

To Kiss, or Kill

By DAY KEENE

(AP Wirephotos)

CHAPTER 7

"Your family name wasn't always Mandell, was it?" Curtis asked.

"No. The old man changed it."

"When?"

"When he first came to this country. Long before I was born."

"What was the family name in Poland?"

Mandell grinned. "You couldn't even pronounce it. It was Mancochok. But the old man simplified it. Like we see Poland instead of Baecoposolika Polska."

"But it used to be Mancochok. I know. I've seen it on letters from Pa's brother."

"A brother named Vladimir?"

"That's right."

Curtis consulted a mental file. "Born in Gdansk in 1887 and married to Sofia Bjeia, a Czech, in 1922. He blew smoke at the ceiling. One-time professor of advanced physics at the University of Sorbonne. Emigrated to Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 1943, where he opened his own consulting laboratory. Deceased as of September 14, 1947, a widower without issue."

Mandell was apologetic. "I didn't even know he was dead. We kind of lost track of him during the war." He leaned forward in his chair. "But how come you know so much about my uncle Vladimir? What's he got to do with springing me?"

"We'll come to that."

"There was something vaguely familiar about the other man's voice. Then Mandell realized what it was. A weight. He'd felt the same weight before. Many times. Mostly, he'd felt it at night, lying alone after Lights Out had sounded, or crouched alongside a half-track, listening to the heavy stuff in the distance. Knowing that whatever happened to Barney Mandell was up to the eagle perched on his chest.

"You're a fed," he accused.

Curtis smiled. "That's right."

"F.B.I."

"No. Treasury Department."

"What's the government want of me? I pay my tax."

Curtis nodded. "A lot of tax, Barney. But this isn't exactly a tax matter."

"Then what is it?"

"I lit a cigarette from the butt of the one he was smoking. Right now, let's say we're being trying to contact you for some time."

"I haven't been hiding."

"We know where you were all the time. But only to some rather clever rascal—damned, we didn't know who you were," Curtis shrugged. "There are, after all, some three million people of Polish extraction in this country, and it seems that your father didn't bother to legalize his change of name."

"No. I don't think he did," Mandell said.

It was hot in the small office. He wished Curtis would make his point and let him go to Gales. None of this meant to say anything to do with the dead blonde.

Curtis opened the drawer of his desk and took out a Polish-language paper printed in Chicago. "Ever read this, Barney?"

Mandell snook his head. "No. I can't take a little, but that's all."

"I see," Curtis said. He put the paper back in the drawer. "How do you feel about this country, Barney?"

Mandell smelled the witted carnation on his lapel. It was still faintly fragrant. "How do you mean, how I feel about this country? It's my country, I live it."

Curtis nodded. "Yes. I think that can be assumed. Up until this late unpleasantness concerning Cherry Marvin, you've been a good citizen. You have an excellent war record. You never made better than pic, but you earned an infantryman's combat badge, a bronze and silver star, three battle stars, and a Purple Heart. That right?"

Mandell took a cigarette from the package on the desk, but instead

of lighting it he shrank it between his fingers. "That's right." "On your separation from the service, you resumed your ring career and did well. You fought all the men of your weight and compiled an impressive list of knock-outs."

"Not all the men of my weight," Mandell corrected him.

"No," Curtis agreed. "You were angling for a go at the title when you had yourself committed to a mental institution. Mind telling me why, Barney?"

"I'd rather not," Mandell said. His feeling of uneasiness returned. He wiped his hands on his trousers. "Look. How come you guys know so much about what? How come you bail me out? What's this all about?"

Curtis pushed back his chair and stood up. He walked to the dawn-dulled window. An el train was passing. He watched it into the next station before he spoke. "About a lot of money, Barney."

"That's for me," Mandell said. Turning, Curtis said on the sill and looked at Mandell thoughtfully. "And about something even more important than money."

"There's nothing more important than money. I know. I was born back of the yards. My old man didn't make much. After he died, it got worse. I went hungry when I was a kid. I saw my mother go hungry. I saw her go without a warm coat all winter. Go without a lot of things. That's why I got into the fight game. So I got my brains beat in. So what's it's the only quick-money business open to a guy who's none too bright to begin with. But it's bright enough to want to stay on the right side of the law. Now, Doc's give me that. There's nothing more important than money."

Curtis laid the cigarette on the sill and stood up. "I hope—"

He spoke the two words and stopped. Mandell heard the door behind him open. He had a blur-impresion of Mr. Curtis' right hand disappearing under his coat lapel. Then the ceiling light went out and Curtis was shouting:

STEVE ROPER



FOGO



ORPHAN ANNIE



LIL ARNER



HOPALONG CASSIDY



MUTT & JEFF



REX MORGAN, M. D.



DONALD DUCK



MARY WORTH



RADIO PROGRAMS

Table listing radio programs for Thursday and Friday, including stations like KGW, KOIN, KEX, KSLM, and KGAE, with program titles and times.

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FRIDAY—6 A.M. TO 11:45 A.M. listing various radio programs.

FM Reg.: KOIN 10 11, 5 a.m. to 12 p.m. KEX 96.3, 9 to 9 p.m. KOAC listing for Thursday and Friday.

Hubbard

Hubbard—Graduation exercises at North Marion Union high school for 35 expected graduates will feature Dr. Walter Giersbach of Forest Grove as speaker.

TOLLS REDUCED

Olympia, Wash. (AP)—The State Toll Bridge Authority Tuesday approved a 15-cent reduction in car and passenger fares over the Longview toll bridge.

Crossword Puzzle

Crossword puzzle clues: 1. Dry, 2. Agreement, 3. Entertain, 4. Constellation, 5. Soft mineral, 6. Cotton gourd, 7. Beard of sandals, 8. Dose, 9. Blur, 10. Singing voice, 11. Patch, 12. Emphatic, 13. Proved to be untrue, 14. Completely, 15. Catlike, 16. Puzzling situation, 17. 36. Outfit, 18. Straighten, 19. Roving implement, 20. Elocutionist, 21. Eloquent speech, 22. Entertainment, 23. Soft mineral, 24. Beard of sandals, 25. Dose, 26. Blur, 27. Singing voice, 28. Patch, 29. Emphatic, 30. Proved to be untrue, 31. Completely, 32. Catlike, 33. Puzzling situation, 34. Old Italian, 35. Period of time, 36. Outfit, 37. Straighten, 38. Roving implement, 39. Elocutionist, 40. Eloquent speech, 41. Entertainment, 42. Soft mineral, 43. Beard of sandals, 44. Dose, 45. Blur, 46. Singing voice, 47. Patch, 48. Emphatic, 49. Proved to be untrue, 50. Completely, 51. Catlike, 52. Puzzling situation, 53. Old Italian, 54. Period of time, 55. Outfit, 56. Straighten, 57. Roving implement, 58. Mad, 59. City in Algeria, 60. Good buy, 61. Silkworm, 62. Author unknown, 63. Rave, 64. Monkey, 65. Not wholesome, 66. Philippine article of clothing, 67. Mohammedan prince, 68. Residences of diplomats, 69. Dime, 70. Clamor, 71. Sail support, 72. Surface, 73. Finder, 74. Mountain lake, 75. Active, 76. Passaway, 77. 40. Active, 78. Factual, 79. Animal food, 80. Dined, 81. Complete, 82. Old musical note, 83. Biblical character.

Advertisement for a dress (No. 2924) with a large illustration of a woman wearing it.

Advertisement for 'MAKE WORK EASIER!' featuring a cartoon owl and a product illustration.

Advertisement for Wrigley's Spearmint Gum with the slogan 'A help on the job'.

Advertisement for 'ROOM & BOARD' by Ahren, featuring a cartoon illustration of a man and a woman.