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The Big Clock

By Jonathan Latimer

Whew! That was close.
What happens
if I get inside the clock
and the watchman's there?
Think fast, George.
That's a break.
He's off duty.
More guards. The lobby's
sewed up like a sack,
and they said,
"Shoot to kill."
They meant you, George.
You.
How'd I get
into this rat race, anyway?
I'm no criminal.
What happened?
When did it all start?
Just 36 hours ago
I was down there,
crossing that lobby
on my way to work,
minding my own business,
looking forward to
my first vacation in years.
Thirty-six hours ago
I was a decent, respectable
law-abiding citizen...
with a wife and a kid
and a big job.
Just 36 hours ago
by the big clock.
And it's the most accurate...
and the most unique
privately-owned clock
in the world.
Now, behind this huge
map of the globe...
is a single
master mechanism.
Built at a cost
of \$600,000,
it is set so you can
tell the time

anywhere on the Earth:
London, Chicago,
Honolulu and so forth.
It also
synchronizes the clocks
in this building...
with those in the secondary
printing plants...
in Kansas City
and San Francisco...
and in the 43 foreign bureaus
of the Janoth organization.
Hey, mister,
I'd like to ask somethin'.
Yes, sir.
What happens
if the clock stops?
Oh, Mr. Janoth
would never permit that.
Good morning, Betty.
Good morning, Mr. Stroud.
Here it is.
Thank you.
We will now visit
the public exhibits...
displaying
the latest developments...
in the various fields
covered by the Janoth
publications.
Elevator is going up.
Going up.
This elevator
is going up.
Next car, please.
Hello, Joe.
Hiya, George.
Hello, George.
Hello, Lily.
You're looking mighty
smart this morning.
Well, thank you.
I should ride this
more often.

- Sportways.
- Hold it!
Ten, please.
Hello, Miss Gold.
Oh, hello.
Mister, would you mind?
The elevator doesn't run
unless the door is closed.
I'm sorry. Excuse me.
Do you work this shift
every day?
Airways.
We might feature
the reliability angle.
You're safer in an airplane
than you are in a bathtub.
Here's a sketch.
We've got nice elevators
in our building too.
Come on over sometime.
I'll give you a free ride.
Artways. Up.
Down?
What's the matter?
I got poison ivy?
We are not allowed
to speak to people
in the elevators.
Mr. Janoth
doesn't permit it.
Styleways, please.
Watch your step.
Gentlemen,
watch yourselves.
Newsdays, please.
Newsdays.
Newsdays.
Crimeways.
Eleven?
"Age 63, frequents
Metropolite City Club,
Skyview Luncheon Club.

Background:

business for 46 years..."
I'm expecting him any minute.
I'll tell him
the instant he arrives.
Hold it. Mr. Stroud,
Salt Lake's on the line, and
your wife's trying to reach you.
Put Salt Lake on.
All right, fine.
But they're on.
The conference.

It's almost 11:

Plenty of time.
But Mr. Janoth...
Hello. Yeah?
Yes, this is Stroud.
Hello, Max.
How you makin' out?
But, George...
Ya have? Oh, wonderful!
Where was he?
What did I tell ya?
Once a seashell man,
always a seashell man.
They're waiting.
Will he talk?
Well, pretend you're
a fellow collector.
Ask him if he was gonna
spend the dough
on oysters or blondes.
Yeah. You've got an hour
and 53 minutes to get
the story. Attaboy, Max.
We've just located Fleming.
They're waiting for you.
Grace,
call the composing room.
We're gonna replate.
And get my wife.
George, you're
the only one not there.
Mr. Janoth

will be furious.
Time is money.
Fleming is in Salt Lake.
Milner's gonna
wire us a story.
Here are the proofs
of the story you had set up.
Go on, Roy. Go on. Hello?
Oh, hello, darling.
Yeah.
Huh?
No bath and no oatmeal?
Let me talk to him.
All right,
but he doesn't
believe he's going.
He thinks it's
just like last trip
and the time before...
and all the other trips
we didn't go on.
I'll let you talk to him.
George, Daddy wants
to talk to you.
Hello, Daddy.
But I don't believe
we're going.
But this is the McCoy,
an expedition. Your mother's
gonna do the cooking.
What? Yeah,
I know it's tough,
but you'll do the hunting.
That's why you should
eat your oatmeal,
build up your strength.
Ya better believe me.
Look under my pillow.
Oh, boy! Look, Mommy!
An atomic disintegrator!
I think you've
sold him, Wonderman.
I'll let you know at lunch.
A little child psychology,

dear.

All right, dear,

Bye, darling.

Today's agenda

is solely on the subject
of increasing circulation.

The figures

for the second quarter
have fallen off badly.

From a monthly high
of 33 million in January,
we've had

a six-percent recession,
a loss of almost

In some cases, we are below
the circulation levels we have
guaranteed our advertisers.

Mr. Janoth's very upset.

He's going to want ideas.

Sit down, gentlemen.

Sit down.

I resent this.

I resent this deeply.

There are

in the average man's life,

each tick of the clock

the beat of a heart,

and yet you sit here

uselessly ticking

your lives away...

because certain members

are not on schedule.

Where is George Stroud?

Roy's trying

to find him.

I do not propose

to be held up,

not even by Mr. Stroud.

Have you told the others

what we want?

Ideas to build circulation.

Not just ideas.

Dynamic angles.

We live in a dynamic age

with dynamic competitors...
radio, newspapers, newsreels...
and we must anticipate trends
before they are trends.

We are, in effect,
clairvoyants. Correct?

Yes, Mr. Janoth.

I have provided the tools:
a budget of \$37 million,
a staff of 3,600,
bureaus from Reykjavik
to Cairo, Moscow
to Buenos Aires.

All this is waste, sheer
waste under a leadership
of chuckleheads.

Mr. Roberts, you have
exactly one minute to tell us
how you propose...

to add 100,000
subscriptions to Newsways.

Well, uh, I suggest
that we offer prizes...
for the best letters
from subscribers...

on, uh, how to preserve
world peace.

Sorry, Mr. Janoth.

A thousand dollars
each week...

and a grand prize
of \$25,000
to be awarded...

The general theory
of the publishing business
is to sell magazines,
not to pay people
to read them.

Mr. Cordette is acting manager
during Stroud's vacation.

You have one minute to tell us
your ideas on how to add

Well, uh, I have
one suggestion

that might be of value:
a new feature to be called
"Solution of the Week."
Miss Perkins.
Yes, Mr. Janoth?
I'm listening, Cordette.
Hold the Boston call.
The most important...
or the most unique solution,
Steve, remind me
of the Boston business.
highlighting the fact
that crime does not pay.
It's educational...
Primigenous, stale,
a hash-up
of last week's news...
exactly what we don't want.
Fleming.
What was that,
uh, Stroud?
I was reminding him of Fleming.
The absconder?
Yes. His story will sell
a hundred thousand
extra copies next week.
If you mean his personal
story, I'd agree,
but haven't you overlooked
the necessity of finding him?
We have.
Found him.
Have what?
We have him in Salt Lake.
We're replating one and two.
It's too late to touch
the cover, but we'll run...
a paper band around every
copy with "Fleming Found"
in block letters.
Make them red.
Steve, advertise this
in the morning papers.
Use the 25 key cities.

Young man, you've
stumbled on something...
not exactly what
I've been looking for,
but nonetheless valuable.
You have struck 12:00.
Thank you.
Contrary to the anticipated
nationwide trend,
media research reports
a present level
of want-to-buy at 25.6.
Oh, hello, George.
Sit down.
Up.4 from last month.
Nevertheless, our circulation
fails to reflect this trend.
Uh, I'll
finish this later,
Miss Blanchard.
George, you're getting
to be a regular
missing persons bureau.
Fleming's number three
this year.
Four,
if you count
the man we found
hiding in his own basement.
What are your plans
for next week?
That's Cordette's problem.
Mine shall be
in West Virginia.
Mr. Janoth wants you
to follow through...
personally.
On my vacation?
Postponed.
Oh, no.
He can't do that.
This is my honeymoon.
Honeymoon?
With a five-year-old child?

Yes. You know why?

Janoth.

Seven years ago,
I was assistant editor
at the Wheeling Clarion,
a happy man.

Then I run down a guy
police in three states
have been looking for.
Headlines three feet high.

I got a \$15 raise.

So I marry my girl,
and we go on our honeymoon
to Indian Lake.

Idyllic.

I'm about to carry her over the
threshold when the phone rings.

It's Janoth. Wants me to run
Crimeways magazine, "the Police
Blotter of the Nation."

Not next week

or tomorrow,

but tonight!

Two hours later,
we're on the train
for New York.

You'd have done better
to stay at 50 bucks a week?

I had more in the bank then
than I have now, and my wife
still hasn't had a honeymoon.

Put yourself
in her place, Steve.

How would you like to be a woman
who never had a honeymoon?

It's become an obsession.

I've been working
Christmases, Fourth of Julys,
Mother's Days.

What does Janoth think I am,
a clock with springs and gears
instead of flesh and blood?

That's not the right attitude.

Janoth expects loyalty.

Oh, I'm loyal, all right.
Shut that thing off.
What are you
doing here?
Just tidying up, darling.
Isn't that the young man
you pointed out as
"the troublesome Mr. Stroud"?
You find him interesting?
How did you get up here?
Well, it did
present a problem.
The tycoon's lair,
the Berchtesgaden
of the publishing world,
seemed impregnable
till I thought
of your private elevator.
How did you
get past the guard?
He's human.
Mm-hmm.
You're the only
Superman around here.
I think he must've been
winding his watch.
You don't expect me
to approve
of your being here.
Not even on business?
My singing lessons.
Hagen attended to that
yesterday. You should have
had a check this morning.
But he made a mistake.
They were to cost \$2,000.
Remember?
Perhaps you think my voice
isn't worth cultivating.
Your voice
is worth exactly
what that check reads.
Miss Perkins?
Yes, Mr. Janoth?

Get me the name of the guard
on my private elevator.

Yes, sir.

The public elevators
are this way. I'm
six minutes behind schedule.

I have to fly
to Washington at 6:10,
and I will not have
my papers disarranged.

It confuses my secretary.

I'll see you
tomorrow night.

If I wasn't up to my ears,
I'd tell Janoth...

to take his \$30,000
and buy another clock.

Nobody's indispensable
to this organization
except Mr. Janoth.

Mull it over.

I don't have to.

It's honeymoon
regardless.

Even if it means your job?

Well, does it?

Mull it over.

Yes, Earl.

When does he think
he's leaving?

Late this afternoon.

I couldn't do a thing.

I'd better take charge
of the young man.

Oh, and, Steve,
on the fourth floor
in the broom closet,
a bulb has been burning
for several days.

Find the man responsible.

Dock his pay.

Yes, Earl.

Table, miss?

No, thank you.

I'm looking for someone.
Oh, there they are.
Pardon me.
How about another?
I really shouldn't.
Bartender,
two more stingers.
Make it three.
Uh, no, just two,
please.
I have to go.
An appointment
with my psychiatrist.
Do you always drink
stingers, Mr. Stroud?
Mm-hmm.
What makes you think
my name is Stroud?
Oh, I'm psychic...
horoscopes,
crystal balls, astrology.
Perhaps I should've
brought a deck of cards.
Your hand will do.
Oh, I see a stranger
coming into your life,
a woman of mystery.
Does she know
I'm married?
Yes. And I saw
a recent quarrel
with a very unpleasant man,
a publisher,
and the words, "26 hours
a day, Christmases,
Fourth of Julys..."
Wait a minute.
You've been doing a lot more
than just reading palms.
You might add a pinch
of listening in Earl's
office this morning.
What were you doing
in his office?

We're old friends.
Perhaps I should say
we were.
Didn't think he had
any friends.
Thought all he was
crazy about was clocks.
Maybe I have
a clock.
What you said this morning
made me think we have
a great deal in common.
You know the inside Janoth.
I know the outside.
And together we...
Oh, oh, Georgette!
Say, you're late.
Oh, oh, this is Miss...
Pauline York.
She was
telling my fortune.
Oh. With tea leaves,
I see.
Don't let me disturb you.
I'm afraid the psychic
vibrations are unsympathetic.
Good-bye, George.
She is psychic.
I'm definitely
unsympathetic.
Let me explain.
It better be good.
Believe me, it is good,

because A:

She just sat down.

B:

a pass at her on a bet.

C:

And D:

a reserved table,

champagne,
everything.
Now, did you
get the tickets?
Mm-hmm.
A drawing room
on the 722
from Penn Station.

Next stop:

Wheeling, West Virginia.
I still can't
believe we're going.
I get so worried sometimes.
Worried? That's no mood
for a honeymoon, darling.
I know,
but sometimes I think
you married that magazine.
We got a certificate
that says different.
But we're like two strangers.
Either you come
dragging home too tired
to talk to me,
or you're having fun
with some dancer
in San Francisco.
I told you.
That was an article.
I could write an article:
"How to Look at a Wall
in Six Easy Lessons."
We should have stayed
in West Virginia.
We'd be a family now,
an honest-to-goodness,
full-time family.
George, the whole thing
is wrong.
Little George doesn't know you.
A boy needs his father,
someone to teach him
how to play football,

make model airplanes.
I tell you, darling,
it's all different now.
That's what you said
last year before you didn't
show up at the airport.
Nothing will stop me this time,
neither snow nor rain nor heat
nor gloom of night.
Here's to a very
happy honeymoon,
Mrs. Stroud.
And a happy honeymoon
to you, sir.
It's just as topical...
Wait. Both of you.
Mr. Stroud, composing room
is screaming for those proofs.
There might be something
in that comic strip
artist murder.
Might feature cartoons
instead of photographs.
Might work up
a weekly feature:
cartoon crimes.
Mr. Stroud, Mr. Janoth
calling on one.
Why don't we have a...
Shh! Janoth.
Yes, Mr. Janoth. Yes, sir.
Bearing right down on it.
Running off the bands now.
Green.
But, Mr. Janoth, the printer
doesn't like red ink,
says it won't match.
But you can't fire a man
because he doesn't
like red ink.
I guess you can.
Yes, sir.
All set up
for the next two weeks.

What's that?
I'll be here till

about 4:

Why, yes, I... I'd like
to say good-bye to you too.
Come on, fellas.
Let's get to work.
Mr. Hagen wants you...
We'll get by this issue,
but I hate to think
about the next two weeks.
Stop worrying, Roy.
Everything's gonna
be all right.
Mr. Janoth is coming.
What?
Mr. Janoth is coming.
George, you whetted
my curiosity.
Nice of you to come down,
Mr. Janoth. I was tied up.
This job you've been
doing finding people...
Fleming, Cipriani,
Mrs. Dewhurst...
ahead of the police:
How do you do it?
You've heard
of our blackboard.
I suspect
it's more than that.
Well, let me show you.
We call it "the system
of the irrelevant clue."
The police look for relevant
clues. They haven't
got time for much else.
We assemble all the clues.
We recreate the man:
his character, mind, emotions.
When you have that,
it's easy to figure out
where he'll be.

Interesting.
You'd never guess what broke
the Fleming case: seashells.
He was a collector.
Paleozoic bivalves.
I checked his index
and found that he had
every variety except one.
I had the name...
Never mind
about the name, George.
Anyway, this shell
is in the conchological wing
of the Salt Lake Museum...
and it's not for sale,
so I assigned a man
to watch it constantly.
Fleming was going to steal it?
Wouldn't you steal something
if you wanted it badly enough?
I might. George,
you're an intelligent man,
and you've done a fine job.
The credit belongs
to the Crimeways staff.
They dig up the details.
That's another thing
I like about you:
You're modest.
That's why we've worked
so well together.
We've had our differences.
They've been immaterial.
Six years, isn't it?
Uh, seven.
Shoulder-to-shoulder,
comrades in arms, neither
letting the other down.
And we've forged ahead.
Now this,
uh, Fleming story,
properly followed up,
should boost circulation
Oh, 15.

That's the spirit.
I know you'll squeeze
every ounce out of it.
I'll give you
carte blanche
for the next month.
Play it for drama
and suspense.
Use anybody
in the organization.
Wait a minute.
Did you say "next month"?
Then your vacation,
all expenses paid,
South America...
West Virginia
and tonight.
George.
You really had me goin'
until I began to gag
over that soft soap.
I'll dispense
with the soap.
George, you'll see this through
with us or you're finished
with Janoth Publications.
That's okay with me.
And I'll have you, uh,
blacklisted
all over the country.
You'll never work
on another magazine
or any other publication.
It's still okay.
I'll give you six minutes
to reconsider.
I don't need them.
I don't need six seconds.
Good afternoon, Miss Adams.
How's that baby of yours?
Fine.
Splendid.
Mr. Stroud?
Yes.

There's someone on the line
for you... a woman.
What's her name?
She won't say. I think
she's selling something.
Keeps talking
about telling your fortune.
Oh, put her on.
Yes, sir.
How are ya?
Wanna make a bet?
Five-to-one your crystal ball
hasn't given ya
the latest flash.
I have been fired

as of 5:

name inscribed in gold letters
at the head of the blacklist,
never to work
in publishing again.
- What are you going to do?
- First, I'm goin' out to get a stiff drink.
Good. I'll join you.
I'm sorry, but I have
to go on my vacation.
But this is business.
You see, he thinks he's
gonna blacklist me too,
but I know enough about
Mr. Janoth to make him change
his mind about both of us.
You'll find it to our benefit
to meet me at the Van Barth
in, say, about a half an hour?
If you think it's
that important, I'll drop by.
Another martini, please.
Pardon me, please.
Same for me.
And what
do you think she does?
She marries her sponsor.
Excuse me.

All right.
Can you imagine?
Just because a fella doesn't
like red ink, he fires him.
Earl hates green.
Oh, he does?
Bartender, bring us
two more stingers, and this time
make them with green mint.
With green mint?
Green mint.
That's what the boy said.
Oh, no.
George, at the office,
did you ever use
the confidential files?
I practically lived in 'em.
That's what
I was hoping.
You know, Earl has
a passion for obscurity.
He won't even
have his biography
in Who's Who.
Sure. He doesn't want to let
his left hand know whose pocket
the right one is picking.
I think
we can remedy that.
You mean
write his biography?
Who'd buy it?
Earl would.
You know, that's
a very interesting idea,
but not in my line.
What time is it?
You'll excuse me, but...
What?
Holy smoke.
We've missed our train.
There are other trains.
My wife will never
forgive me.

You'd better bring two more.
Make 'em triples.
With green mint.
Green.
Horrible.
She left?
I was supposed
to pick her up.
Hey, just a minute,
will ya?
She picked herself up,
Mr. Stroud,
and she said
if you weren't at the station
by train time, she was leaving.
Thanks, Daisy.
If I don't get
to that phone, I'm gonna
be in trouble at home.
Trouble?
You don't know
the meaning of the word.
If you don't mind.
Hello. Everything all right?
Wouldn't even wait a couple
of minutes for me.
I give up my job,
jeopardize my career
for her sake,
and she won't even wait
a couple of minutes.
That's the trouble

with the world:

There's too much of it.
Greenwich time,
mean time,
mountain standard time,
double British
summer time.
There's
too much of it.
Down with it all.
Man against time.

Tonight we fight
behind the barricades.
Barkeep, where are
those two drinks?
Here.
Don't shilly-shally.
Let's have 'em.
Oh, I beg your pardon.
I beg your pardon.
I hope nothing's damaged.
Here, use mine.
It's bigger.
If you wish, I'll have
your handkerchief dried.
Just get us a couple
of dry drinks.
With green mint.
With green ink...
uh, mint.
Don't forget that.
Oh.
My singing lessons.
Didn't realize Hagen
was a music lover.
He just signs the checks
for Earl, who also happens
not to love music.
Well, we'll throw
clocks at him.
Green clocks.
Come on. Let's get clocks.
Hundreds of 'em, all green.
You can forget
those other two drinks.
White clocks, yellow clocks,
brown clocks, blue clocks.
Ah, Miss York, where are
the green clocks
of yesteryear?
Hey, a picture!
How do they expect
to sell things like that?
If that's what I think it is,
it's gonna be worth a lot

of lettuce one of these days.
This is the object, madam?
Yes.
Where did you find it?
It was part of a lot.
A lot of what?
A lot of things.
A consignment.
I admit it is a trifle...
a trifle...
How much
do you want for it?
Well, I haven't set
a price for it yet.
Ten dollars?
Well, that's quite cheap,
but considering its condition...
I'll give ya \$20.
I didn't realize
this was an auction.
Ten dollars,
and you needn't wrap it.
Just a moment, please.
If this gentleman thinks
it's worth \$20...
He doesn't want it.
Oh, yes, I do.
Who's it by?
It's by someone
named, uh, Patterson.
Did you think
it was by Rembrandt?
Why not?
Oh, leave us not haggle.
I'll give you 30 bucks for it.
Well,
that's more like it.
Isn't it a pity
the wrong people
always have money?
That's not
what we came in for.
What was it?
Clocks.

Why, clocks.
Certainly.
Green clocks.
Green clocks. Oh, no.
I'm sorry.
No green clocks here.
That's a strange attitude...
to two tried-and-true
customers.
Very well.
Very, very well.
My guarantee

still stands:

a free drink to anyone
who can ask me
for something I haven't got.
We should have
thought of this place
a long time ago.
Good evenin',
Mr. Stroud.
Burt, how are you?
What'll it be?
Couple of bourbons
and one for yourself.
We can't mix drinks.
Yes, we can.
That's a fallacy.
Burt. Burt, old boy.
I got ya this time, Burt.
Something he'll never have.
Just watch.
Burt, a bubble.
A nice, big bubble.
This is gonna be
very interesting.
Why don't you try
to think of something
that I have not got?
How do you like...
They got everything.
Look at that there.
Well, Burt, me boy.

Good luck to ya.
Can you think of something
you'd like to see?
Yes. A clock.
That's too easy.
No, it isn't.
This is a green clock.
Green.
Green clock.
Mm-hmm.
Well, must be a green clock
around here somewhere.
Hello, me boy!
How are ya?
Well, George, how are you?
Burt, set one up for
President McKinley, will ya?
Meet the 23rd President
of the United States.
Twenty-fifth, George.
I beg your pardon.
It's a great pleasure.
Thank you.
I heard you were dead.
He is also Colonel
Jefferson Randolph
of Randolph Farms, Georgia.
Colonel Randolph?
We Randolphins, ma'am, propose
to fight the Yankees...
until the last drop
of bourbon has been shed.
Inspector Regan
of the homicide detail.
As an officer of the law,
'tis my duty to warn ya:
Anything this fella says
can be held against him.
Judge Goodbody, Dr. Lifesaver,
Christopher Columbus
and Theodore Roosevelt.
Here's your medicine.
Thank you.
We collectively thank you.

That's all right.
Don't go away
with the glass.
I won't. Very happy
to have met you.
Good luck to you.
So long.
Jefferson Randolph?
Inspector Regan? Who is that?
Radio, Pauline. Radio.
George. George.
What?
Do you remember what
we were talking about?
No. Hey, how about
that clock, Burt?
Oh, the clock. Wait a minute.
I don't think...
Oh, no. It won't do it.
I didn't think so.
Well, how about this?
I said green.
I know. You said green.
Let me see.
Oh, I have it here.
Not in a mile and a half.
A brand-new sundial.
Sundial?
And a nice, green ribbon
from my old uncle's shillelagh.
I'm tellin' ya,
the guy's wonderful.
Just as green...
as the old sod itself.
You're wonderful.
Let's have a little
green music, shall we?
Just a minute.
How about that thing...
Just put it right on the bill.
Hey, laughin' boy, how about
a little green music, huh?
George, claviash.
Oh, Smish, come on.

A little green music.
All right, junior.
"E" flat.
Hey! Yee-hoo!
Burt, set up drinks
for the boys,
and make 'em green!
- Green.
- Got ya!
George. George.
Mmm.
George, come on.
I'm fixing you something.
Mmm.
You'll feel better.
George. George, wake up.
Earl's car's downstairs.
Come on.
Huh? What happened?
You passed out.
He's on his way up.
Who is?
Janoth. Janoth.
Come on, now.
Oh.
You gotta get up.
Hurry. Hurry.
You'll be all right.
Here's your hat.
Here's your hat.
Take your halo.
I want you to have it.
Little memento.
All right, thank you, but hurry.
Wait'll you hear
the elevator,
then use the stairs.
George! George!
Your picture!
Oh, hello, dear.
I'm so glad you didn't
have to stay over.
I said, I'm so glad you didn't
have to stay over.

Was it a pleasant evening?
Marvelous.
Met a lot of bright,
brand-new people.
What were you doing?
Oh, just moving around
from spot to spot:
Van Barth,
a few other places.
Oh, don't
turn the radio on.
I like it. Don't you?
Have a nice trip?
Was he one of them?
One of who?
Oh, you mean the bright,
brand-new people?
Yes.
Who was
this brand-new person?
Just a man.
I don't suppose
you know him.
His name's
Jefferson Randolph.
Southern family.
I suppose.
Charming boy.
What does he do?
Nothing much, I'm afraid.
Sort of a playboy.
Where did you get this?
Some crazy bar he goes to.
At least this time
he wears a clean shirt.
Just what do you mean by that?
You know.
Are you bringing that up again?
Throwing that cab driver in
my face? You never forget him.
No. Do you?
No, you cheap imitation
Napoleon.
And you don't forget

the bellboy or the lifeguard
last summer,
and who knows
how many others?
You don't forget
any of them, including
the one to come.
You talk!
You of all people!
You talk about my friends.
Hah! That's priceless.
What about you
and the Artways secretary?
And the stenographer,
the elevator girl,
the kid in publicity,
the photographer's model...
Do you think they'd look
at you twice if you weren't
the great Mr. Janoth?
Do you think you could
make any woman happy?
Have you lived this long...
without knowing that everybody
laughs at ya behind your back?
You'd be pathetic if you
weren't so disgusting.
You flabby, flabby,
ludicrous, pa... No!
Earl.
Steve,
I've just killed someone.
I've no right to come here,
but I didn't know
where else to go.
Well, she's been
asking for it
for a long time.
She's a regular little comic.
She was one of the most
generous women that ever lived.
Then why did you
kill her?
I don't know, Steve.

I just don't know.
From here I go to my lawyer,
then to prison or the chair.
I'm sorry I disturbed you.
Don't be a fool, Earl.
What about
Janoth Publications?
I know. What can I do?
Do you want to fight,
or do you want to quit?
If there's any chance at all,
you know I'll take it.
Of course there's a chance.
You're not the first man
who ever got into a jam.
You've been very discreet
about Pauline. No one knows
about her but you and me.
Now, let's see
what we can work out.
Tell me what happened.
I can't describe that,
Steve.
Try, Earl.
Thirty seconds before,
I didn't intend
anything like it.
I just don't
understand it.
I killed her with some sort
of a sundial she'd picked up
somewhere. Heavy metal.
That's still there.
Where's your hat?
I left that.
All right, Earl.
I'll go over there
and clean things up.
Steve, I'm gratified.
I always thought you wanted
to step into my shoes
at Janoth Publications.
Earl, Janoth Publications
isn't through with you yet.

Who is it?
A husband.
Oh, it's you.
The door's unlocked.
What's a honeymoon
without a husband?
When did that occur to you?
I was detained.
I was so angry when
the train left without you.
It was unforgivable.
It was unforgivable,
your leaving without me.
Was I supposed to wait
at the station
till our golden wedding?
That's what Janoth wanted.
Please listen.
I know the music by heart.
"Once a man
puts his foot down,
they listen to reason.
Things are different now."
But it is different,
ya dope.
Sit down.
I've quit. Quit cold.
For good, forever
and for always.
I can't believe it.
We're unemployed
and penniless.
It's too good
to be true.
Blacklisted for life,
never to work
on a magazine again.
Oh, George,
how wonderful!
How'd it happen to you?
Why didn't you call me?
But, darling, I had
You just can't
clean up seven years

in five minutes.
Before I could turn around,

it was 7:

the house. Gone.

I'm terribly sorry,
darling.

I was miserable about it.

Were you miserable too?

Miserable?

I was desolate.

It's positively ironic.

I throw away \$30,000 a year
and you walk out on me.

I-I tell you,
the bottom fell out.

I walked the streets
like a zombie.

Didn't meet any blonde
fortune tellers on the way?

You're not serious?

Yes, George.

I'm very serious.

I've been thinking
a great deal.

I can stand a lot,
but...

that's one thing

I just couldn't take.

That's something

you'll never have to take.

You're the only blonde
in my life.

I'm a brunette.

You're

the only brunette too.

Anybody know you're here?

Uncle Fred, but he wouldn't
call at this hour.

Anybody know

you're here?

Only Daisy.

I left her a note.

Don't answer it.

Nobody home.
Now, tell me all about it
from the beginning.
Well...
I'll have to.
Hello. Yes, this is Stroud.
Who? Put him on.
Hello, George.
We've got the story
of the year.
It's a natural for you.
What's that?
I said, haven't ya heard?
I've quit.
But this is important.
The payoff man in an enormous
war contract scandal.
Find him and you'll

get a bonus:

Vacation.
six months' vacation,
maybe the Pulitzer Prize.
I've already got the prize.
I'm on a permanent vacation.
He won't listen.
George, Janoth.
I behaved very badly yesterday.
Steve has been remonstrating
with me about it. I can't
blame you for being sore.
As servants of the public,
it is our duty
to hound this man.
Oh, the trail is still fresh.
He was around town
last night with a blonde.
We know they were
at the Van Barth
and some bar called Burt's.
- You know who the girl is?
- No, we don't care about her.
Uh, we're after the man.
Yes. Uh, Jefferson Randolph.

Jefferson Randolph?
No. Never heard of him.
I am not going to rest
until I have exposed
this scoundrel...
if I have to assign every man
in my organization.
I'll grab the next plane,
Mr. Janoth.
George, if you leave now,
I'll never speak to you again.
- Darling, I have to.
- Why?
Well,
Janoth says it's
a war contract scandal,
but that's a blind.
He's trying to find out
who's been playing
around with his girl.
I happen to know the man.
He's a victim of circumstances.
I've got to go back,
keep Janoth from finding him.
It would wreck
the man's life.
Wreck his life?
Well, what about ours?
Good morning, Mr. Janoth.
Good morning, Tom.
Not very much to go on.
Do you think Stroud can do it?
Had even less on Fleming.
We've Van Barth's
and Burt's Place,
provided Pauline
was telling the truth.
She must have been.
You told me there was
a tag on the sundial.
What did you do with that?
Put it back
at Burt's bar.
That's good.

You're sure there was nothing familiar about this Randolph?
I told you he was in the shadowy part of the hall.
But he saw you?
He couldn't help it.
I was directly under the light.
Well, perhaps he doesn't know you.
Everybody knows me.
He was the only one who can connect me with Pauline.
Except me.
You have a macabre sense of humor, Steve.
Good morning, Mr. Janoth.
Good morning.
Good morning, Mr. Hagen.
Is Stroud in yet?
Yes, Mr. Janoth.
Send him to Mr. Hagen's office.
You better talk to him first.
Yes.
And, Steve, we have to have Randolph before Pauline's body is found, before he reads of the incident and goes to the police.
It'd be most unpleasant if he were to insist he saw me entering her apartment.
I should have to call him a liar.
Send Mr. Stroud in.
Yes, Mr. Hagen.
George,
we appreciate this.
We know what it means to you.
It means more to my wife.
She'll get over it.
Let's get started. Earl

told you the man's name:
Jefferson Randolph.
I think it's an alias.
Why?
The kind of business
he's in.
War contract scandals?
Spending the proceeds
last night on a blonde.
Quite an assignment, a guy
spending money on a blonde.
Not quite as bad as that.
We have a vague description
of the man and the names
of two night spots.
Read these.
Throw a staff together.
We want action.
Call on any of the other
magazines for help.
Set up your blackboard,
your regular technique.
You've got a free hand.

One question:

all this information come from?
A... confidential source.
We're pledged not to reveal it.
Why not call in
the authorities?
No, George.
This is an exclusive
between you and me.
And Janoth?
Of course.
Still some in this old
bottle, Bill. Use it up.
Oh, I'm tired and run down.
I need a vacation.
I should take
an ocean voyage.
Have you ever
been abroad, Bill?
It's stimulating.

Different people,
different customs.
Do you know
that in some countries,
after a murderer confesses,
the police let him run...
and shoot him
in the back?
Do you think
this, uh, killer,
this Jefferson Randolph,
could be persuaded
to run when we find him?
His confession
could just as well...
be prepared afterwards and then
submitted to the police.
Justice would be served.
Wonderful story for Crimeways.
Randolph.
Jefferson Randolph.
This is really a tough one.
It appears we're heading
into a blank wall.
We've worked with less before.
Let's check the assignments.
Lily, you and Morton
take the De Witt Hotel.
The De Witt?
The notes said
the Van Barth.
Was it the Van Barth?
Anyway, you're a society couple
out for an afternoon bracer.
That will be a pleasure.
We'll shoot you additional
information as we get it.
Uh, Edwin.
You take Burt's Place.
Don't you think you ought
to pick someone more suitable?
Why? Edwin's smart.
They'd never spot him
for an investigator.

Tony, you and Bert
are the inquiring reporters.
That means you have to check
the doormen, newsboys,
taxicab drivers,
anybody that might
have seen them between
the Van Barth and Burt's Place.
Isn't that a big hunk
of territory?
We'll send somebody to help you.
Nat, you and Morgan and Talbot,
you're the research division.
This guy's name, as I say,
may be Jefferson Randolph.
He's supposed to come
from a wealthy family.
So you'll have to check
the telephone books,
tax records, utility lists,
general business directories...
anything you can think of
for cities within 300 miles.
Now, any questions?
Yeah, can we ask about
the blonde too?
Yes,
you can ask about the blonde.
But don't forget,
it's the man we want,
and only the man.
Suppose you climb
on your horses, huh?
Don't forget to report in
as soon as you get anything.
Roy'll be on the telephones.
George, you didn't
give me an assignment.
You help with the phones.
Get a couple extra installed.
Check.
Oh, Miss Adams.
Yes, sir?
I don't want

to be disturbed.
Operator, I've been trying
to get Butterfield 8-3597
all morning.
Could you check it for me?
It's not out of order?
Thanks.
Burt's Place?
Who is this?
Charlie,
this is George Stroud.
Look...
No, no, it's not
about the fin at all.
Look, is Burt there?
He isn't?
When he comes in,
give him a message for me.
I wasn't there last night.
Get it?
Sure, I got the message.
And about that fin.
I'll pay it back
at the end of the week.
Oh, that's swell
of ya, George.
Good-bye.
No, you don't!
So you're the guy that's
been swipin' my stock.
I was just scrapin'
the stamp off the bottle.
I collect 'em.
Get out of here
and stay out.
Give me another chance.
You had your last chance
on St. Patrick's Day.
But I've got a message for you.
Give it to
the telegraph company!
Okay, I'll go,
but I won't come back!
Hello, Roy? Bert Finch.

I got a lead.
Yeah, a witness
who saw a couple like ours
near Burt's Place.

About, uh, 10:

Yeah, and the man had
a picture under his arm.
Of a pair of hands.
Yeah.
Yeah, I've got it.
A painting of a pair of hands.
Hands,
Mr. Cordette?
Hands.
What about descriptions?
Gorgeous, huh?
And the man?
Good. Keep checking.
Finch says that a man
and a gorgeous blonde...
were seen outside
Burt's Place,
They were both high.
The man had a painting of
a pair of hands under his arm.
The witness didn't get
a good look at the man.
Finch says he was too busy
staring at the blonde.
That's too bad.
Miss Connely, on the board,
Burt's Place, 10:30.
Oh, George.
Yes, Steve?
Mightn't that be one of your
famous irrelevant clues?
What?
The picture.
Yes, yes, it might
at that.
Better get busy.
If he had it under his arm,
he probably bought it

somewhere nearby.
I'll assign a man
to check it.
Assign a dozen men. Check every
art store and antique shop
in the neighborhood.
Maybe he paid for it
with a check.
Maybe somebody
will remember the picture.
Yeah, you're right.

As of 12:

reads as follows.

"Name:

Appearance:

black hair.

Clothes:

gray suit, well-tailored,
blue tie.

Age:

Frequents:

and Burt's Place.

Habits:

Character:

Hello.
No, this is Kislav.
Yeah, go ahead.
Mort Spaulding at the Van Barth
has something.
They remember them here,
but the bartender who
served them hasn't come in yet.
I've found one very
charming lead though.
The hatcheck lady.
He's been in here before,

but with his wife.
No, she can't add anything
to our description,
but she remembers his hat.
Brown felt hat
with a feather in the band.
Anything else?
Okay, stick around
till the bartender comes.
Guess you better put that
on the board, huh?
Yeah.
Miss Connely,
put that on the board.
Brown felt hat
with a feather in the band.
We have located five Randolphys.
One in Forest Hills,
one in Brooklyn.
Assign a man to each one.
Find out where
they were last night.
Tell 'em it's a poll
on America's nightlife.
Yeah, right.
George, we've got a break.
Finch traced the picture.
An antique shop
on 3rd Avenue.
The man paid \$30 for it.
It was painted by an artist
named Patterson.
Sounds as if he might
be a collector, huh?
Yeah.
What are you going
to do about it?
Hadn't we better check?
What's the name
of the chief critic on Artways?
Right!
What do you mean, right?
Is his name Klausmeyer
or something?

I'll phone him and send him
out to see Patterson.

Good.

Say, George.

This painting.

It's a Patterson, isn't it?

That's what it says.

I got others at home.

Why don't you
interview Patterson?

Randolph may be a collector.

No. The way we're going,

we'll have this guy

in a couple of hours.

Maybe sooner. You go ahead
and keep a check on things.

Amazing how much junk
gets in these things.

Miss Adams.

Yes, sir?

Try and keep this thing
clean for me, will you?

Good morning, young lady.

Beat it!

Is your mother at home?

I said, beat it!

Who is it, Rosa?

Someone trying
to steal the mail!

No, no, I was just...

Yes?

Miss Patterson?

I'm Don Klausmeyer
from Artways magazine.

Yes?

Oh, yes, didn't you review
my show in '41?

I think I did.

Oh, come in,

Mr. Klausman.

"Klausmeyer."

I've been planning
to kill you for years.

Drop those, cherub,

and I'll break
both your arms.
Straight ahead.
Are all these your little ones,
Miss Patterson?
More or less.
That one's Ralph's,
my first husband.
Drank himself to death.
That one's Frederick's.
Lost at sea.
I had a third husband.
He... And the twins
are Mike's.
Your present husband?
Would be
if I could find him.
Oh, don't sit there.
No, no, it collapses.
Won't you come into
my workshop?
Don't be afraid.
A glass of sherry?
No, no, no,
thank you.
Sit down, Mr. Klaus...
"Meyer."
Oh.
Another review?
No.
Our organization,
the Janoth Publications,
is trying to find someone,
possibly a collector
of your pictures.
So have I
for 15 years.
This man bought one
of your pictures last night in
an antique shop on 3rd Avenue.
Oh, a pair of hands?
Yes, how did you know?
I was there,
trying to buy them myself.

Then you saw this man.
Can you describe him?
Oh, yes.
Smug, self-satisfied.
Uh, symmetrical features.
I could draw him
for you.
That would be wonderful.
Of course, I should
like to be paid.
Of course.
How would \$100 be?
And of course,
the same for the blonde.
You mean, you don't
know the blonde?
Uh, no.
She's a model that used
to pose for that horrible
fashion rag of yours,
uh, Styleways.
I wanted to use her once
for a painting, Avarice.
You know her name?
Oh, yes, yes.
Um, Pauline York.
Pauline York!
What a scoop!
Thank you!
Oh, Mr. Klausburger.
"Klausmeyer."
What about the sketches?
Check with George Stroud
at Crimeways magazine.
Oh, sorry.
Oh, Penelope.
You forgot to put away
your roller skates.
The board certainly
is coming along fine.
I'd say we're getting a pretty
good picture of the man.
Drinker, collects paintings.
Eccentric.

Clock phobia,
glib talker.
Ladies' man.
And married.
How'd you like your wife
to see that, George?
My wife?
Well, any wife.
She'd start shooting before
you could open your mouth.
I'll take it.
Hello? Yes, Don,
this is George.
What? You have?
Who is she?
Pauline York.
She modeled for Styleways once.
Patterson recognized her.
She was in the antique shop
trying to buy that
picture herself.
York was with a man
who outbid her.
I'm going over
to see York right now.
Don?
Now, wait a minute...
You take over.
What is it?
New lead.
"It Might Have
Happened To You,"
the "Safety First" program
is on the air.
Presented as a public service,
"It Might Have Happened To You"...
comes to you each week
from a different American city.
Dramatized from real life,
"It Might Have Happened To You"...
hopes to reduce
the appalling casualty rate
on our highways and byways.
This week,

tragedy strikes in Elksburg.
A flourishing town in the
Midwest, where we hear the story
of Mr. Bundy's extra little nip.
The Elksburg Municipal
Orchestra opens now
with an American medley.

Hello, Don.

George, have you
seen Miss York?

Yeah, I saw Miss York.
Got all the information.

Who's the guy?

Jefferson Randolph,
publisher from Pittsburgh.

He's got his
own plant down there.

I want you to hop on a plane.
Find out all you can
about him.

Check the chamber of commerce,
talk to the mayor. Somebody'll
know where he is... Taxi!

Then call us back, understand?
I'm an art editor,
not an investigator.

Janoth's orders, Don.

Go ahead. La Guardia Field.
But my toothbrush and pajamas?
Put it on your expense account.
Go on. Beat it!

Oh, doorman. Do you
happen to know Mr. Janoth?

Yes, sir?

Mr. Janoth? Sure.

Fine fellow. He gave me
a wristwatch last Christmas.
Didn't happen to see him
last night around 1:00 or 1:30?

I quit at 12:

How about
the telephone operator
or the elevator boy?

Everybody knocks off

at 12:

By the way,
does Miss York have a maid?
Sure, but you won't find her.
She started her vacation
last Monday.
You sure?
I got a postcard
from her from Milwaukee.
Oh, where would you get a cab

around 1:

Two blocks.
Thanks.
Tails.
A dollar and a half.
Heads.
A dollar-six bits
I owe you.
Five I owe in return
for a little information.
You got a deal, mister.
Who's on duty here
after midnight?
Nobody.
Not an all-night stand.
That's right.
Nearest one's on 5th Avenue,
two blocks from here.
Thanks.
Half of that's mine.
"April 4, 1936.
Crowd catcher at the
Greenwich Village Sidewalk Show.
Louise Patterson's Birthright."
Research dug it up.
Decadent-looking thing.
Yes, but I can use it as bait.
Offer a reward for the original.
Ads in the afternoon papers,
big-scale reproductions
of the picture.

A lost masterpiece.
Randolph or somebody's
bound to bite.
Do that at once.
Get me Sheekman in
Press Relations and Paul Bell.
Yes, Mr. Hagen.
A thousand dollars?
Don't fool around with this.
Ten thousand.
How about the stand in front
of Scanlon's Drug Store?
No.
The Parkway Hotel?
The Ashendon Library?
Say, there's a stand
by an all-night hamburger joint
three blocks down.
How about that?
I could use a hamburger.
Thanks.
That your cab out there?
Yeah, you want it?
No, not exactly.
How many drivers
use this stand?
Just me and Kowalski.
Uh-huh.
Who was on last night

between 1:

You trying to find out about
a fare Kowalski had then?
Yeah.
He was tellin' me.
Half-crazy the guy was.
No hat, mumbling to himself.
Gave a 20 for a 12-block haul.
Where'd he haul him to?
Didn't say.
Where does Kowalski live?
Somewhere around here.
Don't know exactly.
First name's Casimir,

if that's any help.
No, not much.
He'll be here at 8:00.
He will?
You have him call me, will you?
Tell him there's
another 20 in it.
Thanks.
Thank you, Betty.
Thank you, Mr. Stroud.
I certainly wish
I could find that picture.
Uh-huh.

Time:

In manpower, the efforts
of 46 employees.
It results in enough
information about this man...
his whimsicalities,
his clean-cut features,
his charming manners,
his penchant for green mint
stingers and modern paintings...
to write his biography.
Mr. Stroud, where is he?
That I don't know.
I've placed the blonde though.
Her name's Pauline York.
How did you discover that?
Klausmeyer and I just
came from her apartment.
Did you talk with her?
I couldn't very well
on account of she was dead.
That doesn't seem
to be much of a shocker.
Why do you think we've been
conducting the search?
How did you find out
she was dead?
Her maid discovered her
this morning,
telephoned Steve.

Telephoned Steve?
Yes, she was
a protge of his.
Why didn't the maid
call the police?
Steve asked her not to.
He's been rather generous
with her of late.
We wanted to trap
Randolph ourselves,
then hand him over.
Feather in our caps.
Yeah.
Yeah,
but where's all this dope
on Randolph come from?
The maid.
She heard them
talking, quarreling.
That's what makes you
think he killed her.
Who else could it be?
Well, how about Steve,
for instance?
She was his protge.
That's a very strange
suggestion, Stroud.
I telephoned over to his home,
spoke to him at 12:30.
Within seven minutes
of the time the murder
took place.
How do you know?
The clock broke
in the struggle.
Then you've been
in her apartment?
The maid reported it.
She's quite
a detective.
What is
the matter with you?
I just can't understand
why you're so sure

Randolph killed her.
Suppose an investigation
proved him innocent?
An investigation?
What sort of an investigation?
An inquiry around
the apartment house.
Witnesses who saw somebody else
enter or leave.
You have witnesses?
No, not yet,
but I shall have to look for them,
that is, unless you decide
to let the matter drop.
You're going to great lengths
to protect this Randolph.
Just trying to keep
an open mind.
Very open.
Have you some inside
knowledge of this matter?
Yes?
Oh, Cordette.
You have?
Oh, excellent!
Excellent!
You can forget
about your witnesses.
We have our man.
He was just seen
entering the building.
I want an emergency order
issued, all exits blocked,
the building closed.
Nobody's to leave
unless identified.
You take charge.
Yes, sir.
Stroud? Now!
Sorry, ladies and gentlemen,
but all exits have been closed,
except the main door.
We will try to inconvenience you
as little as possible.

If everybody will proceed
in the direction of the desk,
we will try
to get you out quickly.
Just a matter
of identification.
Just a matter of identification.
Your cooperation
will be appreciated.
Thank you.
Everybody on this side
of the rope, please.
Kindly form a single line.
Only routine.
You'll be out of here
in a couple of minutes.
Thank you.
Nobody leaves the building
except through the front.
Mr. Janoth's orders.
Have you sent
for the other witnesses?
Not yet.
Get them immediately.
Get Patterson and the people
at the Van Barth.
I've stationed the antique
dealer in the lobby.
Get me the Van Barth bar.
We have 50 men stationed,
Mr. Stroud.
If the man gets out,
it'll be a miracle.
It certainly will.
Yeah? I'll find out
about that. Mr. Hagen?
Yes?
The people are raising
Cain in the lobby.
They don't like being delayed.
Kislav, go down
and use a little diplomacy.
Make sure no one leaves
without being passed

by the antique dealer.
Morgan, Talbot,
you go with him.
We're taking care
of that.
Yeah, Orlin?
Burt's Place.
Nothing at all?
I find all this
very distasteful.
An extremely sordid place.
Disreputable clientele.
Did you ask any questions?
Well, ask some.
Very well.
If I must, I must.
Thank you very much for
letting me use the telephone.
Here's your nickel.
Do you mind if I ask
a civil question, bud?
Not at all.
What's the matter with
the public library today?
Did they raise the dues?
See here, my friend.
Now, don't get sore about it.
You just arouse my curiosity.
Sitting here all afternoon
with one limeade and two books,
and you don't even
play the game.
Child's play.
And I don't like your limeade.
I'm just waiting for someone.
And who might that be?
I don't know.
You don't know?
It's quite simple.
He's a friend of a friend of mine.
I've never seen him,
but I understand he's a habitu.
He was in here recently
with a stunning blonde,

that is, if you think
blondes are stunning.
You wouldn't be
his brother-in-law
by any chance?
You might be a bill collector.
What do you want with this guy?
It's quite personal.
I'm told he talks about clocks...
green clocks.
Green clocks, you say?
You know him?
Can you describe him for me?
Oh, that'll be easy.
Yeah, sure we could.
'Cause he's
a very remarkable fellow.
Yes, a very remarkable fellow.
Why should this man
be in the building...
unless he is employed here,
or at least known?
You correlate your information.
We can identify him.
Out of 3,000 employees
and 2,000 sightseers a day?
Nothing is impossible.
Hello? Yeah, Edwin.
You have?
Orlin at Burt's Place.
Says he's got
a complete description.
Shoot, Edwin.
Last night with a blonde.
Two witnesses.
Okay, let's have
the description.
Built-up heels,
cauliflower ear,
brown toupee.
That's right,
a brown toupee.
And don't forget
the glass eye.

It's the left eye.
Glass eye,
the left one.
Glass eye?
Hold it.
Edwin says...
I heard.
Anybody know a man
with a glass eye?
What's that idiot's name?
Edwin Orlin.
Fire him.
Mr. Hagen, I can't do it.
Orlin, this is Mr. Hagen.
Yes, Orlin, we heard
your description.
Superior Cab Company?
This is George Stroud
at Crimeways magazine.
I'm trying to get hold
of one of your drivers,
Casimir Kowalski.
He has no phone?
How about his address?
Thank you.
Louise Patterson to see you.
I'm pleased to see that
somebody likes my work.
I've been an admirer
of yours for years,
Mrs. Patterson.
Are you Mr. Stroud?
I'm afraid so.
Well, I should like
to earn my money.
That codfish,
Mr. Klaus...
Klausmeyer.
Yes, he said
that you'd pay \$100...
for a sketch of the man
who bought my painting.
Then somebody else called
and said that you'd

give me another 50...
if I'd come down here
and identify him,
plus the cab fare.
That's \$151.55
and a 10-cent tip.
I'll give you a cash voucher.
Yes, the cashier will pay you.
I'll get a messenger.
Shall I start
the sketch now?
That won't be necessary.
Never mind, Mr. Stroud.
I've few enough collectors
without sending one to jail.
What did you do?
Oh, never mind.
With all that hue and cry
downstairs, it must be
something terribly lurid.
But I don't mind.
My agent says that I
shall make a fortune...
on the strength of that
lost masterpiece story.
Oh, my goodness.
This says \$500.
I said I was an admirer.
You didn't sound that way
last night, bidding against me.
By the way, what did you do
with my picture?
I took it home.
Under the circumstances,
don't you think it would
be safer with me?
Let's discuss that later.
Right now, I have to go
find a taxicab driver.
Thank you. Cordette!
Here's the man
who'll cash your voucher.
Thank you.
You understand

we can't pay you the money
until you finish the picture.
Oh.
Finish the picture.
Naturally.
I'll start
the sketch now.
Just a minute.
Oh, it's you, Mr. Stroud.
Just out for a sandwich, boys.
Nobody's to leave unless
identified in the lobby.
Ah, good work.
Keep on the beam.
Mr. Stroud isn't here.
Will Pittsburgh speak
to someone else?
I was disconnected
from the Van Barth.
May I look
at the sketch now?
Not yet. It isn't finished.
A slippery character,
Mr. Randolph.
Glib talker,
ladies' man, playboy.
I could almost believe that
he was my fourth husband, Mike.
He was a playboy too.
Coffee, Mrs. Stroud?
No, thank you.
I'm sorry, Operator.
Please ask Mr. Klausmeyer
to speak to someone else.
Mr. Klausmeyer won't
speak to anyone else?
You tell Mr. Klausmeyer...
George,
a collect call from Pittsburgh.
Hello, darling.
I knew you wouldn't stay away.
Not after what I found
in our bedroom.
Found in our bedroom?

Yes, in our bedroom.
I can explain
everything, dear.
All I want to know is...
In my office, dear.
Family quarrels should
be held in private.
Family quarrels?
George,
the call from Pittsburgh.
Refuse the charges.
And a fine pickle, Hagen.
Vacation busted up,
marriage on the rocks.
How am I going to explain?
If he can explain,
Mrs. Stroud,
you have a good man.
Oh, darling,
if you only knew what
I've been through today.
Take your hands off me,
Jefferson Randolph.
You see, I've been reading
that blackboard too.
But, darling,
it's a long, long story.
Yes, I know.
All about wrecking
an innocent man's life.
Please listen to me.
Don't start making accusations
until you know the true facts.
I was talking with
the Van Barth, the bar.
I was disconnect...
Oh, hello, Lily?
The bartender just came in.
He says that Randolph spilled
a drink on the blonde.
It was a stinger
with green mint.
She mopped it up
with his handkerchief and put

the handkerchief in her purse.
The most horrible drink
I ever had in my life.
That's right. Kept it.
I was shaking,
but I just couldn't take it...
Please!
Just a moment. I'm talking.
As I was drinking it...
Will you shut up?
Shh. The lady is talking.
No, no, not you.
Bring the bartender with you.
We're waiting.
Lily says the blonde
took a handkerchief
from the gentleman.
Might have
a laundry mark on it.
That's interesting.
Now, if we could only
get that handkerchief.
I'd better put that
on the blackboard.
Yes?
Mr. Cordette to see you.
Send him in.
Mr. Hagen,
Mr. Janoth wants you downstairs.
It's very important.
Thank you.
And so help me,
the first I knew she was dead
was this afternoon.
Why didn't you call the police?
And spend the next
Janoth'll have lots of alibis.
Bill, Hagen and a dozen
other people, if necessary.
Me... All I got is myself.
And that taxi driver.
Or did you invent him?
Could I invent a name
like Casimir Kowalski?

You could invent anything.
"Miserable, desolate.
Walked the streets like
a zombie." And all the time
you were with that...
But I called the cab company,
got his address,
even wrote it down.
But I can't
get out of here.
Yes?
Stand by, George.
Mr. Janoth wants to speak to you.
Right, Steve.
If I get out of this jam,
I'm going back to West Virginia.
George, if I could
just believe it.
I'll cover church socials,
write obituaries,
set type, anything.
That would be wonderful.
But you won't.
Yes, sir?
George,
I want this man smoked out.
Use the guards.
Mobilize everyone.
Start a floor-by-floor search.
Yes, sir.
I'll put O'Brien
right on it.
I want you to follow through
in person, you understand me?
Yes, I understand.
Georgette.
Georgette!
She just left.
This way, boys.
Take this corridor first.
You take the one
to the left.
Any luck?
Nothing yet.

Keep it up.
Stroud, are you up here?
The antique dealer
wants to see you.
George?
He must be somewhere.
You wait here.
I'll find him.
You!
It's not what
you think it is.
Take it easy. Keep calm.
Somebody's been murdered,
that's all.
Murder!
Aaah!
Oh, there you are, George.
The antique dealer
wants to know...
Now, what happened
to him?
Haven't seen him.
I told him to wait.
How stupid can a guy get?
Let's keep looking.
Cordette!
Miss Patterson's picture,
where is it?
She hasn't
finished it yet,
Mr. Janoth.
I asked for a sketch,
not a mural.
Did somebody call me?
Yes.
Mr. Janoth wants to see
the picture right now.
Oh, of course.
Would you like it
in oil?
No, no, madam.
I'll see it
just as it is.
Come along,

come along,
come along.
I think I've captured
his mood rather successfully,
don't you?
Mr. Janoth, sir.
Here's the antique dealer.
He says Randolph jumped him
on the fifth floor.
Murder, he said.
A murder case.
Did you get a look at him?
Enormous. I fought.
I struggled. No use.
Wild glare
in his eyes.
Warn everyone.
Authorize them to shoot
if necessary.
The man's a maniac.
Tell O'Brien and
the guards downstairs.
Yes, Mr. Hagen.
Yeah? Oh.
They've finished
on nine, Mr. Janoth.
I've sent for George Stroud.
Tell them
to keep moving.
Better keep moving.
Mr. Janoth,
here are the witnesses
from the Van Barth.
Miss Thomas,
the hatcheck lady.
How do you do?
Mr. Kolbas,
the bartender.
Delighted.
Gentleman and ladies,
Janoth Publications...
are extremely grateful
for your help.
You may not realize it,

but when we apprehend this man,
you will have done
your duty as citizens of your community.
Oh, Mr. Stroud,
be careful. This guy's
a dangerous maniac.
We just got orders
to shoot to kill.
I have authorized two rewards
of \$ 1,000 each.
One for the person identifying
our man, and the other for...
- What's the matter?
- The man! He was right there!
Oh!
George!
Come on. This way.
He might carry
a gun.
Yeah. Call the cops.
Get going, boys!
In here.
Where have you been?
That taxi cab driver.
You got him?
Uh-uh. He's gone.
He and his wife came in
for a sudden legacy,
the neighbors said.
How do you like that?
Sudden legacy from old Grandpa
Janoth. That's all I needed.
What are you doing?
I'm gonna call
the police.
And turn me in?
It's better than
having you shot.
Come on.
Oh, George, I heard
what those guards said.
They called you a maniac.
Why did you ever
have anything to do

with that woman?
But I told you,
I didn't.
There must be some way
out of this mess.
If I could only think.
Give me a cigarette.
I haven't got one.
We could use one of Hagen's.
Maybe I should go to Janoth,
try and make some sort
of a deal.
Here you are.
Let me see that.
It was in the box.
Well, well.
What do you mean,
"Well, well"?
This is mine.
It was in Pauline's purse.
There you go again.
Pauline.
How did Hagen get it?
Well, she certainly
got around, didn't she?
He claimed he was
never up there.
Why don't we pin
this job on Hagen?
They've been so busy
covering up Janoth,
they've left Hagen wide open.
We'll put him in such
a hole, he'll have to
implicate Janoth.
Hello, Burt's Place?
This is George Stroud.
Let me speak
to the President.
President?
President McKinley.
George, are you sure
you're all right?
Stroud, are you in

my office?
Mr. Janoth wants to see you
in your office at once.
George, are you there?
Talk to this guy.
Get him up here fast.
He's a radio actor,
a friend of mine.
Where are you going?
Into retirement.
When you get him, call me
at extension 381.
All right.
I can't find Stroud
at the moment.
Then you take charge.
Round everybody up.
Make a mass search
of the top floor.
Get the right driver?
Five thousand enough?
Good man.
Superior Cab Company?
This is Stroud
of Crimeways again.
Listen, did Kowalski,
one of your drivers,
make a record
of his fares last night?

About 1:

Yeah, Kowalski.

Yeah, 1:

He did?
What was the address?
Thanks.
"Hagen, Joseph.
Joseph,
Stanley, Stephen.
Stephen Hagen.
Two hundred
and fifty people,
twelve hours,

forty-three minutes...
Earl, the clock
has stopped.
What's that?
The clock
has stopped.
So has this one.
Why shouldn't it stop?
What's the matter with that?
You issued orders never
to stop the clocks.
Why shouldn't it stop for once?
It's a mechanical thing.
It can go wrong, can't it?
It started again.
This one
started again too.
Steve, this hasn't
happened in 12 years.
Bill, go downstairs.
See if there's anyone
inside the clock.
George, where
have you been?
Never mind.
We gotta work fast
before that thug
gets out of the elevator.
Who?
What elevator?
I'll tell you later.
Look, Mac...
Yeah, thanks.
I came as soon as I could.
What do
you want?
Wait a minute.
Is Mr. Janoth there?
This is George Stroud.
Janoth speaking.
I'm in Hagen's office,
Mr. Janoth.
I've nailed our man.
He'll be here as soon as

you and Hagen can get here.
Good work.
We'll be right up.
Have someone find Bill.
Tell him to come to
my office at once.
Earl, they'll send up Bill
as soon as they find him.
We'd better go in
and see what Stroud
has for us.
Mr. Janoth.
George, is this
the, uh, man...
No, this is Inspector Regan
of the homicide detail.
Mr. Earl Janoth,
Mr. Steve Hagen.
How do you do?
Mr. Hagen.
How do you do?
Inspector, would you mind
stepping outside a moment?
I give you my solemn word
nothing irregular will occur.
That Hagen fella...
I've seen him
somewhere before.
He's editor in chief here.
Let's try
these two rooms.
Stroud,
I thought you understood
this was confidential.
This is my wife.
She's been helping me.
I beg your pardon.
I'm talking about the police.
You were told to keep them out.
Not until we had
the murderer. I'm afraid
it's gonna be a shock.
Shock?
Our man

is Mr. Hagen.
Uh, George, this is
a very serious charge.
I wouldn't be making it
if I didn't have the evidence.
Evidence? Why,
the witnesses have all
seen me, talked to me.
I'm not saying you're Jefferson
Randolph, but nevertheless,
he's the murderer.
Why should I
kill Pauline?
Blackmail.
He's been giving her money
by check. The bank
will verify that.
Ridiculous.
Is it?
Cigarette?
Uh, not now.
Go ahead, Steve.
You need a smoke.
Thank you, no.
You're afraid to open
the box. Why?
Because I found something
in here, hidden away.
The handkerchief that
Miss York got from Randolph
at the Van Barth.
Notice the green stains. Where
would he get it except from
the purse in her apartment?
The maid might have
brought it up here.
The maid's been away on vacation.
She's been gone a week.
Link number three:
the taxi driver who took you
from Pauline's apartment.
I don't seem
to see him here.
He was bribed

to go away. I went to
his home and found out.
But I've got the address
he took you to from
the cab company's files.
And it's 323 Sutton Place.
That's Hagen's residence.
There's your evidence,
Mr. Janoth.
It'll stand up in court.
I doubt that, George.
I think you've had
a brainstorm.
Anybody could've taken
a cab to my address,
or have planted
that handkerchief
in my cigarette box.
As for the maid,
I think I can produce her
if necessary.
Earl saw her this morning.
Didn't you, Earl?
- Of course I did.
- I'm afraid your case won't hold water.
We'll see what they say
about that at headquarters.
Darling, would you ask
Inspector Regan to come in?
All right.
We've just about covered
the floor, Mr. Cordette.
Inspector.
Only the executive
offices are left.
I'm sorry to have to do this,
Steve. There's your murderer,
Inspector.
"Inspector"? Why, I've
seen him cadging drinks
at Burt's Place.
A broken-down
radio actor.
George, I'm beginning

to get an idea.
Maybe some of the witnesses
should take a look at you.
Just a minute, you.
So you've seen me cadging
drinks at Burt's Place?
Well, I just remembered
seeing you at Burt's Place
late last night,
sneaking that sundial
back into Burt's collection.
"Sundial"?
Yeah. Didn't think
we saw it.
Had it under his coat.
The murder weapon,
and witnesses who saw him
try to dispose of it.
That wraps it up, Mr. Janoth.
Now we'll try a real cop.
Well, Earl?
Steve, I know how you
feel about me and about
my organization.
You're the most loyal employee
I've ever had.
I'm not going
to let you down, Steve.
I'll put every resource
we have at your disposal.
We'll fight this through
for you, no matter how long
it takes or how much it costs.
You're not going to be alone.
Every bit of influence I can...
Mr. Hagen?
Mr. Hagen!
Mr. Hagen?
Steve, your office
and Mr. Janoth's are the
only ones we haven't...
The search is off.
Send everybody home.
"Off"? What about

Jefferson Randolph?
Who is he?
Not interested.
You insufferable egomaniac!
You thought you inspired
such adulation that I'd
do anything for you.
George,
Janoth killed Pauline.
You'll say that
in court?
I will.
No!
George, are you
all right?
Sure.
I've been so worried.
Did he get away?
Yeah, he got away.
Get me
the police department.
Where is he?
Elevator shaft.
Aah! It's him!
Who?
Jefferson Randolph?
My fourth husband.
Mike, darling!
Oh, no!