

MADE UP TO KILL

by Kelley Ross

Chapter 35

The Fire

"SEVEN people were killed in the fire," Jeff said, "six of the audience and one member of the company... the juvenile. His body was found in his dressing room. And they found the door to that dressing room locked... from the outside. There was an inquest, of course, and the coroner's verdict was death by some person or persons unknown. There wasn't a scrap of evidence, there never was, and the case went unsolved. But it could have been solved. There was a witness. Eve North saw Clint Bowers lock that door."

"But, Jeff, why? Why did he do it?"

"He was rather reticent about the motive. It involved a woman who is still living. No one knew about that woman and Clint Bowers but the juvenile. He tried blackmail... he worked on both of them, and when neither could meet his demands he threatened exposure. And he meant it."

"Bowers never thought of killing to protect himself and the woman. He wasn't a murderer... not in those days. He thought there was no way out."

"But, then, between the acts that night, a fire broke out in the theater. It was none of Bowers' doing. A short behind the switchboard caused it. No one person could actually be blamed. The flames swept through the draperies and scenery and in a moment the place was filled with overpowering smoke."

"Bowers slipped a wet cloth across his face and rushed to the dressing room. He found no one in any of them until he reached the top floor. And there he found his blackmailing friend groping hysterically for his door. In trying to save his wardrobe, apparently, he had waited a moment too long; the smoke had got him."

"Bowers took one step toward him and stopped. If, instead of leading him to safety, he shut the door and turned the key! The flames were gaining headway; the entire theater would surely be demolished. No one would ever know that the door had been locked. No one would have seen him do it. So Clint Bowers turned the key... and rushed out of the theater."

"He was wrong on both points, of course. Eve North, trapped in her dressing room at the other end of the hall, had seen him turn the key before she slipped into unconsciousness, overcome by the smoke. Bowers hadn't seen her, hadn't heard her gasp for help."

"And consequently Eve was left to burn... almost to death. The firemen got to her in time, but they didn't get to the juvenile until it was too late. And they did discover that the door had been locked."

Next Egg

"I DON'T know if Eve ever killed the boy. But that didn't matter. She didn't have to present the police with a motive to have Bowers hanged. She had plenty; she had been an eyewitness to the murder. But Eve never talked. Perhaps her own tragedy kept her quiet. Or perhaps, even then, she was saving her knowledge for a little nest egg."

Jeff stopped long enough to beckon the waiter. "I've got to have another drink; my throat's parched. That damn fire." He asked for another brandy and a large glass of water. "Now where was I?" he asked. "I wasn't listening to myself."

"Eve knew Bowers had killed a man and she kept quiet." "When she got out of the hospital, despite her scarred back"

and arms that so few knew about she took up her career again. She became famous and wealthy, the darling of the early twenties. Then she started slipping, her looks were going, her youth fading, and she wasn't a good enough actress. She was down, out."

"Poor Eve."

"Yeah, poor Eve, she had to resort to blackmail a very early type of blackmail. By then Bowers was the white-haired boy of the American theater. She simply said to him, 'You produce for me, darling; star me, or else the whole world will know what young man locked another young man in his dressing room in the Detroit theater fire. What could he do?'"

"He could produce for her."

"Exactly. He produced for her and starred her, and ruined himself financially and artistically. It must have torn him to pieces to do all those bedroom comedies and bad French translations after all the beautiful stuff he had been producing. It ripped him to shreds. The theater was his life. Some people let that happen to their lives. Why, Halia?"

"Go on, darling."

The Limit

"WELL, finally it got him. It was either Eve or he. Rather selfishly he decided it would be Eve. He just told us that he looked for a play for two years that would give him a chance to kill her. Finally he found Green Apples. It was perfect. It had a drinking scene exactly in the right place. But Phoebe Thompson forgot to put the flowers on the table. Eve, the trouper, rearranged the glasses instead of the flowers, and Carol, not Eve, got the poison."

"Bowers dropped the poison into Eve's glass just before the curtain went up on the third act. And what he must have gone through when Carol got it... and when the play turned out to be a hit! He told us if Eve hadn't figured out the poison was meant for her, he would have let her live, because Green Apples would've made enough money to put him back where he could produce other plays, too, the kind he wanted to do."

"I suddenly remembered. 'When you went in to talk to Eve between the acts the second night of the theater...'"

"Yeah, that was the first time Eve heard about the poisoning." "And Clint was in the hall; he heard you and Eve; he realized then that..."

Jeff nodded. "Right. When I asked her why she had been fussing around the table, she knew that she had changed the glasses, given Carol the poison that was meant for her. She knew then that Bowers was out to get rid of her."

"Why didn't she run? For her life?"

"I don't know," Jeff said. "The shock. She thought she was protecting the twenty people backstage. She couldn't imagine any way that Bowers could have her dead within thirty minutes. She couldn't believe that he would dare strike again so soon, or at the theater again."

"And when the places were called, she took her place on stage as she had been doing for twenty-five years. Then Bowers watched for his chance. His first attack had been planned for months. This had to be one of the moments."

"That chance came at Eve's first exit in the second act—and everything worked into Bowers' hands. Eve, waiting there in the wings for her next entrance leaned up against the scenery and the paint came off on her jacket. She whipped it off to look at it after she realized what she had done."

To be continued

On the Radio Chains

STATIONS:

Where to find them on the dial:
KEX, 1190, Portland; KFI, 640, Los Angeles; KGA, 1310, Spokane; KGO, 810, San Francisco; KGW, 530, Portland; KJR, 1000, Seattle; KNN, 1070, Los Angeles; KOA, 830, Denver; KOIN, 970, Portland; KOMO, 890, Seattle; KPO, 630, San Francisco; KSL, 1160, Salt Lake.

Time shown is PST

Friday

8:00 p. m.—Janet Jordan, KGO, KJR, KEX, Wala Time, KPO, KOMO, KGW, Boulevard Interviews, KNX, Eyes of the World, KOIN, Americana, KSL.

8:30 p. m.—News, Here and Abroad, KGO, KJR, KEX, Uncle Walter's Dog House, KPO, KGW, KOMO, Hollywood Premiere, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

9:00 p. m.—Pan-American, Union Concert, KGO, KEX, Penthouse Party, KSL, KNX, KOIN; Wings of Destiny, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Scandinavian News, KJR.

9:30 p. m.—Listen, America, KPO, KGO, KJR, KEX, Burt Ives, KNX, KSL, KOIN; First Piano Quartet, KGO, KEX; Comedy, KOMO.

10:00 p. m.—Fred Waring, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Johnny Long's Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR; Amos 'n' Andy, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Dance Time, KJR.

10:30 p. m.—Death Valley Days, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Great Moments

From Great Plays, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Vox Pop, KGO, KEX, KJR.

8:00 p. m.—Will Osborne's Orch., KPO, KGW; Grandpoppy and His

Pala, KGO, KJR, KEX; Claudia, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Fish Finder, KOMO.

8:30 p. m.—Woody Herman's Orch., KGO, KJR; You and Your Bank,

KPO; Baseball Game, KEX; Fort

Lewis News, KGW; Chapel Music,

KNX; Fort Lewis Life, KOMO; Lead-

ers of the West, KSL.

9:00 p. m.—West Orch., KGO,

KJR; Bill Clifford's Orch., KPO; Paul

Sullivan, KNX; Frontiers of Indus-

try, KGW; Leon F. Drews, KOIN;

Highlight Hour, KOMO; Symphonic

Serenade, KSL.

9:30 p. m.—Weekly Spectator, KPO,

KGO, KOMO, Bill Henry, KNX,

KOIN; Emile Pettit's Orch., KGO;

News, KSL, KJR.

10:00 p. m.—Reporter News, KPO,

KOMO, KGW; Jay Burnett, KGO,

KJR; Bob Crosby's Orch., KNX,

News, KOIN.

10:30 p. m.—Neil Bondah's Orch.,

KGO, KGW, KOMO; Matty Mainek's

Orch., KJR; The World Today, KOIN,

KSL; Concert Hall, KPO; Broadway

Bandwagon, KEX; Masterworks of

Music, KNX; Behind the Headlines,

KEX.

11:00 p. m.—Woody Herman's Orch.,

KPO, KOMO, KGW; This Moving

World, KEX; News, KGO, KNX; Fish-

ing News, KJR.

Musovy was a former name for

Russia.

THE WORLD AT ITS WORST

GLUYAS WILLIAMS

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WORLD GIRDLING

HOUND IS DEAD

Kansas City, Sept. 5.—(P)—

Jerry, a hitch-hiking hound that

made the navy for three trips

around the world, is dead.

Chief Petty Officer Harold

Maxey found Jerry on the docks

at San Francisco and took him

aboard the U. S. S. Mississippi.

Months later a visiting admiral

came aboard at the end of a

globe-girdling cruise.

"That dog's been around the

world," they told him.

He looked closely at Jerry.

"Um-hmm, twice with me."

Jerry retired to Kansas City

with his master and spent his

last years chasing stray dogs

and burglars from the 3800

block on Wabash. Twice he rout-

ed prowlers and his toothless old

age found his appetite for a good

dogfight undiminished.

He died a martyr to his taste

for travel—an overland trip to

California proved too much.

LOW BID LITTLE

BUTTE ROAD TOLD

Portland, Sept. 5.—(P)—De-

fense priorities are creating a

serious obstacle to Oregon's

der.

Contractors complained that

they were experiencing more

and more difficulty in obtaining

materials. The uncertainty of

bidders resulted in A. S. Wal-

lace, Roseburg contractor, being

low on six of 12 jobs and in sev-

eral instances being the sole bid-

der.

Low highway bids included:

Jackson—Surfacing and oiling

4.07 miles of the Salt Creek

Hanley Ranch section, Little

Butte secondary highway, Nor-

ris Brothers, Seattle, \$48,860.

Patriotic Names

Steubenville, O. (UP)—The list of

new Jefferson county draft regis-

trants includes the names of John

Pershing Devore and George Wash-

ington Greco.

highway program, the state

highway commission learned to-

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