

SUSTAINABILITY ACCOUNTING AND INTEGRATED REPORTING

He usually ate lunch alone in his office. The room was the size of an elevator, but of course didn't go up or down. It went sideways, however, in the sense that herein Paul was transported into wondrous lands of adventure.. "How's something so delicious come from a fat, smelly, dirty, snorting old pig?". When Paul arrived with a Christmas gift, Perri was abed, wearing Chinese-red pajamas, reading Jane Austen. A clever contraption of leather straps, pulleys, and counterweights assisted her in moving her right arm more fluidly than would otherwise have been possible. A lap stand held the book, but she could tam the pages.. "Are you all right?" he asked as he opened the passenger's door and helped her into the car.. In a pocket of his smock was his letter to Reverend Harrison White. He hadn't sealed the envelope, because he intended to read to Perri, his wife, what he'd written, and include any corrections she suggested. In this, as in all things, Paul valued her opinion.. Tongue clamped between his teeth as he concentrated on keeping the blue crayon within the lines of the bunny, Barty nodded. "Yeah.. Wally had disposed of his properties in San Francisco under Tom's careful supervision. Any attempt to trace him from the city to Bright Beach would fail. His vehicles were purchased through a corporation, and his new house had been bought through a trust named after his late wife.. Spruce Hills, but also those in the entire county, maybe seventy or eighty thousand.. Ministering to Perri, Joshua had pulled back her blankets. The fabric of the pale yellow pajama pants couldn't disguise how terribly withered her legs were: two sticks.. Junior said, "I should know your name from the playbill at the lounge, but I'm as bad with names as you are good with faces..". Edom removed two of the pies from the table and put them on the counter near the ovens.. This Monday morning in Oregon was bleak, with the swollen, dark bellies of rain clouds swagging low over the cemetery, a dreary send-off for Naomi, even though rain was not yet falling.. He would have liked to take Industrial Woman, as well, but she weighed a quarter ton. He couldn't manage her alone, and he dared not hire a day worker, not even an illegal alien, to assist him, and thereby compromise the Pinchbeck van and identity.. Returning from his tests, he'd gotten into bed without stripping off the thin, hospital-issue robe. He was still wearing it over his pajamas.. Celestina didn't hear gunfire, but she couldn't mistake the bullets for anything else when they cracked through the door.. Wally drove slowly, carefully, with all the responsibility that you would expect from an obstetrician, pediatrician, and spanking-new fianc?. The trip home to Pacific Heights took twice as long as it would have taken in clear weather on a night without a pledge of troth.. "Loved her? Of course I loved her. Naomi was beautiful and so kind ... and funny. She was the best ... the best thing that ever happened to me..". Darkrose and Diamond.. To the windows, then, drawing all the blinds securely down. And still, irrationally, she felt watched.. Concerned 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.. Vanadium understood the depth of his old friend's pain, and he knew that the anguish over the loss of a child could make the best of men act out of emotion rather than good judgment, and so he accepted Harrison's preference to let the matter rest. When enough time passed for reflection, what Vanadium ultimately decided was that of the two of them, Harrison was much the stronger in his faith, and that he himself, perhaps for the rest of his life, would be more comfortable behind a badge than behind a Roman collar.. The dining room again, but this time he remembered how he had gotten here: by way of the living room.. Less cautious than the typical accountant, perhaps mellow in this season of peace, Prosser opened the door without hesitation.. "So do I, honey. Oh, Lord, so do I." She kissed his forehead. "Listen, kiddo, in spite of their stories and all their funny ways, your uncles are good men..". just as Sinatra broke into song again, Junior thought he heard a footstep on the wood floor of the hallway, and the creak of a board. The music masked the sounds of the visitor's approach if, indeed, he was approaching.. "He worked in your shipyard, your highness." Losen liked to be called by kingly titles.. The poster announced an upcoming show, titled "This Momentous Day," by the young artist calling herself Celestina White. Dates for the exhibition were Friday, January 12, through Saturday, January 27.. In addition to these scavengers, another presence was here, unseen but not unfelt. The chill of this invisible entity pierced Junior to the marrow: the stubborn, vicious, psychotic, prickly-bur spirit of Thomas Vanadium, maniac cop, not satisfied to haunt the house in which he'd died, not ready yet to seek reincarnation, but instead pursuing his beleaguered suspect even after death, capering--to paraphrase Sklent like an invisible, filthy, scabby monkey here on this city street, in bright daylight.. "There's lots of places where I don't have bad eyes at all. And then lots of places where I have it worse or don't have it as bad, but still have it some..". "You sounded as though you were in a lot of distress. You were frightened of this Bartholomew..". Now, here on this sunny ridge in Oregon, miles from any train and farther still from any nuns, Junior applied this artistic insight to his own situation, overcame his squeamishness, and regained some momentum of his own. He approached his fallen wife, stood over her, and stared down into her fixed eyes as he said, "Naomi".. Copyright (c) 1999 by Ursula K. Le Guin. "Dragonfly" first appeared in Legends.. A great boom. Concussion rocked the floor and shuddered the walls and made the roof timbers squeal as though unsuspected colonies of bats had taken flight by the thousands all in the same instant.. Panic set in when he began to wonder if these intestinal spasms were going to prevent him from leaving Spruce Hills. In fact, what if they required hospitalization?.. "And to the north of us," Agnes said, drawing him out, "Janey Carter went off to college last year, and she's their only child..". The roses filling the countersunk vases in the comers of Joey's gravestone were not Edom-grown, but they were Edom-bought. He had visited the florist himself, personally selecting each bloom from the inventory in the cooler; but he didn't have the courage to accompany Agnes and Barty to the grave.. Maria was hand-repairing some of Joey's clothes, which Agnes had meticulously damaged earlier in the day.. Soundlessly, reluctantly, Agnes pulled the bedroom door nearly shut, and went down to the kitchen, where she sat alone, drinking coffee and nibbling at mysteries. Of all the gifts that Barty opened on Christmas

morning, the hardback copy of Robert Heinlein's *The Star Beast* was his favorite. Instantly enchanted by the promise of an amusing alien creature, space travel, an exotic future, and lots of adventure, he seized every opportunity throughout the busy day to crack open those pages and to step out of Bright Beach into stranger places. 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. Eleven years later, a few months after marrying Agnes, Joey mysteriously invited Edom to accompany him on "a little drive," and took his bewildered brother-in-law to a nursery. They returned home with fifty pound bags of special mulch, jars of plant food, and an array of new tools. Together, they stripped the sod from the side yard, turned the soil, and prepared the ground for the rich variety of hybrid starter plants that were delivered the following week. During the cleaning, installation of new carpet, and painting that had followed the removal of the diarrhetic pig set loose by one of Cain's disgruntled girlfriends, the wife killer had spent a few nights in a hotel. Nolly took advantage of the opportunity to bring his associate James Hunnicolt--Jimmy Gadget--onto the premises to provide a customized, undetectable, exterior window-latch release. Uncommonly healthy, he didn't suffer croup, flu, sinusitis, or most of the ailments to which other children were vulnerable. After a while, a voice broke the vacuum-perfect silence. Bob Chicane. His instructor. The Benediction service had concluded, and the worshipers had departed. Gone, too, were the priest and the altar boys. 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. Later in the month, from Sparky Vox, Junior learned the building had a four-pipe, fan-coil heating system serving discrete ductwork for each apartment. Voices couldn't carry from residence to residence in the heating-cooling system, because no apartments shared ducting. Throughout the spring, summer, and autumn of 1967, Junior met new women, bedded a few, and had no doubt that each of his conquests experienced with him something she had never known before. Yet he still suffered from an emptiness in the heart. Although only half the stools at the counter were occupied, and none of those close to Junior, customers were seated in most of the booths. Some had their backs to him, and three were about Vanadium's size. Finally, he said, "What I did was grab the shovel, dig a hole really fast, and bury Muffin in it up to her neck--just until she calmed down." Gradually he grew calm. His great frosty exhalations diminished to a diaphanous dribble that evaporated two inches from his lips. Mocked by the silvery ping-ting-jingle of the maniac detective emptying his ghostly pockets, Junior ran. "Where did it go?" Grace asked her granddaughter, making as much effort as she could to lighten the mood for the girl's sake. 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. Deed flinched. "No reason. But I sure never did mean you or your husband any harm, Mrs. Lampion. And not your baby, either, not little Bartholomew." In spite of the urgency of his desire, he followed a circuitous route to Victorial'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. Off the hard surfaces of cabinets, refrigerator, and ovens, the twin reports crashed and rattled. The windowpanes briefly thrummed. Her name was Victoria Bressler, and she was an attractive blonde. She would never have been serious competition for Naomi, because Naomi had been singularly stunning, but Naomi, after all, was gone. "But you don't understand." She recounted the extraordinary draw of aces during the fortune-telling session Friday evening. His mouth was dry when he said to Angel, "Well, it seems pretty magical to me--that flipped-coin trick." "They've gone to bed. They're tired," Wally told her as he put the car in gear and released the hand brake. "Aren't you?" I was hoping you might know," said Edom, studying the collar of Jacob's green flannel shirt. Three minutes by car, maybe two without stop signs. He could just about run it as fast as drive it. He had a bit of a gut on him. He wasn't the man he used to be. Ironically, however, after the coma and the rehab, he wasn't as heavy as he had been before Cain sunk him in Quarry Lake. If the ace of diamonds, in quartet, must be taken seriously, then why not the rest of the draw? Tuesday, January 9, having cashed out a number of investments during the past ten days, Junior made a wire transfer of one and a half million dollars to the Gammoner account in the Grand Cayman bank. "I really am sorry about this," Junior said, regretting the necessity to deny her the right to look good at her own funeral, "but it's got to appear to be a crime of passion." "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." Since discovering the quarter in his cheeseburger, Junior had been half convinced that the maniac cop survived the bludgeoning. In spite of his grievous wounds, perhaps Vanadium had swum up through a hundred feet of murky water, barely avoiding being drowned. "--and we're from different worlds, which I respect. I respect you and your wonderful family ... your centeredness, your certainty. I want to do this only because it's what I owe you." The night was holding its breath again, the previous breeze now pent up in the breast of darkness. 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. "With this money, you won't have to cut back on the number of pies you give away--and all of that." Once he had toured the exhibition, managing not to shudder openly, he tried to hang out within hearing distance of Celestina White, but without appearing to be listening with special intensity. Junior would have liked to pursue spiritual matters with Sklent, but numerous other partyers wanted their time with the great man. In parting, sure that he would give the artist a laugh, Junior withdrew the brochure for "This Momentous Day" from his jacket and coyly asked for an opinion of Celestina White's paintings. Besides, even before he had fully turned on his charm, before he had shown her that a ride on the Junior Cain love machine would make other men seem forever inadequate, Renee was so hot for him that it might have been wise to open a bottle of champagne to douse her when

spontaneous combustion destroyed her Chanel suit..During the drive, he alternated between great gales of delighted laughter and racking sobs wrought by pain and self-pity. The voodoo Baptist was dead, the curse broken with the death of he who had cast it. Yet Junior must endure this final devastating plague..Sitting up in bed, he passed a little time reading favorite, marked passages in Zedd's You Are the World. The book presented a brilliant argument that selfishness was the most misunderstood, moral, rational, and courageous of all human motivations..As he raced into the future, the past caught up with him in the form of intestinal spasms, and by the time that he had driven only three miles, whimpering like a sick dog, he made an emergency stop at a service station to use the rest room..Again he fired into the lock, squeezed the trigger a second time, and discovered that no rounds remained in the magazine. Extra cartridges were distributed in his pockets.. "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 already told you-anything in your heart is as easy to read as the open page of a book.. "I'll teach her," Wally said, moving past them to the apartment door, fishing a ring of keys out of his coat pocket..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..He also sought a supplier of high-quality counterfeit ID. This proved easier than he anticipated..She lived with her parents then. They had converted the dining room to a bedroom for her..What might have become a waiting game of epic duration was ended when the door to the room swung inward, and a doctor in a white lab coat entered from the corridor. He was backlit by fluorescent glare, his face in shadow, like a figure in a dream..He phoned her before leaving, to be sure she was home. She didn't work weekend shifts at the hospital; but maybe she would have gone out on this night off. When she answered, he recognized her seductive voice-and devilishly muttered, "Wrong number.. "Up flew his hands, as white as doves, flapping as though trying to escape from the sleeves of his raincoat, as if he were a magician rather than a musician..Neddy favored a quick greeting, two curt pumps, but Junior held fast after the handshake was over. He didn't grind the musician's knuckles, nothing so crude, just held on pleasantly but firmly. His intention was to confuse and further rattle the man, taking advantage of his obvious dislike of having his personal space encroached upon, in the hope that Neddy would reveal why he'd been watching Junior so intently from across the room..The glimmering bay and the shimmering amber candlelight provided the perfect atmosphere for the song that arose now from the piano in the bar.. "No. It's, stopped. The thing now is to prevent a recurrence of the emesis, which could trigger more bleeding. He's getting antinausea medication and replacement electrolytes intravenously, and we've applied ice bags to his midsection to reduce the chance of further abdominal-muscle spasms and to help control inflammation.. "stubbornly withholds them is to take a bitterly cold shower while pressing ice against one's genitals, until the desired facts are recalled or hypothermic collapse ensues..yuhn," so she nodded as vigorously as she was able to do, and tightened her grip on Celestina's hand.. "It isn't just the rotten railing," Junior said, still paging through the report, his outrage growing. "The stairs are unsafe.. "A wonderful wedding," Celestina promised her, taking a pair of pajamas from a dresser drawer..too quiet and too patient to be the living-dead incarnation of a murdered wife. This was a predatory silence, an animal cunning, not a supernatural hush. This was the elegant stillness of a panther in the brush..Already, he was up two hours past his bedtime. In recent months, he'd exhibited the more erratic sleeping habits of older children. Some nights, he seemed to possess the circadian rhythms of owls and bats; after being sluggish all day, he suddenly became alert and energetic at dusk wanting to read long past midnight..A mutual interest in ballroom dancing had resulted in their introduction when each needed a new partner for a fox-trot and swing competition. Nolly had started taking lessons five years before he had met Kathleen..He smiled ruefully. "Might be ready for a wedding by then, but not a honeymoon.. "If their relationship had not been limited to a single evening of passion, if they had not been of two worlds, if she had not been underage and therefore jailbait, they might have had an open romance, and then her death would have touched him more deeply.. "Jacob scares people," Agnes said. "No one would eat a pie that Jacob delivered without having it tested at a lab.. "Barty wore elfin-size, knitted blue pajamas complete with feet, white rickrack at the cuffs and neckline, and a matching cap. His white blanket was decorated with blue and yellow bunnies..Not that she ever gave any indication that her brothers were other than a source of pride for her. She treated them always with respect, tenderness, and love-as if unaware of their shortcomings.

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