

# Butterfly of Death

By HAROLD GLUCK

It sounded like a bad joke, at first, but then the murder attempts started. And Joe Delaney found that he was likely to end up as the victim in a true detective mystery—a lot like the stories he edited. And the cops thought it was just a publicity gag!

ON THAT particular Friday evening I was exceedingly tired. Working for Frank Parker, of Parker Publications, wasn't exactly the type of work in which you could take it easy. My job was to edit three of his magazines, *Detective Adventures*, *Science and Crime* and *Private Eye*. It meant spending hours reading all kinds of manuscripts, good, bad, and indifferent. Which all accounted for the fact that at about 7:30 I tried to relax in the easy chair that faced the street, in the living room of my apartment on East 53rd Street.

I closed my eyes to get some kind of relief. The meal I had eaten at Luigi's was light; there were thousands of little round red dots dancing around my two eyeballs. I opened both eyes as though to chase them away; it was futile.

The phone rang twice. "Odd" was the only comment I made to myself; I had a private, unlisted, number—known only to my editor, the printer, and my personal physician. Not once had my phone rung during the past year. I arose, went over to my desk, and lifted the receiver from the hook.

A muffled voice asked, "Joe Delaney?"

Mechanically I replied, "Yes, who is this and what do you wish?"

A queer kind of a chuckle hit my eardrum. "You're Joe Delaney," repeated the voice, and then it added, "So you think you can take my little Butterfly away from me and nothing will happen to you?"



I knew I was marked . . .

Remember, I was tired and that accounted for the fact my brain cells failed to react quickly. Something had to be said and I went searching for words. Then I found them. "What kind of a trick is this?" was what finally came from my lips.

"This isn't a gag," was the reply. "I'm going to make your life a living hell, just like you made mine. And don't think I'm kidding; you're going to be tortured and when you have suffered enough, then I'll kill you."

Nice words to hear over a phone. I was getting back to myself and trying to think a mile a second. "There are lots of Joe Delaneys in the phone book," I protested; "You got the wrong one."

"No," was the reply, "I got the right one. The one who works as an editor at Parker Publications and thinks in his spare time he

can play around with my wife. You damaged my butterfly; I'm going to damage you."

This was getting on what was left of my nerves. "I'm going to hang up now," I shouted through the mouthpiece of the phone.

"Still think I'm kidding," the voice continued. "I'll show you I'm not bluffing. Wait fifteen minutes, then walk down on the east side of 47th Street, between Ninth and Tenth Avenues, and see what happens. Then you'll know whether this is a joke or the beginning of the end for you, Joe Delaney."

That was all. I heard a little laugh, and then I, too, hung up.

Back I went to my easy chair to try a bit of thinking. *This is all a joke on me. Some fools are having a little celebration and someone who knows me is having fun at my expense.* My inner brain snapped back, *But if you don't take that dare and walk out, you will never know whether it is a joke.*

I arose from my easy chair and looked at my wrist watch. If I walked quickly, I could just make it. When I got downstairs, my heart was beating so rapidly, I realized it would be silly to walk; I hailed a cab and got out at 47th Street and Ninth Avenue. I walked slowly towards Tenth Avenue. As I passed an alley, I turned instinctively, just pressing my head to one side. From somewhere out of the alley, came a baseball, thrown with tremendous force, just missing my skull. It hit against the side of the wall and fell to the ground. I gasped for breath, then came a little unconscious hysterical laughter from my lips.

"Some kids playing baseball," I said to reassure myself.

I picked it up and walked down the alley, looking for the kids, so I could return that ball. Yet I knew deep down in my heart, I wouldn't find any youngsters.

Slowly I walked home, trying to make some sense out of this situation. It wasn't a joke; there actually existed a person who was

determined to torture and eventually kill me. Why? He must be some kind of a nut, who had a mistaken idea that I had played around with his wife; somehow, I had to get hold of that fellow. When I reached my apartment, I sank into that easy chair, completely exhausted. Maybe I slept for an hour or two. But I had a nightmare; I saw an executioner trying to throw stones at me. He missed the first five. Then the sixth hit my head, bounced off and landed on a large bell. I could hear it ring. It rang, rang, and rang.

When my eyes opened, I realized the phone was ringing. Warily I lifted the receiver. "Missed you," said the voice, "but don't worry; I'll get you before the week is over. And don't think you can trace this phone; I'm too smart for you."

That was all. I knew the phone call couldn't be traced; the devil take the new dial phone. And my caller was probably using different pay stations.

SATURDAY morning, instead of playing tennis, I went over to the Fifth Avenue apartment of Frank Parker. His wife, Eleanor, was there at the door to greet me. "Come in, Joe," she said, "What brings you over at this time of the day?" And then, as though she were answering her own question, she added, "Must be very important for you to give up your tennis match, Frank is in the studio, poring over circulation figures, when he should be with me at Atlantic City."

I walked through the living room, into the room on the left, without the formality of knocking. There, seated before a long mahogany desk, was a tremendously tall man, but one who was not a bit ungainly or awkward. He had a narrow, high forehead, and a long thin nose, rather fleshy at the tip. There wasn't much left of his chestnut hair. I don't know what any woman could see in him, except the simple arithmetical fact that his bankroll was in the millions.

“What’s up, Joe?” he asked, as he pointed to a chair at the side of the table. I actually slumped into it.

“Some nut has been making phone calls threatening my life. And last night I was almost beamed on the skull with a baseball when I answered a challenge over the phone to go down and see whether my caller was joking or not. I am going over to the police station to make a formal complaint. The 63rd Precinct station is near my home.

When I finished, Frank looked at me, arose and took hold of both of my shoulders with his hands. “Joe, this is the most wonderful publicity stunt I have ever heard of; it certainly is worthy of you. Go ahead and make a bee-line for the police station. I will run a full page ad in Monday’s papers offering ten thousand dollars for information leading to the arrest and conviction of your unknown enemy. Why, that ought to run circulation figures of the detective magazines into the hundreds of thousands.”

I stroked my chin twice, trying to figure out what to reply.

“Look, Frank, this isn’t a joke. I actually got those calls over the phone. My life is in danger.”

A peculiar smile played over the lips of my boss. “After all, you have read enough manuscripts to know what to do with almost any crime situation. I won’t quarrel with you; let’s say it really did happen. It still will be the best publicity stunt of the year.”

I arose, shrugged my shoulders, and left the room, without waiting to hear a formal good-bye. Eleanor was still in the living room, reading a magazine. I looked at her intensely. She was a beautiful creature, with corn-colored hair, blue eyes, a nose with just a wee bit of an upturn and a smile that could dazzle the hardest of males.

She realized I was studying her carefully, but before she could say anything I asked, “Did anyone ever call you Butterfly?”

“How perfectly charming a question to ask,” she replied. “I have been called lots of names by various people, from those who loved me to those who hated me. But not one of them ever compared me to the butterfly.”

I LEFT the apartment, took the elevator down, then started to walk along Fifth Avenue. Suppose Parker was the man who had called me? From the thousands of detective manuscripts I had read, I knew the proper procedure was to consider anyone and everyone as my potential enemy in this situation. The police would probably laugh at me, once they thought it was a publicity stunt. I would be powerless to convince them it was the real McCoy, until I was dead.

An hour later I was in the 63rd Precinct. The sergeant at the desk sent me upstairs and there in a large room were two men. I spoke to the older one, Detective Ralph Pierson. He was a man in his late forties, with a head of bushy black hair and deep-set brown eyes. Maybe he had been an athlete in his youth, but mother nature now had retaliated and presented him with a large stomach. He asked me my name.

“Francis Geronimo Delaney” was the answer. Then I told him the entire story, omitting nothing. At the other end of the room was a much younger man, with horn-rimmed glasses, bothering himself only to the extent of removing dirt from his fingernails with his pocket knife. But he was taking in every word I said.

When I was finished, Detective Pierson looked at me very carefully. “This is the worst kind of a publicity stunt I ever heard a supposedly sane man create. You got your nerve, even to tell me your boss thought it was tops; get out before I throw you out.”

I didn’t budge an inch. “The law says that when a person makes a complaint in regard to a threat to his life, he is entitled to police protection.”

Detective Pierson snapped right back at me. "And the law also provides that any person who tries to use the machinery of the law for publicity purposes has committed a misdemeanor."

The younger man arose from his seat and came over to where I was. "May I ask him a question, Ralph?"

"Go ahead, suit yourself, Herman. I'm through with this fellow. If he has any complaint to make, he can go down to Center Street. This smells to high heaven."

"I am Detective Herman Butler," said the younger man. "You said your name was Francis Geronimo Delaney; yet the person you claimed who spoke to you over the phone addressed you as 'Joe' Delaney. Why the difference in first names?"

Then it dawned upon me. "Say, you just gave me something of a clue. Only the people down at the office, and a few of my close friends, call me Joe. To the rest of the people who know me, my name is exactly as you have it."

"Any objection if I give up some of my time and see nothing happens to this poor editor?" asked Butler in a rather sarcastic voice.

Pierson laughed, "If you want to play nursemaid to a publicity stunt on your own time, why that's your funeral. If you catch the ghost who has been calling him up it would make departmental history."

In utter disgust I left the room. There was an inward feeling that urged me to tell both of them to go to a warmer region in the portion of this world below the surface.

It was rather delightful outside, and I walked slowly towards my apartment. Perhaps I was absentminded as I crossed Park Avenue on 52nd Street. A woman shouted, "Look out!" and I jumped back to the curb. A black sedan was headed straight for me; then it swerved. I didn't need much intelligence to realize someone behind that wheel was deliberately trying to run me

down. The driver got the car back into the center of the street and stepped on the gas—but not before I had observed that the man behind the wheel had his hat pulled down so he couldn't be recognized. And I knew it was a 1948 black Cadillac sedan with the license number C768-452.

I rushed home and called up the police station asking for Detective Butler. He came to the phone and I told him what had happened, giving him the number of the car. He told me to remain home until he came over to see me.

**M**AYBE IT was three centuries later—that's how long it seemed to me—before he arrived at my apartment, carrying a small leather case which he placed on my table. "It didn't take long to find the owner of that car," he announced with a certain measure of pride.

My eagerness asserted itself, "Who's the guilty party?"

Butler laughed. "The car belongs to your boss; he said he left it in front of his house. We found it around the corner with a damaged fender."

I know exactly what was in Butler's mind. "Guess that means you still think the entire set-up is a publicity stunt."

"Could be, could be," was his retort. "However your boss did agree to drop any idea of capitalizing upon what you have, so far, claimed to be attempts on your life. He isn't going to run any full page ad in the newspapers; I read him the riot act about that. Meanwhile, I am going to keep you company until another telephone call comes across. I have a tape recorder outfit with me; there is a tiny microphone that can be attached to the receiver of your phone and it will record every word coming in. So let's just sit tight till the phone jingles."

It was most annoying to watch that officer of the law sit so comfortably in one of my chairs. According to all the rules of

fiction he should either have been upset or finding relief in a couple of highballs. Instead he merely placed the fingertips of his right hand against those of his left hand and looked up at the ceiling.

I just couldn't sit still. Once he remarked, "If you keep that up, you'll land in the nut-house within a week."

I was going to snap back that, after all, it was my life at stake, but on second thought I said nothing. The bell rang, and he signaled me to answer. I lifted the receiver to my ear, and he adjusted the tape recorder.

It was the same voice at the other end, "Hello, Joe; sorry I missed you with the car. That fool woman ruined everything; almost made me crash. But don't worry; I'll get you before the next week end comes around. Hope you are suffering and going to pieces."

That was all. I hung up the receiver and Butler started the recorder. I could hear every word over, and when finished he looked like a man possessed with a single idea. "Get your hat," he ordered. "My car is outside. We are going up to see a friend of mine—Professor Hubert Musterman, who lives at 116th Street and the Drive. He's one of the best analysis men in the country."

**D**OWN WE went and he opened the door of his rather old coupe. He entered and I followed. For five minutes nothing was said, then I began, "Mind if I ask some questions?"

"Go right ahead," he replied, "Get them out of your system if it will make you feel any better."

"Number one," I began, "Did you dust the car for fingerprints?"

He took his eyes off traffic momentarily to give me a "drop-dead" look. "That's what you get for living in a world of detective fiction. The man who drove that car, if he did exist, wore gloves. There were several messes of what once had been finger contacts with the door, but utterly useless."

He had made it quite evident he still doubted me. Might as well come right to the point. "If you don't believe that all this is on the level, why are you bothering with the case?"

He didn't bother to look at me as he replied, "My father was the late Nelson Butler. Died some five years ago. Guess the name doesn't mean much to you. My father was arrested and convicted for forging four checks on the Third National bank. He spent three years in Sing Sing; not a soul would believe he was innocent. I was a kid then, but my mother worked herself to the bone to get funds to fight for my father's freedom.

"Finally a plain flatfoot believed she might be right; somewhere in this country there was a man who was my father's double. The man was finally arrested in Los Angeles, confessed everything, and my father was freed. The state at least had enough decency to compensate him financially for the wrong it had done to him. It was his wish that I dedicate my life to preventing injury to the innocent. That's how I became a detective; and for your information, the flatfoot is now Detective Pierson, my best friend."

I wanted to ask also whether he was on the case officially, but I just let that go. When we came to 116th Street, he parked the car around the corner, and we went up to see the Professor. He lived in a penthouse all by himself.

He must have been expecting both of us for he looked at me and said, "Ah, that must be the editor in search of a crime."

I couldn't help laughing. The professor looked more like a retired businessman, weighing about 230 pounds, with a full head of light grey hair; and a pair of real friendly brown eyes.

"I have the voice on the tape recorder," explained Butler, "you give me your verdict."

He played it once and the professor

motioned for a re-play. This went on for six consecutive times.

"Your voice is speaking through a handkerchief," declared the Professor, "and he is also doing his best to disguise the voice. That means it is someone close to Mr. Delaney—someone whom Mr. Delaney hears frequently, and would recognize at once. The man probably once lived in New England and also spent some time in the Middle West. The voice also has a nasal quality to it which means either the speaker has trouble with his adenoids or can handle French with ease."

I had to put my two cents in. "Professor," I asked, "I notice you refer to the owner of the voice as a man. Why couldn't it be a female?"

All I get in response was another of those "drop-dead" looks that probably are very destructive in a classroom. Then realizing that he had before him, not a student, but a potential murder victim, he hastened to explain, "While the range of tone is within the frequency used by a woman, its quality is definitely masculine."

**D**ETEKTIVE Butler now asked for advice, "What's my next step?" The Professor opened a box on his table. From it he took a small purple flower which he inserted in Butler's coat lapel. Then he connected a small wire which he then hooked up to an outfit that resembled a hearing device. "You can use this Mitone recorder," he suggested in no uncertain terms. "It will run for twenty minutes, then you can insert another reel. Listen to all your suspects. All I need is about five or six sentences from each; then I can compare with the voice on your recorder. Maybe it will help, though I can't guarantee results. The microphone in the flower will pick up any voice within fifteen feet from yourself."

We both thanked him for his interest in the case.

I must admit I was sort of glad when we landed back in Butler's car. "You know," I said, "In all my excitement, I forgot about the simple necessary fact that a human being must have food. On our way home we will pass Luigi's and there you can eat the best plate of spaghetti in town."

When we entered the restaurant, the red-haired cashier signaled to me. "Good evening, Mr. Delaney, there is a little package here for you. Haven't any idea how it got here, but I found it on the side of my cash register when I took over at 6 this evening."

I thanked her and she handed me a small box, about 4 inches by 2, wrapped in brown paper, sealed with two rubber bands; it had my name on it, very carefully printed. Butler followed me to a booth in the back of the restaurant. We sat down and I opened the box. Then I turned a sickly pale white. He looked at its contents—there was a butterfly in it with a broken wing.

"Now comes the play on your nerves," was all he said. "Put it away and let's eat."

I would have had to be made of iron to have digested my meal. Luigi came over midway between my coffee and cigar. "Meet Herman Butler, Luigi," I said. The two men shook hands, and Luigi sat down.

Butler said something merely to make conversation. "Learn how to cook in Italy?" Luigi laughed. "I was born in Sweden," he explained. "My grandfather went there in the early 1870's. When I came to this country, all I could speak was Swedish and French. I have learned Italian since by the simple trick of listening to a set of language records."

Butler looked at his wrist watch. "The hour's getting late. We better start back now."

Before we left Luigi handed me an envelope. When we were outside the restaurant, Butler turned to me. "How stupid, we forgot to pay our bill."

"Not at all," I disclosed; "you see I have

a half interest in the restaurant. Inside the envelope is a check for this month's profit."

When we got into the car Butler asked, "If it's not too personal, how does an editor become a partner in an Italian restaurant run by a Swede?"

"Nothing mysterious," I began. "You see, it all started in the days of the depression back in the '30's. Luigi was broke; I gave him three thousand dollars to open a small place. It prospered until he opened this restaurant and my return was the half interest."

Then my tongue froze in my mouth. My eyes almost popped out as I remembered something.

"Hey, what's wrong—poisoned? Or did you swallow your tongue?"

"I just remembered something terrible," I confessed. "You see the partnership agreement contains a clause that in case of death of either partner, the survivor gets the entire business and also the sum of \$25,000—which would result from a partnership policy we took out."

"That makes Luigi on par with your boss as a possible suspect," was the only comment I got from Butler. "Don't worry, I got a recording of his voice on the Mitone recorder. I am going to take you directly to your apartment, then go home for some sleep."

He rode up silently with me on the elevator. I took my key case from my pocket and inserted the key in the lock. As I opened in the door, I heard something snap. Detective Butler threw his body against mine, and we both went down in a heap, as a sawed-off shotgun missed me with a scattering hail of buckshot.

**W**HEN I recovered consciousness, Butler was standing over me and a doctor was bandaging my hand. "It's not serious," said the doctor, "your hand was just

grazed by some of those buckshot. Don't use it for a few days and it will be o. k."

My eyes spoke that I wanted the puzzle cleared up.

"Your voice almost got you this time; he rigged up a sawed-off shot gun connected to a mouse trap. When you opened the door you pulled the string that set off the mouse trap. That in turn pulled another string which pulled the trigger of the shot gun. He rigged that gun up with a clamp on your table. I just got a glimpse of the barrel and we made it by a split second."

I was shaky and Butler could spot the trembling in my voice. "Can't take very much more of this kind of a game. If this keeps up, the fellow who wants to bump me off can't have a straight run of errors. All he has to do is connect once and that finishes me."

And there wasn't any doubt that my bodyguard had the same idea going through his brain cells. "Get some sleep if that's possible. Tomorrow morning you go to the office and I'll be at your side. As soon as I get a recording of everyone there we go straight to the Professor's place. I'm not kidding myself either. Time is of the essence when you got Death staking the cards against you."

Sleep was impossible and I wasn't conscious of the pain in the hand; I just wanted to go on living and that didn't seem to be an unreasonable desire on my part. If the someone we were looking for happened to be part of the office staff, that narrowed the search down. But cold sweat gathered on my forehead when I thought of the possibility it might be a person outside the office. Then we could never spot him.

Roger Hartly was in charge of the art department. He was one of those fellows who could have been in his late twenties or early forties. You couldn't win a bet guessing his age. He had a busy head of hair

that told you, “either musician or artist.” Roger placed some drawings on my desk.

“Here’s some nice stuff by the fellow who wrote us last week. Harold Gibson is his name. He’s been free lancing for some of the pulps out in Chicago and I think he’s going places.”

I looked at the drawings and just nodded my head automatically. “Guess that accident last night unnerved you,” said Roger. “But as long as you got that nursemaid from the police department around, I guess your killer wouldn’t have an easy job making a victim out of you.”

I felt like telling Roger to jump into the lake when I caught Herman’s eyes. It was first names now, especially when Death has almost given you a fatal kiss and you sort of feel a closeness to the man who is doing his best to keep you alive. I arose from my desk and went over to the corner of the room where my detective pal was going through some back issues of our magazines.

“We better leave now,” he suggested in a low voice. “I got all the recordings we need. The sooner we get over to the Professor’s apartment, the better.” The suggestion seemed sound to me and we were on our way uptown in five minutes.

I WATCHED with eager eyes, like a kid of ten, as Professor Musterman played those recordings. He did it a second time, and then a third time. On a sheet of paper he had the names of the people.

“Your man is Roger Hartly,” was his verdict. “New England in it, a bit of the Middle West, and that nasal touch. I can place a handkerchief over this speaker and show you a recording of the voice as it would be when it is disguised.” Five minutes later we listened to a second recording and there wasn’t the slightest bit of doubt as to the identity of the man.

“Where does he live?” asked Herman.

“Uptown, off Central Park West. I’ve

never been there. He’s not a very sociable fellow and likes to keep to himself; I guess he has his own crowd and goes out with them.”

The apartment house was relatively new and we went up to the sixteenth floor. My bodyguard rang the bell and an eye appeared at the peep hole. I told her who I was and she let us both in. Then we got the shock of our lives. She must have been about five feet six, thin, and in perfect proportion. Jet black hair drawn back and narrow eyes. She was dressed in a kimono! I got what was off my mind first.

“Tell me—why they call you Butterfly,” I tried to remark in an offhand manner. It was a shot in the dark and it worked. My ego went up one hundred per cent as she replied in a musical tone of voice.

“I was born in the Orient. My parents were missionaries and Roger met me in Japan while he was painting some pictures for a millionaire. He gave me that pet name. Maybe I reminded him of the tragic heroine of a certain opera.”

We waited and waited for Roger to come. If his wife knew anything was wrong, she never for once betrayed it.

“Can I get you some drinks?” she offered as we heard the key turn in the lock.

Roger looked at the three of us, and you could see a wild cast to his face.

He pointed his index finger at me and demanded, “What kind of a cat and-mouse game are you playing with me? You knew all along I wanted to kill you. And I had every right to do so; you took my wife’s love away from me. Are you trying to drive me mad?”

How do you reason with a madman? One who has let jealousy deprive him of the power of clear reasoning. Then Roger raised his other hand and it held a snub-nose .32 which he pointed directly at me.

Herman got into action with words. “Look here—before you do any shooting

with that gun; you can make a mistake and kill the wrong man. Why not ask your wife if there happens to be another man? And if so, let her name him.”

“If you go for your gun, Mr. Detective,” warned Roger, “I’ll let you have it too.” Then he turned towards his wife and kept his eyes focused on us at the same time. “Is Joe the man?” was all he asked.

Mrs. Hartly nervously bit her lower lips as she tried to avoid her husband’s piercing gaze. I guess I was about ready to sink to the floor; all she had to do was to mention my name and that was my finish. Whoever the other fellow happened to be, if she loved him, she probably wouldn’t betray him; I could be the sacrificial goat.

**T**HEN, ALL of a sudden, the expression on Roger’s face changed as though he had suddenly become conscious of some fact he had long overlooked.

“You don’t have to answer,” he recommended with sarcasm in his voice. “I think I know who has been responsible for all of this. I’ve been blind a long time but now I see things clearly.”

His eyes shifted to me. “Sorry, Joe, for the mess I have made of things. The man who likes my wife must be the same one who suggested you were playing around with her. That rat is. . .” but he never finished the words. Four shots in rapid succession poured into his back as he slumped to the floor—dead.

There was the glint of a gun-barrel in the door behind and Herman got out his gun and emptied its contents at the narrow opening. Then the door slammed tight. We smashed through that wooden door into a hall and then spotted the service door to the apartment.

Butler opened it and commented as we looked into an empty hall. “The killer must have had a key to the apartment. All the time he was behind that door taking in every word

being spoken. Well, Mrs. Hartly knows who he is; I’m going to take her to Police Headquarters and she’ll talk.”

As we turned to retrace our steps we heard one shot. We raced back to the room to see Mrs. Hartly on the floor with her husband’s gun in her outstretched hand. She had put one bullet into her brain—which was all that was needed for the job.

Detective Pierson came over with the boys from Homicide and they took charge of things; Butler saw I was ready to collapse. “I’m going to Kansas, where I have an aunt, for a rest or I’ll have a mental breakdown,” I said. “But first I’m going over to my boss’ place and tell him to get a new editor.”

“I might as well go with you,” suggested Herman Butler. “After all there is a killer still on the loose. Whether or not he wants you, the law wants him. Its going to be my job to get him, even though we I haven’t the slightest clue as to his identity. If one of my bullets nicked him, he’s got to go to a doctor and the law requires a physician to make a report within twenty-four hours of such a case. Let’s go over to Mr. Parker’s house.”

**I** SAW Eleanor first and told her what had happened. “You certainly need a rest, Joe,” she said sympathetically. “My husband is in his library. Go on in and settle things with him.”

I entered the library room followed by Detective Butler. I came right to the point and to my surprise found my boss very nice about it. “You take off as long as you want, Joe. A month, two, three, four or five. And remember, it’s with pay; I never forget the loyalty of a good man.”

I extended my hand and we shook with my nervous fingers holding his in a tight grasp. Then I saw the red trickle of blood coming down his sleeve and staining my fingers.

“So you never forget the loyalty of a good man,” I echoed. “You killed Roger; his

wife is dead because of you; and you nearly sent me to a grave.”

“Don’t reach for your gun,” advised Butler, “because there is nothing I would like better than to say in my report that you were killed resisting arrest.”

Three months later, after the jury had returned a verdict of guilty in the first degree, without a recommendation for mercy, Herman and I sat in Luigi’s. I had taken a two month’s rest and looked much better.

“I’m going to continue with the magazines,” I told him; “Eleanor wants me to carry on. Somehow when you go through an experience like mine, you get a different attitude when you read fiction manuscripts.

To think that Parker even told Roger to take the car and run me down. Parker was just as jealous as Roger; even though he had been cheating, making love to Mrs. Hartly, he thought I was making love to *his* wife. He wanted me out of the way as well Roger. Poor Butterfly. I guess I’ll always think of this as The Butterfly of Death. Parker had a gold key to her apartment and he always knew when her husband was out. Women are a funny lot.”

There was a peculiar smile creeping over Detective Butler’s face. “Women are a funny lot? Which reminds me. I get married next month and you are going to be my best man.”