

The girl who

From psychiatrists' files comes a case unrivaled by the most imaginative fiction:

By CURTIS MITCHELL

EDDIE WAITKUS had no business going to the girl's room alone that midnight in June, 1949, but there was the urgent and mysterious note he had found on his dresser: "It's important that I see you as soon as possible... I think it would be to your advantage to let me explain it to you."

He took an elevator to the 12th floor and walked hesitantly to Room 1297A. He knocked and heard footsteps. When the door opened, he saw that she was tall, slim, and very pale. Her eyes, as he stepped past her into the room, flashed with annoyance.

"I've got a surprise for you," she said, striding toward the closet. Then she turned swiftly, pointing a .22 rifle at him, and said, "For two years, you've been bothering me, and now you're going to die."

It's a joke, he thought. Maybe the fellows are pulling a rib. He said, "What goes on here?"

The bullet hit his chest, tore through the right lung, and lodged near the spine. He fell, crying, "Baby, what did you do that for?"

Hours later, the American baseball public was

asking the same question, and so were two psychiatrists in the Behavior Clinic of the Criminal Court of Cook County, Ill., Dr. William H. Haines, director, and Dr. Robert A. Esser, his assistant.

To them, Ruth Steinhagen, 19-year-old typist for a Chicago firm, tried to explain her attack:

"I'm sorry Eddie has to suffer so, but I had to shoot somebody. He reminded me of my father. Since I shot Eddie, I feel more consoled and relieved than ever before in my life."

Her answer led to another query: was Ruth sane or insane? Could she be tried under Illinois law?

Psychiatrists Haines and Esser, public servants as well as physicians, had to find out. They began to question her in the gloomy Cook County jail. Conditions were hardly the best. Chicago newspapers made a field day of the event, filling their pages with her pictures. "I've never been so happy in my life," she announced.

Meanwhile, Eddie Waitkus had to endure two operations to remove the bullet from his lung. He

The girl was a stranger to him and much too young to handle a rifle: as the pain ripped Eddie's body, his mind kept on asking, "Why?"

