

10.

I did not hear what the eldest monk said, but I saw his mouth lower to Anthony's right ear, and I saw the mouth move. Anthony's eyes rose to meet the monk's. They stayed there until the monk turned and left down the darkened hallway.

Yellow calendula staining my fingers.

He pushed himself back from the table, upsetting the tinctures. His robes around his body in a noisy vortex.

His light made a candle unnecessary.

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The bell tower housed sea gulls who circled and cried when I disturbed them. The coronas turned to look, to watch the white bodies in the sky, to see what could have woken them.

He again started into the cedars, down the path that he had worn to the stream that fed into the ocean. And then the coronas were moving separately from his body-- the triangle skipping across the surface of the stream. It bounced twice before spinning and sinking into the current. He tried again with the circle and got four skips before the light sunk and traveled downstream.

The two points of light moved with the dark water and were out of sight. I stood on the railing to look towards the ocean, to see if I could catch them merge into that body. My hand slipped, and I struck the bell with my full weight.

The old clapper rang against the metal and I felt it through my teeth, conducting through my blood into the hollows of my chest.

I felt sound opening silence, peeling it back again and again as it announced my frailty.