

WHATS MY NAME XARA

That night, in Barty's room, after Agnes had listened to his prayers and then had tucked him in for the night, she sat on the edge of his bed. "Honey, I was wondering.... Now that you've had more time to think, could you explain to me what happened?" As a matter of principle, Junior considered firing the slit-mouthed troll on the spot, but then Magusson said, "You shouldn't be bothered any further by Detective Vanadium." Assuming this criticism was amusing hyperbole, Junior laughed, but Sklent squinted those virtually colorless eyes, and Junior's laugh withered in his throat. "Well, maybe that's how it'll work out," he said, wanting to be on Sklent's good side, but he was at once sorry he'd spoken those words in front of witnesses..Of course, Seraphim's child would not have a telephone. He was just a baby, dangerous to Junior in a way that was not clear, but a baby nonetheless..Celestina, surprised by Lipscomb's arrival, was still mentally numb from Neddy's harangue. "Doctor, I didn't know you were coming." As Sinatra began to sing "I'll Be Seeing You," Junior stepped around the bloom and the Merlot. He cautiously peeled back two inches of the curtain at one of the sidelights..than the left: slack yet with a pulled look. The left eyelid drooped. That side of her.Tongue clamped between his teeth as he concentrated on keeping the blue crayon within the lines of the bunny, Barty nodded. "Yeah..At home, after phoning her folks, Celestina made a ham sandwich. She ate a quarter of it. Then two bites of a chocolate croissant. One spoonful of butter pecan ice cream. Everything was without taste, more bland than Phimie's hospital food, and it cloyed in her throat..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..Tom was aware that something had happened here during the past week, an important development that Celestina mentioned on the phone but that she declined to discuss. He didn't harbor any expectations of what he'd find when she escorted him and Wally into the Lampion dining room, but if he'd tried to imagine the scene awaiting him, he wouldn't have pictured a s?ance..Vanadium was surely unaware of any connection between Junior and Seraphim White. And now the girl could never talk..While Angel continued her relentless interrogation of Paul Damascus, Tom joined her mother in front of the large window at the end of the room farthest from the dinner table..Murmuring reassurances, Celestina put a hand on the girl's head and smoothed her brow, her hair, until the sour dream was sweetened by the touch..Given a child-size harmonica, he extemporized simplified versions of songs he heard on the radio. The Beatles' "All You Need Is Love." The Box Tops' "The Letter." Stevie Wonder's "I Was Made to Love Her." After hearing a tune once, Barty could play a recognizable rendition..At the elevators, the orderly suggested that EDOM and Jacob take a second cab and meet them on the surgical floor..Celestina smiled distractedly. Since arriving at the hotel an hour ago, she had been openly debating with herself whether to call her parents in Spruce Hills or to wait until later in the afternoon, when she might be able to report not just that she had a fianc?, and not only that she had a fianc? who'd been shot and nearly killed, but also that his condition had been upgraded from critical to serious. As she'd explained to Tom, in addition to worrying them with the news about Cain, she'd be stunning them with the announcement that she was going to marry a white man twice her age. "My folks don't have one ounce of prejudice between them, but they sure do have firm ideas about what's appropriate and what's not." This would ring the big bell at the top of the White Family Scale of the Inappropriate. Besides, they were preparing for the funeral of a parishioner, and from personal experience, Celestina knew their day would be full. Nevertheless, at ten minutes past eleven, after picking at her breakfast, she finally decided to call them..Junior descended the escalator two steps at a time, not content to let it carry him along at its own pace. When he reached the second floor, however, he found that Vanadium's ghost had done what ghosts do best: faded away. Abandoning his search for the perfect tie chain but determined to remain calm, Junior decided to have lunch at the St. Francis Hotel..To achieve certain narrative effects, I've fiddled slightly with the floor plan and the interior design of St. Mary's Hospital in San Francisco. In this story, the characters who work at St. Mary's are fictional and are not modeled after anyone on the staff of that excellent institution, either past or present..Incredibly, Renee came after him, slinky and seductive, trying to calm him and lure him back into an embrace..Rhythmic breathing. Slow and deep. Slow and deep. Per Zedd, the route to tranquility is through the lungs..He didn't rely, either, on a sixth sense to detect obstacles or open spaces, which some blind people claimed to have. Sometimes instinct told him that in his path was an object that ordinarily would not have been there; but as often as not, it went undetected, and unless he was using his cane, he tripped over it. The sixth sense was greatly overrated..With his refreshed drink, studying Celestina's photograph in the brochure, Junior returned to the living room. She was as stunning as her sister, but unlike her poor sister, she wasn't dead and was, therefore, an appealing prospect for romance. From her, he must learn whatever she knew that might help him in the Bartholomew hunt, without alerting her to his motive. At the same time, there was no reason that they couldn't have a fling, a love affair, even a serious future together..The driver shook his head. "I knew everything anyone would need to know about you when I heard you ask your kid what would happen if the stupid boogeyman showed up in her dream." With no job to return to, he dawdled over lunch. He was actually tumescent with a growing sense of freedom that was as thrilling as sex..As she struggled to cope with her loss, the last thing Agnes needed was the reminder posed by that empty chair. Maria's intentions were good, however, and Agnes didn't want to hurt her feelings..Junior Cain definitely was not a crazed sex-killer, not driven to homicide by weird lusts beyond his control. A single night of sex and death-an indulgence never to be repeated-wouldn't require serious self-examination or a reconsideration of his self-image..The paramedic pulled shut the door, leaving Joey outside in the night, in the storm, in the wind between worlds..exercise. Although

they expected him to be dizzy, he had no difficulty whatsoever with his balance, and in spite of feeling a little drained, he wasn't as weak as they thought he was. He could have toured the hospital unassisted, but he played to their expectations and used the wheeled walker. "He must've listened on the car radio," Agnes said, digging down into the layered days in her packed trunk of memories. "He was trying to get ahead of his work, so he'd be able to stay around the house a lot during the week after the baby came. So he arranged to meet with some prospective clients even on Sunday. He was working a lot, and I was trying to deliver my pies and meet my other obligations before the big day. We didn't have as much time together as usual, and even as impressed as he must've been with the sermon, he never had a chance to tell me about it. The next-to-last thing he ever said to me was 'Bartholomew.' He wanted me to name the baby Bartholomew." Junior tossed garments on the floor and across the bed to create the impression that the detective had packed with haste. After being imprudent enough to blast Victoria Bressler five times with his service revolver—perhaps in a jealous rage, or perhaps because he had gone nuts—Vanadium would have been frantic to flee justice. He doused the light and crouched motionless in the absolute darkness, leaning against a wall of the dumpster to steady himself, because his feet were planted in slippery layers of fog-dampened plastic trash bags. Junior had hoped not to be recognized by anyone at this affair. He regretted that he hadn't stuck to his original plan, maintaining surveillance of the gallery from his parked car. Only a dishonest or delusional man, however, could justify Victoria's killing as self-defense. To a degree, he'd been motivated by anger and passion, and Junior was forthright enough to admit this. Junior wasn't concerned that the shots would attract unwanted attention. These large rural properties and a plenitude of muffling trees made it unlikely that the nearest neighbor would hear anything. Harrison was a Baptist, Vanadium a Catholic, and although they approached the same faith from different angles, they weren't coming to it from different planets, which was the feeling Vanadium had been left with following their conversation. It was true that Enoch Cain could never be brought successfully to trial for the rape of Phimie, subsequent to her death and in the absence of her testimony. And it was also uncomfortably true that exploring the possibility that Cain was the rapist would tear open the wounds in the hearts of everyone in the White family, to no useful effect. Nevertheless, to rely on divine justice alone seemed naive, if not morally questionable. Maria arrived early, expecting to assist with final details in the kitchen. Though honored to be a guest, she wasn't able to stand by with a glass of wine while preparations remained to be made. "Why should I be afraid of a stumbling blind boy?" asked Junior again. But this time the words issued from him in a different tone of voice, because suddenly he sensed something knowing in this boy's attitude, if not in his manufactured eyes, a quality similar to what the girl exhibited. 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. Those ominous words again, turning through his memory, reel to reel. This time he actually heard them spoken. The voice commanded minded attention with a deeper timbre and crisper diction than his own. Evidently, Jacob had made a quick trip to his apartment over the garage and, with no thought for mice and dust, had not closed the back door. Junior said, "You've caused me a lot of trouble, you know." He'd been building a beautiful rage all night, thinking about what he'd been through because of the girl's temptress mother, whom he saw so clearly in this pint-size bitch. "So much trouble." Chicane wasn't alone. Sparky Vox, the building superintendent, approached behind him and hovered. Seventy-two yet as spry as a monkey, Sparky didn't walk so much as scamper like a capuchin. Nicholas Deed was not the knave. He had already brought all the ruin into their lives that he was going to bring. They sat in silence, and the moment held such an extraordinary quality of expectation that Kathleen would not have been surprised if the vanished quarter had suddenly appeared in midair and dropped, winking brightly, to the center of Nolly's desk, there to spin with perpetual motion, until Vanadium chose to pluck it up. He wasn't a marksman, anyway. He couldn't handle anything more than close-up work. On Tuesday, January 2, Junior met with the drug dealer who had introduced him to Google, the document forger, and he arranged to purchase a 9-mm handgun with custom-machined silencer. From out of the fog and darkness came the slap of running feet on bricks. He was sprinting toward the back of the house. If he didn't find the Rolex and get back to his car before the reception ended, he'd forfeit his best chance of following Celestina to Bartholomew. And as he grew, the boy seemed content with his own company and that of his mother and his uncles. Yet Agnes worried that no children his age lived in their neighborhood. She thought he would be happier if he had a playmate or two. Ghosts. Sklent was an atheist, and yet he believed in spirits. Here's how that works: Heaven, Hell, and God do not exist, but human beings are as much energy as flesh, and when the flesh gives out, the energy goes on. "We're the most stubborn, selfish, greedy, grubbing, vicious, psychotic, evil species in the universe," Sklent explained, "and some of us just refuse to die, we're too hardass to die. The spirit is a prickly bur of energy that sometimes clings to places and people that were once important to us, so then you get haunted houses, poor bastards still tormented by their dead wives, and crap like that. And sometimes, the bur attaches itself to the embryo in some slut who's just been knocked up, so you get reincarnation. You don't need a god for all this. It's just the way things are. Life and the afterlife are the same place, right here, right now, and we're all just a bunch of filthy, scabby monkeys tumbling through an endless damn series of barrels." They came to the house in Boatwright Street after dark. They kicked the door in, and Hound, standing among the armed and armored men, said, "Him. Let the others be." And to Otter he said, "Don't move," in a low, amicable voice. He sensed great power in the young man, enough that he was a little afraid of him. But Otter's distress was too great and his training too slight for him to think of using magic to free himself or stop the men's brutality. He flung himself at them and fought them like an animal till they knocked him on the head. They broke Otter's father's jaw and beat his aunt and mother senseless to teach them not to bring up crafty men. Then they carried Otter away. No one had actually been here. And he still didn't believe in ghosts, so he didn't think that

a spirit had been wandering his home in his absence..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..Skinny, pasty-faced, chattering sissy," he hissed, still so furious with Neddy that he wanted to jam the pianist's head in the toilet even though he was dead. Jam his head in and stomp on him. Stomp him into the bowl. Flush and flush, stomp and stomp..Hound told his master that they had the hexer in a safe place, and Losen said, "Who was he working for?".On January 2, 1968, four days before his birthday, Bartholomew Lampion gave up his eyes that he might live, and accepted a fife of blindness with no hope of bathing in light again until, in his good time, he left this world for a better one..When he heard the snick of the lock being disengaged, he rammed into the men's room..Celestina looked out a kitchen window and saw Agnes in the Lampion driveway, where the three-vehicle caravan was assembled. She was loading her station wagon..She struggled, wept, pretended disgust, faked shame, swore to bring the police down on him. Another man, not as highly skilled at reading men as Junior, might have thought the girl's resistance was genuine, Sat her charges of rape were sincere. Any other man might have backed off, but Junior was neither fooled nor confused.. "Nature has no maternal instincts," Edom said quietly but with conviction. "To think otherwise is sheer sentimentality at its worst. Nature is our enemy. She's a vicious killer." He briefly closed his hand around the three coins, then with a snap of his wrist, flung them at Nolly, who flinched. But either the coins were never flung or they vanished in midair-and his hand was empty..I believe the universe is sort of like an unimaginably vast musical with an infinite number of strings." The rocking chair stopped squeaking under her. She heard the sincerity in Vinnie's voice, and as her disbelief dissolved, she was shocked into immobility. She whispered, "My little superstition." He was a virile young man, desired by many, and life was short. Poor Naomi, her lovely face and her look of shock still fresh in his memory, was a constant reminder of how suddenly the end could come. No one was guaranteed tomorrow. Seize the day..At best, Vanadium might decide Junior had come here to learn what other funeral his nemesis had attended-which was, in fact, the true motivation. But this made it clear that Junior feared him and was striving to stay one step ahead of him. Innocent men didn't go to such length. As far as the fruitcake cop was concerned, Junior might as well have painted I killed Naomi on his forehead..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.. "We'll need to talk about this a lot in the days to come, as we both have more time to think about it." The night of Barty's birth, when Joey actually lay dead in the pickup-bashed Pontiac, as a paramedic had rolled Agnes's gurney to the back door of the ambulance, she had seen her husband standing there, untouched by that rain as her son was untouched by this. But Joey-dry-in-the-storm had been a ghost or an illusion fostered by shock and loss of blood..By Thursday, the eruption passed from him. Because he'd had the self-control not to claw his face or hands, he was presentable enough to venture out into the city; although if people in the streets could have Seen the weeping scabs and inflamed scratches that tattooed his body and limbs, they would have fled with the grim certainty that the black.Behind them, the door rebounded forcefully from a rubber-tipped stopper and closed with a thud. The lock wasn't engaged, however, and they might be interrupted momentarily..He feared that suicide was a ticket to Hell, and he knew that sinless Perri was not waiting for him in those lower realms..of fists, hard blows, and his father's heavy breathing as he deals out the punishment. Edom himself lies face down in.Although she knew how, and although she knew the pointlessness of asking why, Agnes asked, "Why? Oh, Lord, why must a blind boy climb a tree?".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..Fortunately, at least the desk was cigarette-scarred, because it came with the office. It had been the property of a skip-tracer named Otto Zelm, who'd made a good living at the kind of work Nolly avoided out of boredom: tracking down deadbeats and repossessing their vehicles. On a stakeout, Zelm fell asleep in his car, while smoking, thereby triggering the payoff of both life- and casualty-insurance policies, and freeing the lease on this furnished space..Unbuttoning her blouse, Celestina said, "Traditionally, puppies don't have a role in weddings." With the determination of any pulp-magazine adventurer, Paul walked in sunshine and in rain. He walked in heat and cold. Wind did not deter him, nor lightning..The round table seated six, but they required only three chairs, because the two brainless friends were a pair of Angel's dolls..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.For each of them, Agnes put one scoop of vanilla ice cream in a tall glass of root beer, and after changing quickly into their pajamas, they sat together in Barty's bed, enjoying their treats, while she read aloud the last sixty pages of Starman Jones..Agnes had the craziest notion that he was counting them, when at is age. Of course, he would have no concept of numbers.. "Your mother's wise," Paul said. "More than all the owls in the world," the boy agreed..Chan nodded. "Considering the advanced stage of Bartholomew's malignancies, he should have complained earlier than he did." An exceptionally attractive woman, alone at the bar, stirred his desire. Glossy black hair: the tresses of night itself, shorn from the sky.At the midpoint of the table, directly under the chandelier, the flashing silvery disc turned through the air, turned, turned, turned out of this world into another..Entering the bedroom, Junior had expected to cast aside his pistol and draw a knife. But he was no longer in a mood for close-up work. Fortunately, he'd managed to hold on to the gun.. "July 6, 1944, in Hartford, Connecticut, a fire broke out in the great tent of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus at two-forty in the afternoon, while six thousand patrons watched the Wallendas, a world-famous high-wire troupe, ascend to begin their act. By three o'clock, the fire burned out, following the collapse of the flaming tent, leaving one hundred sixty-eight dead. Another five hundred people were badly injured, but one thousand circus animals-including forty lions and forty elephants-were not harmed." I. In the Dark Time.In the glamorous cocktail lounge of this elegant hotel, Junior was necessarily forced to use other of Zedd's techniques-and more brandy--to liberate from his subconscious the name of the caller on the Ansaphone. Max. The

caller had said, It's Max..As he edged closer, to better hear the conversation, he became aware of someone staring at him. He looked up into anthracite eyes, into a gaze as sharp as that of any bird, set in the lean face of a thirty something man thinner than a winter-starved crow..In a state of wonderment that was laced with dread rather than delight, he looked up from the quarter, seeking an explanation from Vanadium, expecting to see that anaconda smile..A pathologically suspicious cop, aware of Junior's acute.; emesis following Naomi's death, might imagine a connection between this epic bout of diarrhea and Victoria's murder, and Vanadium's disappearance Here was an avenue of speculation that he did not want to encourage.. "Last I noticed, his car was out. Let me check." Sparky put down his phone and went to look in the garage. When he returned, he said, "Nope. Still out. When he parties, he usually parties late." He turned the brochure in his hands, to look at the front of it again. Gradually he began to suspect that the title of the exhibition might be what had brought to mind the reverend's unremembered sermon..The blinds were raised, the windows bare. Usually, she liked the smoky, reddish-gold glow of the city at night, but this once it made her uneasy.. "You remember things?" the girl asked, her fingertips still pressed lightly to his cheek.. "Blood tests should reveal whether the child's yours or not. That also might explain all this."..dropping on the conversation between Dr. Parkhurst and Vanadium, and later failing and respond to Vanadium's pointed accusations, his deception would inevitably be read as an admission of guilt in the murder."Indeed, you did," said Magusson. "And I dismissed him as a well intentioned crusader, a holy fool. Looks like you had a better take on him than I did, Mr. Cain."..Smiling, pulling the blanket more tightly around herself, she said, "You look after your old mom, don't you?"..As they dropped toward the surgical floor, the solemn sister said, "Another hypertensive crisis..Thereafter, Junior managed to drive four miles before he was forced to pull off the road at another service station, after which he felt that his ordeal might be over. But less than ten minutes later, he settled for more rustic facilities in a clump of bushes alongside the highway, where his cries of anguish frightened small animals into squeaking flight..A spirit-shredding bleakness clawed at her, but she couldn't permit it to leave her in tatters. If she traded hope for despair, as her brothers had done, Bartholomew would be finished before he'd begun. She owed him optimism, lessons in the joy of life..He pressed his right ear to the door, held his breath, heard nothing, and addressed the top lock first. Quietly, he slid the thin pick of the lock-release gun into the key channel, under the pin tumblers..honor and family. This was life, and everyone lived his life in the shadow of one solemn obligation or another.. "I don't know anyone named Bartholomew." He decided that the truth, in this instance, could not harm him..In the living room, the central and largest window framed a magnificent view, and swagged silk brocatelle draperies framed the window. An oversize hand-painted and heavily gilded chaise lounge, upholstered in an exquisite tapestry, stood against this backdrop of city and silk, and Renee pulled Junior down upon the chaise, desperate to be ravished there..As kids-living in a house that was run like a prison, stifled by the oppressive rule of a morose father who believed that any form of entertainment was an offense against God-they conducted secret card games as their primary act of rebellion. A deck of cards was small enough to hide quickly and to keep hidden successfully even during one of their father's painstakingly thorough room searches..where everyone spoke a single language and had all the blueberry pies they needed..Perhaps, reluctant to admit to herself that she had yearned for him to do everything that he'd done, she had slowly been inflamed by guilt, until she convinced herself that she had, indeed, been raped. Psychotic little bitch..Licky did not take him into the roaster tower, but back to the barracks. From a locked room he brought out a small, soft, thick, leather bag that weighed heavy in his hands. He opened it to show Otter the little pool of dusty brilliance lying in it. When he closed the bag the metal moved in it, bulging, pressing, like an animal trying to get free..These weren't lakes of blood, just smears, so Junior could wipe them up quickly, once he got the corpse out of the hallway, but the sight of them further infuriated him. He was here to bring closure to all the unfinished business of Spruce Hills, to free himself from vengeful spirits, to better his life and plunge henceforth entirely into a bright new future. He wasn't here, damn it, to do building maintenance..Hound shrugged. He didn't choose to tell Losen that people hated him disinterestedly.. "Uncle Edom. Uncle Jacob. Aunt Maria. So I can remember faces after ... you know.".. "Thanks, Sparky, but not tonight. I'm thinking of taking a look around downstairs if old Nine Toes isn't stuck at home tonight with a case of paralytic bladder.".. "See this?" He placed the pepper shaker in front of her on the room-service table and held the salt shaker concealed in his hand..By the time Agnes opened the driver's door and slumped behind the steering wheel, Barty levered himself onto the seat beside her. Grunting, he pulled his door shut with both hands as she jammed the key in the ignition and started the engine..Your deeds ... will return to you, magnified beyond imagining ... the spirit of Bartholomew ... will find you ... and mete out the terrible judgment that you deserve..Shortly after four o'clock, here was Neddy, already spiffed for work in black tuxedo, pleated white shirt, and black bow tie, with a red bud rose as a boutonniere, standing just inside the open door to Celestina White's studio apartment, holding forth in tedious detail as to the reasons why she was in flagrant breach of her lease and obligated to move by the end of the month. The issue was Angel, lone baby in an otherwise childless building: her crying (though she rarely cried), her noisy play (though Angel wasn't yet strong enough to shake a rattle), and the potential she represented for damage to the premises (though she was not yet able to get out of a bassinet on her own, let alone go at the plaster with a ball-peen hammer)..At the end of his fourth month, instead of in his seventh, he said "Mama," and clearly knew what it meant. He repeated it when he wanted to get her attention..Truly, the time spent helping Agnes had given her uncountable new subjects for paintings and had begun to bring to her work a new depth that excited her. "When you pour out your pockets into the pockets of others," Agnes had once said, "you just wind up richer in the morning than you were the night before."..White's paintings, which Junior found naive, dull, and insipid in the extreme. She imbued her work with all the qualities that real artists disdained: realistic detail, storytelling, beauty, optimism, and even charm..Widening his eyes in calculated surprise, Junior said, "Are you a police officer?".. "Is it as bad as that?" Celestina wondered

plaintively, though she knew the answer. "I love San Francisco. The city inspires my work. I've built a life here. Is it really as bad as that?" "That's unusual, too, and I wish the etiology of this disease, which is exceedingly well understood, gave us reason to hope based on the transience of the symptoms ... but it doesn't." "Thank you, Nurse Bressler," he said most solemnly, matching her tone, barely able to control the urge to glance at her, smile, and give her another preview of his quick, pink tongue..Over the following hour, as Walter Panglo guided Jacob through the planning of the funeral, Jacob recounted the gruesome details of numerous airliner crashes, shipwrecks, train collisions, coal-mine disasters, darn collapses, hotel fires, nightclub fires, pipeline and oil-well explosions, munitions--plant explosions....PERRI'S POLIO-WHITTLED body did not test the strength of her pallbearers. The minister prayed for her soul, her friends mourned her loss, and the earth received her..Junior was accustomed to having women seduce him. His good looks were a blessing of nature. His commitment to improving his mind made him interesting. Most important, from the books of Caesar Zedd, he had learned how to be irresistibly charming..Tucking the covers around Angel, Celestina said, "Would you like Uncle Wally to be your daddy?" "That would be the best." "I think so, too." "I never had a daddy, you know." "Getting Wally was worth the wait, huh?" "Will we move in with Uncle Wally?" "That's the way it usually works." "Will Mrs. Ornwall leave?" "All that stuff will need to be worked out." "If she leaves, you'll have to make the cheese."The muscles of his legs grew as hard as any of the landscapes that he trod. Granite thighs; calves like marble, roped with veins..were uniformly negative, frequently hilarious, but never as succinct and violent as Sklent's.

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