

*Owl Man and Heron Man consider the wider implications of “Sal’s Story” ...*

Owl Man put the first sheaf of papers down on the bench, then glanced up at a seagull whirling overhead. Judging from the sound of its call, the gull was complaining bitterly about some injustice, whether avian or marine or otherwise, was not clear.

“Well?” said Heron Man.

“Wow,” said Owl Man, taking a deep breath. “I had no idea we were getting into something this complex.”

“Neither did I,” replied Heron Man. “Maybe you should keep reading, in case you’d like to back out while you still can.”

“Oh, I think I’m good for another round of reading, at least,” said the Owl, “though there’s no telling what shape I’ll be in when we’re done with the actualities—whenever and whatever that might be.”

“I know what you mean,” said the Heron. “Just read on, and tell me what you think.”

So the Owl looked at his watch—10:29 AM—and followed the Heron’s suggestion, continuing to read the next stack of research papers.

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