

## **LA GUERRE ET L'HOMME DE GUERRE NOUVELLE IDITION**

Behind the dog, Mary walked out of nowhere, ball in hand, and Koko whirled in surprise, and the chase was on again.. "Wouldn't dream of asking you to make it a habit. Just this one time. If anguish, why not guilt?". Celestina circled him, half carrying but also half dragging the chair, either because her nerves were still ringing and her arms were weak--or because she was faking weakness in the hope of luring him to a reckless response. Junior circled her while she rounded on him frantically trying to deal with the pistol without taking his eyes off his adversary.. This morning, Damascus had left the house early, before Vanadium came downstairs, which was perfect for Junior's purposes. While the maniac cop was finishing his shave and shower, Junior crept upstairs to check his room. He discovered the revolver in the second of the three places that he expected it to be, did his work, and returned the weapon to the nightstand drawer in precisely the position that he had found it. Narrowly avoiding an encounter with Vanadium in the hall, he retreated to the ground floor. After some fussing over the most effective placement, he left the quarter and the luggage--just as Vanadium, the human stump, clumped down the stairs. Junior experienced an unexpected delay when the detective spent half an hour making phone calls from the study, but then Vanadium went into the kitchen, allowing him to slip out of the house and complete his work.. He felt lightheaded again. But this time he knew why. Not an oncoming case of the flu. He was straining against the cocoon of his life to date, straining to be born in a new and better form. He had been a pupa, encased in a chrysalis of fear and confusion, but now he was an imago, a fully evolved butterfly, because he had used the power of his beautiful rage to improve himself. When Bartholomew was dead, Junior Cain would at last spread his wings and fly.. "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.. Apparently Maria wished that she'd brought a rosary to dinner. With the fingers of her right hand, she pinched the knuckles of her left, one after the other, as if they were beads.. Her father respected and admired Tom, so she was thankful for his presence. And anyone who could survive whatever catastrophe had left him with this cubistic face was a man she wanted on her team in a crisis.. BARTY TODDLED, Barty walked, and ultimately Barty carried a pie for his mother on one of her delivery days, wary of his balance and solemn with responsibility.. 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.. "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..". Less cautious than the typical accountant, perhaps mellow in this season of peace, Prosser opened the door without hesitation.. which was beginning to come into view, was as sharp as pins and needles, sheer torture to her eyes.. The same thought had occurred to her, a consolation that might make acceptance of these riches possible. Yet she remained chilled by the thought of receiving a life-changing amount of money as the consequence of a death.. At the bedside, Joshua Nunn, friend and physician, looked up as Paul approached. He rose as though under a yoke of iron.. He'd wanted to give Celestina more help than she would accept. She continued working nights as a waitress for two years, while she completed classes at the Academy of Art College, and she quit her job only when she began to sell her paintings for enough to equal her wages and gratuities.. 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.. Neddy possessed all the musical talent, but Junior had the muscle. Pinned against the wall, his throat in the vise of Junior's hands, Neddy needed a miracle if he were ever again to sweep another glissando from a keyboard.. This philosophy had worked for him previously, but forgetting the aftermath was more difficult when the aftermath was your own poor, torn, severed toe. Your own poor, torn, severed toe was infinitely more difficult to ignore than a busload of dead nuns.. He remembered standing in the cemetery, downhill from Seraphim's grave--although at the time he'd known only that it was a Negro being buried, not that it was his former lover--and thinking that the rains would over time carry the juices of the decomposing Negro corpse into the lower grave that contained Naomi's remains. Had that been a half-psyhic moment on his part, a dim awareness that another and far more dangerous connection between dead Naomi and dead Seraphim had already been formed?. "Fourteen. It's usually the family that's behind an expression of the calling at such a young age, but in my case, I had to argue my folks into it..". More than once, a passing nurse stopped to check on him and to advise him not to exhaust himself.. The station wagon rolled out, the Volkswagen bus followed it, and Wally brought up the rear. "Wagons, ho!" he announced. The morning that it happened, Barty ate breakfast in the Lampion kitchen with Angel, Uncle Jacob, and two brainless friends.. A sense of mystery overcame Agnes, unnerving but not entirely or even primarily unpleasant.. "This is going to be an enormous settlement," the attorney promised. "And there's more good news. County and state authorities have agreed to close the case on Naomi's death. It's now officially an accident..". Convinced he was alone and unobserved, Junior leaned into the car and shifted it out of park. He released the hand brake.. able to reconcile these opposed forces, she was all but paralyzed by indecision.. And had Phimie, retrieved from death by the resuscitation procedures of the surgical team, repaid Nella's kindness with her own

stunning message to Lipscomb?. If he had been any other three-year-old, she would have told a compassionate lie. He was her miracle child, however, her prodigy, and he would know a lie for what it was..The apartment above Elena's Fashions could be reached by a set of exterior stairs at the back of the building. The climb had never before taxed Agnes in the least, but now it took away her breath and left her legs trembling by the time she reached the top landing.. "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..As soon as he was alone, however, Junior yearned for the nurse to return. Alone, he felt vulnerable, threatened..With one tiny hand, Barty reached up for his mother. She gave him her forefinger, to which the sugar-bag boy clung tenaciously..In the main room, on his way toward the front door, Junior saw Celestina White surrounded by adoring fatheads, nattering ninnies, dithering dolts, saps and boneheads, oafs and gawks and simpletons. She was still as gorgeous as her shamelessly beautiful paintings. If the opportunity arose, Junior would have more use for her than for her so called art..Otter was reluctant to answer. He had to like Hound, but didn't have to trust him. "Shape-changing," he mumbled at last..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?"..Saturday and Sunday, between sessions with the directory, Junior cruised around the county on a series of pleasure drives-testing the theory that the maniac cop was no longer following him. Apparently, Simon Magusson was correct: The case had been closed..Angel was lying on a towel on the convertible sofa, where Grace had just changed her diaper..folded over his too-tight shirt collar, and with a second chin more prominent than Vanadium's smile, in that tragically fractured face, might have alarmed most people, but Kathleen found it appealing because of the indestructible spirit it revealed..No doubt thinking about the land of the big bugs, into which she had pushed Enoch Cain, which was exactly what Barty had suddenly thought about, Angel said, "Honey, this is amazing, it's wonderful, but you've got to be careful."..A matronly nurse arrived, alerted to the patient's return to consciousness by the telemetry device associated with the heart monitor..Edom bit his lower lip, shook his head, and stubbornly clung to Barty's left foot..faiths and inhibiting rules that confused humanity, when he was sufficiently enlightened to believe only in himself, he would be able to trust his instincts, for they would be free of society's toxic views, and he would be assured of success and happiness if always he followed these gut feelings..The owner, also the pilot on this trip, was pleased to be paid cash in advance, in crisp hundred-dollar bills, rather than by check or credit card. He accepted payment hesitantly, however, and with an unconcealed grimace, as though afraid of contracting a contagion from the currency. "What's wrong with your face?"..One moment, girl and yellow vinyl ball. The next moment, gone as if they'd never been..All day, for reasons he couldn't quite put into words, Junior had carried that quarter in a pocket of his bathrobe. From time to time, he had taken it out to examine it..Although he had made no effort to summon them, tears spilled from Junior's closed eyes. They weren't drawn from him by thoughts of poor Naomi. These next few days-perhaps weeks-were going to be tedious, until he could have Nurse Victoria Bressler. Under the circumstances, he had good reason to feel sorry for himself..She remained fixated on the card that she had just dealt, and for a while she didn't speak, as though the eyes of the paper knave held her in thrall. Finally she said, "Monster. Human monster."..Lifting his martini, theatrically gesturing to the tablecloth where the glass had stood, as though the lack of coins proved that he, too, had sorcerous power, Nolly said, "Another round of this magical concoction?"..The nurse noted that the maximum weight capacity of the elevator allowed all of them to take the same cab, if they didn't mind being squeezed a little..The diminutive mortician spoke a few comforting words instead of commenting on the dental history of the deceased, and when he put a consoling hand on Jacob's shoulder, Jacob cringed from his touch..During Barty's hospitalization, they had graduated from the young adult novels by Robert Heinlein to some of the same author's science fiction for general audiences. Now, pajamaed and in bed, with his sunglasses on the nightstand but his padded eye patches still in place, Barty listened, rapt, to the beginning of Double Star..He moved the shaker across the tablecloth, rocking it back and forth to convey that he was strolling without a care in the world.."Angel," Phimie said urgently, and then, with an effort that made a blood vessel swell..Angel didn't join the grieving women, but sat on the floor in front of the television, switching back and forth between Gunsmoke and The Monkees. Too young to be genuinely involved in either show, nevertheless she occasionally made gunfire sounds when Marshal Dillon went into battle or invented her own lyrics to sing along with the Monkees..Too much had happened in those rooms. They were stained dark with family history, and in the night, when either Edom or Jacob slept under that gabled roof, the past came alive again in dreams..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.."I'm a less philosophical sort than Kathleen," Nolly said, "so what I've been wondering is where you learned the tricks with the quarter. How is it you're priest, cop-and amateur magician?"..Barty had never been instructed in the rules of grammar, but had absorbed them as the roots of Edom's roses absorbed nutrients. "Sure. Does and is.".. "I didn't know her well. She didn't hang out or party much--especially after the baby.".. "Why are you here?" "Where else I should be and for why? I watch you over." As the tears cleared from Agnes's eyes, she saw that Maria was sewing. A shopping bag stood to one side of the chair, and to the other side, open on the floor, a case contained spools of thread, needles, a pincushion, a pair of scissors, and other supplies of a seamstress's trade..He had nothing against men or women of color. Live and let live. One earth, one people. All of that..The longer they were required to lie low in fear, the more likely Celestina would be to cast caution aside and return to Pacific Heights, Tom knew her well enough to be sure that she was a fighter rather than a runner. Being in hiding frustrated her. Day by day, hour by hour, with no target date for resuming a normal life, she would quickly lose patience. Rubbed raw, her dignity and sense of justice would compel her to act-perhaps more out of emotion than out of reason..Matching his mother's whisper, taking obvious delight in their conspiracy, he said, "Our own secret society."..Leaving the engine running

and the heater on, he got out of the car, leaned back inside, said, "Better lock up while I'm gone," and then closed his door..Suddenly and seriously crept out, Junior wanted to get away from this nut case. Yet he was frozen by morbid fascination..FOLLOWING A SECOND NIGHT at the Sleepie Tyme Inne, waking at dawn, Junior felt rested, refreshed-and in control of his bowels..Perhaps his sister intuited what Edom was about to say, because she didn't let him get started..In a minute or two, one of the cops returned, crouching close as the medics worked. "There's no intruder."His severed toe lay across the room, on the white tile floor. It stuck up stiffly, nail gleaming, as if the floor were snow and the toe were the only exposed extremity of a body buried in a drift..Junior, putting himself in the detective's place, could think of a few reasons for this visit to Seraphim's grave. Unfortunately, not one of them supported his contention that he was an innocent man..Through fog-shrouded hills forested with oaks, maples, madrones, and pepperwoods, through magnificent stands of redwoods that towered three hundred feet, he arrived in Weott on the evening of January 3, 1968, where he stayed the night. If Paul had any northernmost goal for this trip, it was the city of Eureka, almost fifty miles farther-and for no reason, other than to eat Humboldt Bay crabs at their origin, because that was one of his and Perri's favorite foods..He turned the knob. The door eased inward, but he pushed it open only a fraction of an inch.."If I ever get there, I'll be back," she promised the gathered family. "Imagine how much we'll have to talk about. Maybe I'll even get some new pie recipes from Over There."."Each life," Barty Lampion said, "is like our oak tree in the backyard but lots bigger. One trunk to start with, and then all the branches, millions of branches, and every branch is the same life going in a new direction."..This time, however, the singing lasted longer than before, long enough for him to become suspicious of the heating ducts. These rooms had ten-foot ceilings, and the ducts opened high in the walls..The reception still roared in both showrooms of the gallery. Legions of the uncultured, taste-challenged in every regard except in their appreciation for hors d'oeuvres, yammered about art and chased their cloddish opinions with mediocre champagne..She always had a generous heart. After disease whittled Perri's flesh, leaving her so frail, her great heart, undiminished by her suffering, seemed bigger than the body that contained it..This unflinching consistency of packaging enables card mechanics, professional gamblers, sleight-of-hand magicians-to manipulate a new deck with confidence that they know, starting, where every card can be found in the stack. An expert mechanic with practiced and dexterous hands can appear to shuffle so thoroughly that even the most suspicious observer will be satisfied-yet he will still know exactly where every card is located in the deck. With masterly manipulation, he can place the cards in the order that he wishes, to achieve whatever effect he desires..The reverend said, "I'm sure you underestimate my parishioners, Celestina. They won't be scandalized. They'll open their hearts."..As she turned away from him and continued along the hall toward the kitchen, Agnes said, "They'll be as good as new when she's mended them."..Second, Thomas Vanadium received no mention: Therefore, his body hadn't been found in the lake. He still ought to be under suspicion in the Bressler case. And if new evidence cleared him of suspicion, then his disappearance should have been mentioned, and he should have been listed as another possible victim of the Shamefaced Slayer, the Bandaged Butcher, as the tabloids had dubbed Junior..All the way to the nightstand, he expected to discover that the revolver had been taken from the drawer. Yet here it was. Loaded.."He worked in your shipyard, your highness." Losen liked to be called by kingly titles..When he closed his eyes, he saw a bowling pin, a leftover image from his with-seed days. In less than a minute, he was able to make the pin dematerialize, filling his mind with featureless, soundless, soothing, white nothingness..Three equally modest rooms opened off this lounge. Two housed complete dental units, and the third provided cramped office space shared by the receptionist and the doctor..His entire body throbbed from his neck to the tips of his nine toes. His legs were the worst, filled with hot twisting agony..Her shaking threatened her composure. She was Barty's mother and father, his only rock, and she must always be strong for him. She clenched her teeth and tensed her body and gradually quieted the tremors by an act of will..Having gotten the new roof for them at cost, Agnes subsequently put together donations from a dozen individuals and one church group to cover all but two hundred dollars of the outlay..Still on her knees, she raised the weapon and realized that she was going to shoot the maniac in the back, that she had no other choice, because her inexperience didn't allow her to aim for a leg or an arm. The moral dilemma overwhelmed her, but so did an image of Phimie lying dead in bloody sheets on the surgery table. She pulled the trigger and rocked with the recoil..He slept outdoors rarely and otherwise stayed in inexpensive motels, boardinghouses, and YMCAs..JUNIOR CAIN WANDERED among the Philistines, in the gray land of conformity, seeking one-just one-refreshingly repellent canvas, finding only images that welcomed and even charmed, yearning for real art and the vicious emotional whirlpool of despair and disgust that it evoked, finding instead only themes of uplift and images of hope, surrounded by people who seemed to like everything from the paintings to the canapes to the cold January night, people who probably hadn't spent even one day of their lives brooding about the inevitability of nuclear annihilation before the end of this decade, people who smiled too much to be genuine intellectuals, and he felt more alone and threatened than eyeless Samson chained in Gaza..She thought that she already knew all about humility, about the necessity of it, about the power of it to bring peace of mind and to heal the heart, but in the following few minutes, she learned more about humility than she had ever known before..SERAPHIM AETHIONEMA WHITE was nothing whatsoever like her name, except that she had as kind a heart and as good a soul as any among the hosts in Heaven. She did not have wings, as did the angels after which she had been named, and she couldn't sing as sweetly as the seraphim, either, for she had been blessed with a throaty voice and far too much humility to be a performer. Aethionema were delicate flowers, either pale-or rose-pink, and while this girl, just sixteen, was beautiful by any standard, she was not a delicate soul but a strong one, not likely to be shaken apart in even the highest wind..Now that Tom knew what to look for, the gloom couldn't conceal the incredible truth.."She was a hero, just like you. I wanted you ... I wanted you to see her and to know her name. Perri Damascus. That was her name."..Junior

worried, however, that they had noticed him after he pulled to the curb twice behind them, that they were keeping an eye on him, ready to bolt if he got out of the car, in which case they might all make it inside before he could cut them down..Perhaps because Celestina was her father's daughter, with his faith in humanity, she was always deeply moved by the kindnesses of strangers and saw in them the shape of a greater grace. "Does your wife know what a lucky woman she is?". "What wound? Junior wanted to ask, but he recognized bait when he heard it, and he did not bite..Because Harrison, with the best of intentions, had not wanted to open wounds, Cain could walk up to Celestina anywhere, anytime, and she wouldn't know that he might have been her sister's rapist. To her, his face was that of any stranger..And suddenly Celestina believed that Bellini was a cop, not because his voice contained such authority, but because her heart told her that the time had come, that the long-anticipated danger had at last materialized: the dark advent that Phimie had warned her about three years ago..If she'd connected with his left side, as she intended, she might have broken his arm or cracked a few ribs. But lie saw the chair coming, and as agile as a base runner dodging a shortstop's tag, he turned away from her, taking the blow across his back..Angel didn't want to go, maybe because the boogeyman schemed beneath the bed in some of her nightmares..Jacob had become a card mechanic for one purpose. Not because he'd ever be a gambler. Not to wow friends with card tricks. Not because the challenge intrigued him. He wanted to be able to give Agnes winning cards once in a while, if she was losing too frequently or needed to have her spirits lifted. He didn't feed her winning hands often enough to make her suspicious or to make the games less fun for Edom or Joey. He was judicious. The effort he expended-the thousands of hours of practice-was repaid with interest each time Agnes laughed with delight after being dealt a perfect hand..He liked her face, too. She wore no makeup, and pulled her brown hair back in a bun. Some might say she was mousy, but the only things mousy that Nolly saw about her were a piquant tilt to her nose and a certain cuteness..Alone with Agnes, the physician said, "I want you to take Barty to a specialist in Newport Beach. Franklin Chan. He's a wonderful ophthalmologist and ophthalmological surgeon, and right now we don't have anyone like that here in town.".On one particular street in Bright Beach, however, the most significant event of the year occurred on a pleasant afternoon in early April, when Barty, now nine years old, climbed to the top of the great oak and perched there in triumph, king of the tree and master of his blindness..At the far end of the table, Agnes shot up from her chair as her son said rain, and as he said wet, she spoke warningly: "Barty!".The big trees on Vanadium's property also stood bare, allowing a relatively unobstructed view of the house. The back of the residence as dark, but a soft light warmed two windows at the front..THE SANDMAN WAS powerless to cast a spell of sleep while Junior spent the night flushing away enough water to drain a reservoir..Walking away, he was aware of the many faces at the windows, all as stupid as the faces of cud-chewing cows. He had given them something to talk about when they returned from lunch to their shops and offices. He'd reduced himself to an object of amusement for strangers, had briefly become one of the city's army of eccentrics.. "The exquisite kind," he replied, glad that he had read so many books on the art of seduction and therefore knew precisely the right thing to say..The gunshot was louder-and the pain initially less-than he expected. Timpani-boom, timpani-boom, the explosion echoed back and forth through the high-ceilinged apartment..He wasn't entirely sure what all he hoped to find. Perhaps an envelope or a cash box with folding money, which a fleeing murderer would surely pause to take with him. Suspicions might be raised if he left it behind. Perhaps a savings-account passbook..Based on the evidence, perhaps Sklent never laughed, regardless of how clever the joke. He scowled fiercely at the paintings in the brochure, returned it to Junior, and snarled, "Shoot the bitch.".AFTER UNDERGOING TESTS for brain tumors or lesions, to ascertain whether his seizure of violent emesis might, in fact, have a physical cause, Junior was returned to his hospital room shortly before noon..Fragments of the broken wineglass crunched under his shoes as he crossed the small kitchen to the dinette. He opened the bottle of vodka and put it on the table in front of the dead woman..Feroocious pirates, ruthless secret agents, brain-eating aliens from distant galaxies, super criminals hell-bent on ruling the world, bloodthirsty vampires, face-gnawing werewolves, savage Gestapo thugs, mad scientists, satanic cultists, insane carnival freaks, hate-crazed Ku Klux Klansmen, knife-worshipping thrill killers, and emotionless robot soldiers from other planets had slashed, stabbed, burned, shot, gouged, torn, clubbed, crushed, stomped, hanged, bitten, eviscerated, beheaded, poisoned, drowned, radiated, blown up, mangled, mutilated, and tortured uncounted victims in the pulp magazines that Paul had been reading since childhood. Yet not one scene in those hundreds upon hundreds of issues of colorful tales withered a corner of his soul as did a glimpse of Barty's empty sockets. The sight wasn't in the least gory, nor even gruesome. Paul cringed and looked away only because this evidence of the boy's loss too pointedly made him think about the terrible vulnerability of the innocent in the freight-train path of nature, and threatened to tear off the fragile scab on the anguish that he still felt over Perri's death..Mrs. Cain's little boy felt small, weak, sorry for himself, and terribly alone. The detective was still here, but his presence only aggravated Junior's sense of isolation..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.Neddy, dressed for work but overdressed for his own funeral, slumped against the wall, head bowed, chin on his chest. His pale hands were splayed at his sides, as though he were trying to strike chords from the floor tiles..Focus. Get Ichabod all the way inside. Act now, think later. No, no, proper focus requires an understanding of the need to ize: scrutinize, analyze, and prioritize. Get the bitch, get the bitch! Slow deep breaths. Channel the beautiful rage. A fully evolved man is self-controlled and calm. Move, move, move!.Like all women past puberty and this side of the grave, she was attracted to him. She never told him as much, not in words, but he detected this attraction in the way she looked at him, in the tone that she used when she spoke his name. Throughout three weeks of therapy, Seraphim revealed countless small but significant proofs of her

desire..Hard experience had taught him, however, that killing someone he knew, while occasionally necessary, didn't release stress. Or if it did briefly release stress, then unforeseen consequences always contributed to even worse future stress..As if vengeful spirits weren't trouble enough, he had for three years been struggling unwittingly against the terrible power of the minister's curse, black Baptist voodoo that made his life miserable. He knew now why he had been plagued by violent nervous emesis, by epic diarrhea, by hideously disfiguring hives. The failure to find a heart mate, the humiliation with Renee Vivi, the two nasty cases of gonorrhea, the disastrous meditative catatonia, the inability to learn French and German, his loneliness, his emptiness, his thwarted attempts to find and kill the bastard boy born of Phimie's womb: All these things and more, much more, were the hateful consequences of the vicious, vindictive voodoo of that hypocritical Christian. As a highly self-improved, fully evolved, committed man who was comfortable with his raw instincts, Junior should be sailing through life on calm seas, under perpetually sunny sides, with his sails always full of wind, but instead he was constantly cruelly battered and storm-tossed through an unrelenting night, not because of any shortcomings of mind or heart, or character, but because of black magic..After Maria, Bonita, and Francesca had gone, when Agnes and her brothers joined forces to clear the table and wash the dishes, Barty kissed them good-night and retired to his room with The Star Beast..Junior suspected that no one other than this man's mother called him Tom. He was probably "Detective" to some and "Vanadium" to most who knew him.. "I'm wondering," Nolly said, "if you're not an officer of the law anymore, in what capacity are you going to pursue Cain?". You ever hear it, Enoch? I'm that someone for you, of course, in a romantic sense..In the refrigerator, he found a stick of butter in a container with clear plastic lid. He took the container to the cutting board beside the sink, to the left of the cooktop, and opened it.

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