized. Now she felt that she had failed him, and this failure ached like a wound.."So what I am is I'm your talking eyes." Lowering her hand from his face, Angel said, "Do you know where bacon comes from?".Vanadium was surely unaware of any connection between Junior and Seraphim White. And now the girl could never talk..the beast would find them one day, but she hadn't spoken of that possibility in perhaps two and a half years..The second ring was followed by a click, and then a familiar droning voice said, "Hello. I'm Thomas Vanadium-".The Benediction service had concluded, and the worshipers had departed. Gone, too, were the priest and the altar boys..As though giving voice to her worst fear had made it come true, Agnes was seized by a contraction so painful that she cried out and

clutched the paramedic's hands tightly enough to make him wince. She felt a peculiar swelling within, then an awful looseness, pressure followed at once by release..Instead of opening his left fist, Tom lifted his martini with his right, and on the tablecloth under the glass lay the coin..In the closet, a limited wardrobe did not fully occupy available rod space. On the floor, shoes were neatly arranged toe-to-heel..This ended any hope of romance, and he was disappointed. A less self-controlled man might have seized a nearby bronze vase-fashioned to resemble dinosaur stool-and stuffed her into it or vice versa..On a shelf above one of the clothes rods stood a single piece of Mark Cross luggage, an elegant and expensive two-suiter. The rest of the high shelf was empty-enough space for as many as three more bags..Meanwhile, she could offer him only a few pieces of ice, which he was forbidden to chew. "Let them melt in your mouth..".Otter's humble teachers had taught him pride. They had trained into him a deep contempt for wizards who worked for such men as Losen, letting fear or greed pervert magic to evil ends. Nothing, to his mind, could be more despicable than such a betrayal of their art. So it troubled him that he couldn't despise Hound..Taking her silence for assent, Tom continued: "Your father is gone from here, gone forever, but he still lives in other worlds. This isn't a statement of faith alone. If Albert Einstein were still alive and standing here, he'd tell you that it's true. Your father is with you in many places, and so is Phimie. In many places, she didn't die in childbirth. In some worlds, she was never raped, her life never blighted. But there's an irony in that, isn't there? Because in those worlds, Angel doesn't exist-yet Angel is a miracle and a blessing." He looked up from the city to the woman. "So when you're lying in bed tonight, kept awake by grief, don't think just about what you've lost with your father and Phimie. Think about what you have in this world that you've never known in some others-Angel. Whether God's a Catholic, a Baptist, a Jew, a Muslim, or a quantum mechanic, He gives us compensation for our pain, compensation right here in this world, not just in those parallel to it and not just in some afterlife. Always compensation for the pain ... if we recognize it when we see it..".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..Junior knelt beside her and pressed two fingers to the carotid artery in her neck. She had a pulse, maybe a little irregular but strong..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..".I've already told them," Joey said, wheeling away from her and yanking open the door of the foyer closet with such force that she thought he would tear it off its hinges..the floor, on a silk-covered pillow filled with goose down. With a sigh " he assumed the lotus position: spine straight, legs crossed, hands at rest with the palms up..Using a clean rag that they had brought to polish the engraved face of the memorial, Barty said, "Is he good with numbers like me?". "Not that trains are any better. Look at the Bakersfield crash back in '60. Santa Fe Chief, out of San Francisco, smashed into an oil-tank truck. Seventeen people crushed, burned in a river of fire..".Slow deep breaths. Per Zedd, slow deep breaths. Any state of anxiety, regardless of how powerful, could be ameliorated or even dissipated..".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..".As terrible as the situation was for Barty, Agnes knew that it was equally difficult for Paul. She could only hold him in the night, and let herself be held. And more than once, she told him, "If worse comes to worst, don't you go walking again..".The mortician and his assistant had nearly finished dismantling the frame of the winch. Soon a worker would close the hole..Easter still lay a few weeks away, but already Celestina had begun decorating more than a hundred baskets, so that nothing would need to be done at the last minute except add the candy. Her living room was a warren of baskets, ribbons, bows, beads, bangles, shredded cellophane in green and purple and yellow and pink, and decorative little plush-toy bunnies and baby chicks..Celestina hadn't noticed the infant being taken away. She had wanted to see it once more, even though she was sickened by the sight of it..She had expected horror, although perhaps not a horror quite as stark as this, and she had also expected to be crushed by it, destroyed, because although she was able to survive any misery that might be visited upon her, she didn't think that she possessed the fortitude to endure the suffering of her innocent child. Yet she listened, and she received the terrible burden of the news, and her bones did not at once turn to dust, though unfeeling dust was what she now preferred to be..He had never expressed opposition to starting a family. She'd had no reason to fear telling him that she was carrying their child..Earlier, the dirty-sheet clouds had been wrung dry. Now, the trees that overhung the house had finally stopped dripping on the cedar shingled roof The night was so still that Agnes could hear the sea softly breaking upon the shore more than half a mile away..When he was baking, the world seemed to be a less dangerous place. Sometimes, making a cake, he forgot to be afraid..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..While Jacob ate, he browsed through a new coffee-table book on dam disasters. He talked more to himself than to Barty and Angel, as he spot-read the text and looked at pictures. "Oh, my," he would say in sonorous tones. Or sadly, sadly: "Oh, the horror of it." Or with indignation: "Criminal. Criminal that it was built so poorly." Sometimes he clucked his tongue in his cheek or sighed or groaned in commiseration..A delay of a few hours, before getting her under a physician's care, might still be risky. But so was forcing her into a local hospital to endure the mortification she desperately wanted to avoid..As he'd proved to himself on his previous two visits-his first night in town and then two nights thereafter-this number was merely part of the pianist's repertoire. Nothing supernatural here..".Search me. But I didn't tell him different. The less he knows, the better. I can't figure his motivation, but if you were tracking this guy by his spoor, you'd want to look for the imprint of cloven hooves..".As Junior stood at Seraphim's grave, his breath smoked from him in the still night air, as though he were a dragon..thickened with the odors of antiseptics and blood, until breathing required an effort..During the past week, he had ferreted out what he could about the nurse. She was thirty, divorced, without kids, and lived alone..".Well, anyway," she said, as though Muffins uncharacteristic viciousness had been adequately explained, "this mending ought to cover ten more lessons..".The telephone rang, putting an end to their chat, but Agnes would remember the substance of it later that year, on the day before Christmas, when Barty took a walk in the rain and changed forever his..In the end, the reason for the walking was the walking itself. Walking gave him something to do, a needed purpose. Motion equaled meaning. Movement became a medicine for melancholy, a preventive for madness..Celestina was better equipped to embrace this transcendental experience for what it appeared to be. She was not one of those artists who celebrated chaos and disorder, or who found

inspiration in pessimism and despair. Wherever her eyes came to rest, she saw order, purpose, exquisite design, and either the pale flicker or the fierce blaze of a humbling beauty. She perceived the uncanny not merely in old houses where ghosts were said to roam or in eerie experiences like the one Lipscomb had described, but every day in the pattern of a tree's branches, in the rapturous play of a dog with a tennis ball, in the white whirling currents of a snowstorm-in every aspect of the natural world in which insoluble mystery was as fundamental a component as light and darkness, as matter and energy, as time and space..Her belief in fortune-telling and in the curious ritual she was about to undertake weren't condoned by the Church. Mysticism of this sort was, in fact, considered to be a sin, a distraction from faith and a perversion of it..While Jacob had shuffled, Agnes had taken little Barty from his bassinet into her arms. She was surprised and discomfited to discover that the baby was to have his fortune told first..Then by ambulance to the hospital, whisked into surgery, and for a while, blessed unconsciousness..Trying to ignore his phantom toe, which itched furiously, he searched the apartment. He proceeded carefully, determined not to shoot himself in the foot accidentally this time..Hope was the handmaid to Agnes's faith. She always held fast to the belief that the future would be bright, but right now she was hesitant to test that optimism even with a harmless card reading. Yet, as with the fifth place setting, she was reluctant to object.. "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.. "And there's more," said Vinnie Lincoln, as round as Santa Claus and cherry-cheeked with pleasure at being able to bear these gifts. "The policy contained a double-indemnity clause in the event of death by accident. The complete tax-free payout is one and a half million." "Oh? Do they rent their house out to pirates with little pirate children, clowns with little clown children?" They wanted to go up to Barty's room, but she refused them, because there was nothing more they could do for the boy than they had done for her. "He wants to finish reading Starman Jones, and I'm not letting anything interfere with that. We're leaving for Newport Beach at seven in the morning, and you can see him then." "Wrong about what, sugarpie smooch--smooch?" Celestina asked as Wally pulled to the curb again and parked.. "Too few," said Maria, "might mean you made an admirably small number of moral mistakes but also that you failed to take reasonable risks and didn't make full use of the gift of life." "What's this?" the man asked her, as Sinatra swooped through "Come Fly with Me."..So many stops, too little time at each, a dazzle of Christmas trees decorated every one to a different taste, offers of butter cookies and hot chocolate or lemon crisps and eggnog, morning chats in bright kitchens steeped in wonderful cooking odors and-in the chillier afternoon good wishes exchanged in front of hearth fires, gifts accepted as well as given, cookies taken in trade for pecan cakes, "Silver Bells" and "Hark How the Bells" and "Jingle-Bell Rock" on the radio: Therewith they arrived at three o'clock in the afternoon, Christmas Eve, their deliveries completed before Santa's had begun..He spat on his right thumb, scrubbed the thumb against one of the dried drips on the floor, rubbed thumb and forefinger together, and brought the freshened spoor to his nose. He smelled blood..The mummified moon had unwound itself from its rags of embalming clouds. Its pocked face glowered in full brightness on the spreading branches of the pine, on the yard, and on the graveled driveway..Instead of immediately killing anyone, Junior returned to his apartment on the afternoon of December 29, and went to bed, fully clothed. To calm down. To think about focus.. "No pie!" Agnes agreed. She parenthesized his head with her hands and punctuated his sweet face with kisses..Hope, on many wings, hovered all around the physician, but he was afraid to let it roost..Barty's reading and writing skills appeared to be related to his talent for math, as well. To him, language was first phonics, a sort of music that symbolized objects and ideas, and this music was then translated into written "syllables using the alphabet-which he saw as a system of math employing twenty-six digits instead of ten.

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