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JULY-SEPT.

# 77 SUNSET STRIP

EFREM ZIMBALIST, JR.

Kookie and Jeff  
uncover a  
fantastic scheme  
to cheat  
an old man  
out of  
his millions!

ROGER SMITH

EDWARD  
"KOOKIE"  
BYRNES





# 77 SUNSET STRIP

## TWO DAYS TO HIGHPOINT



To keep an important appointment in Highpoint, Jeff Spencer and Kookie race against a tight timetable.



Unaccidental accidents put them behind schedule, and they are forced to a desperate decision in order to keep their date.

## THE TELLTALE TRIDENTS



Stu Bailey faces a case of brotherly devotion, when he is hired by one brother to clear another brother of a murder charge.

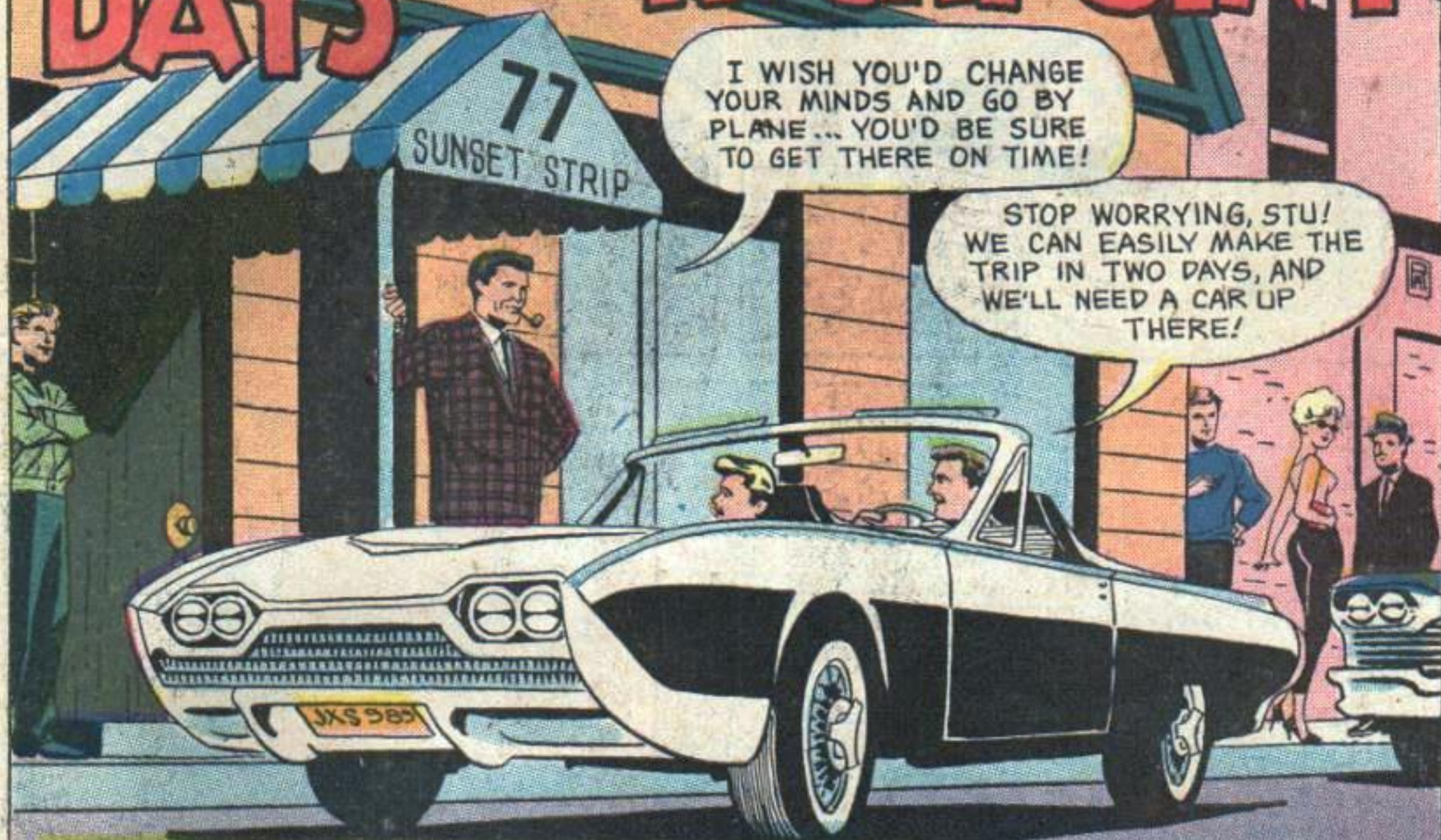


With evidence pointing to both brothers, Stu and Jeff leave no stone uncovered to be sure that the guilty man is found.



77 SUNSET STRIP

# TWO DAYS TO HIGHPOINT



**J**EFF SPENCER AND "KOOKIE" COOKSON HAVE A FINAL CONFERENCE WITH THEIR PARTNER, STUART BAILEY, BEFORE STARTING THE LONG DRIVE TO THE TOWN OF HIGHPOINT...



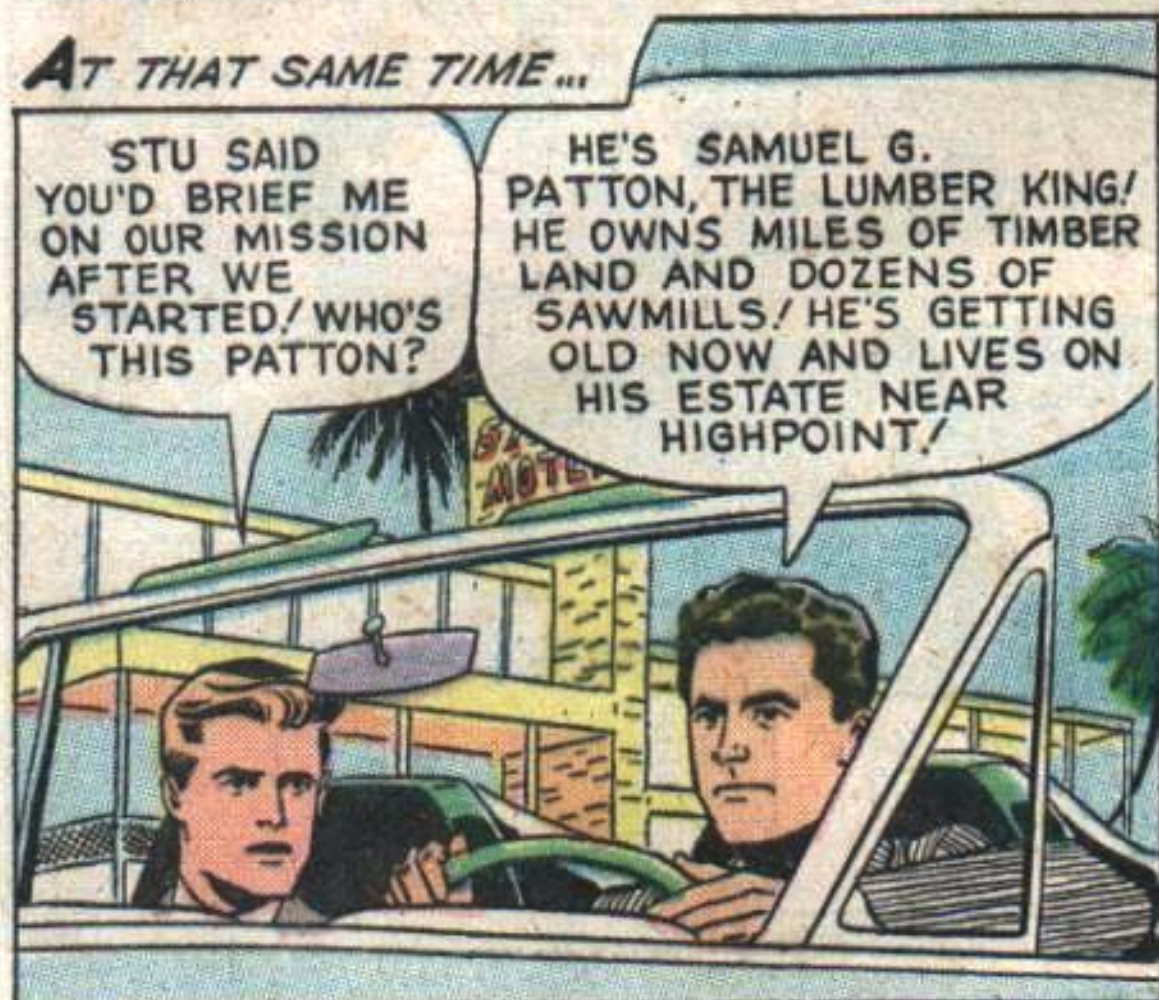
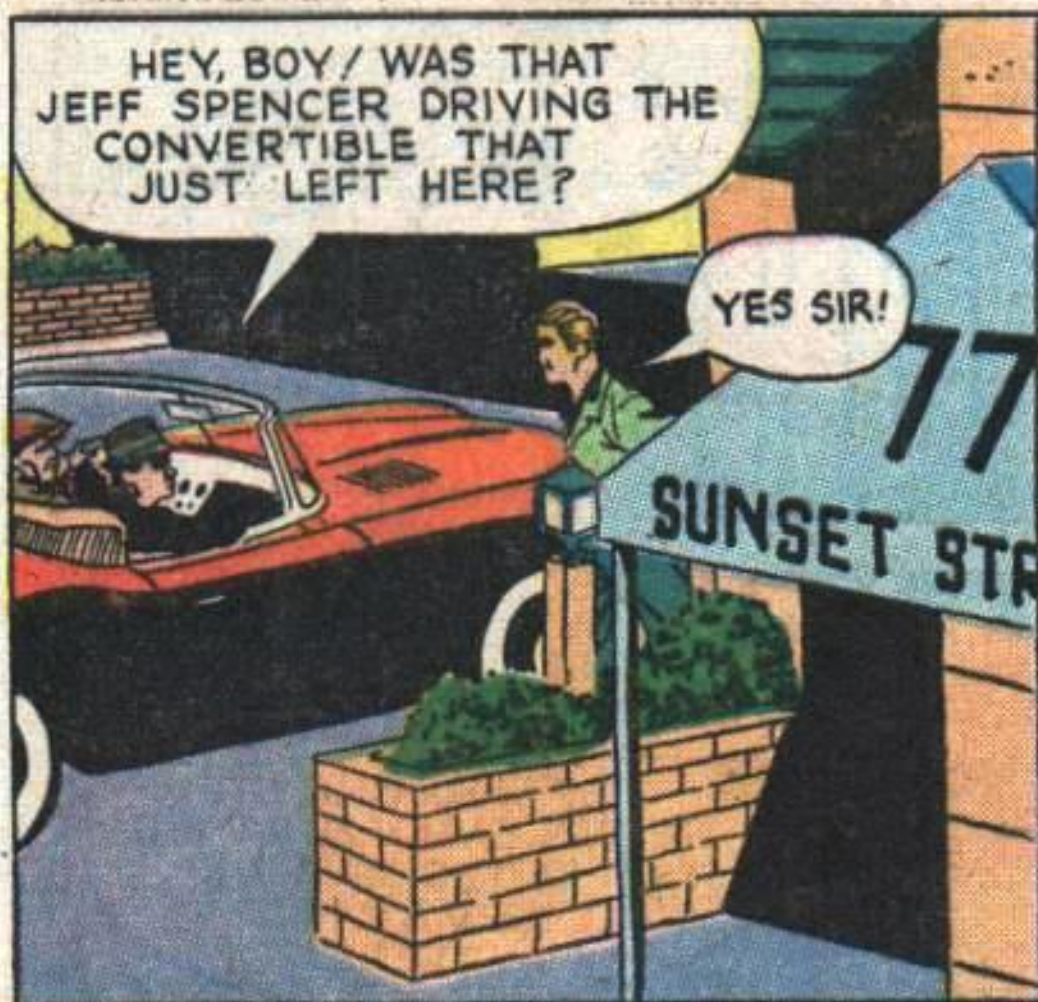
**W**HEN STUART BAILEY ENTERS HIS OFFICE...



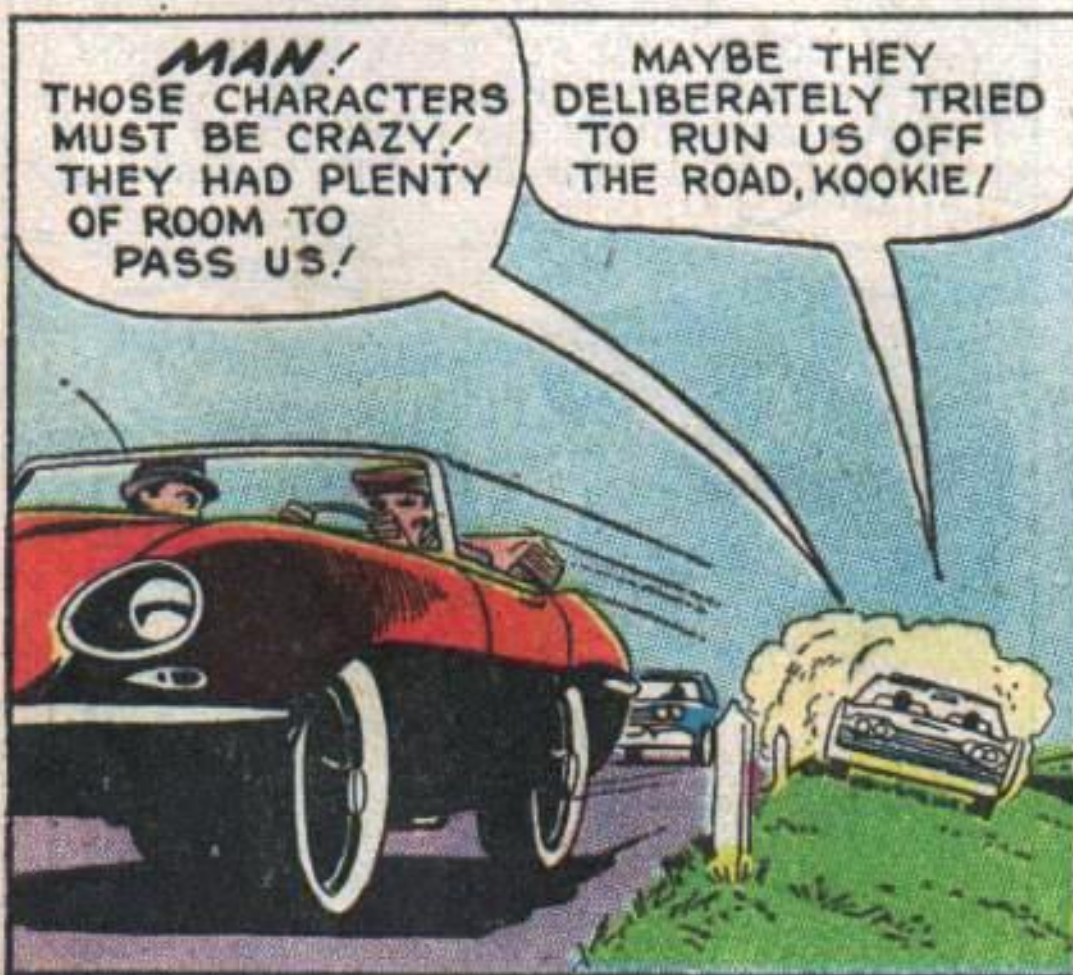
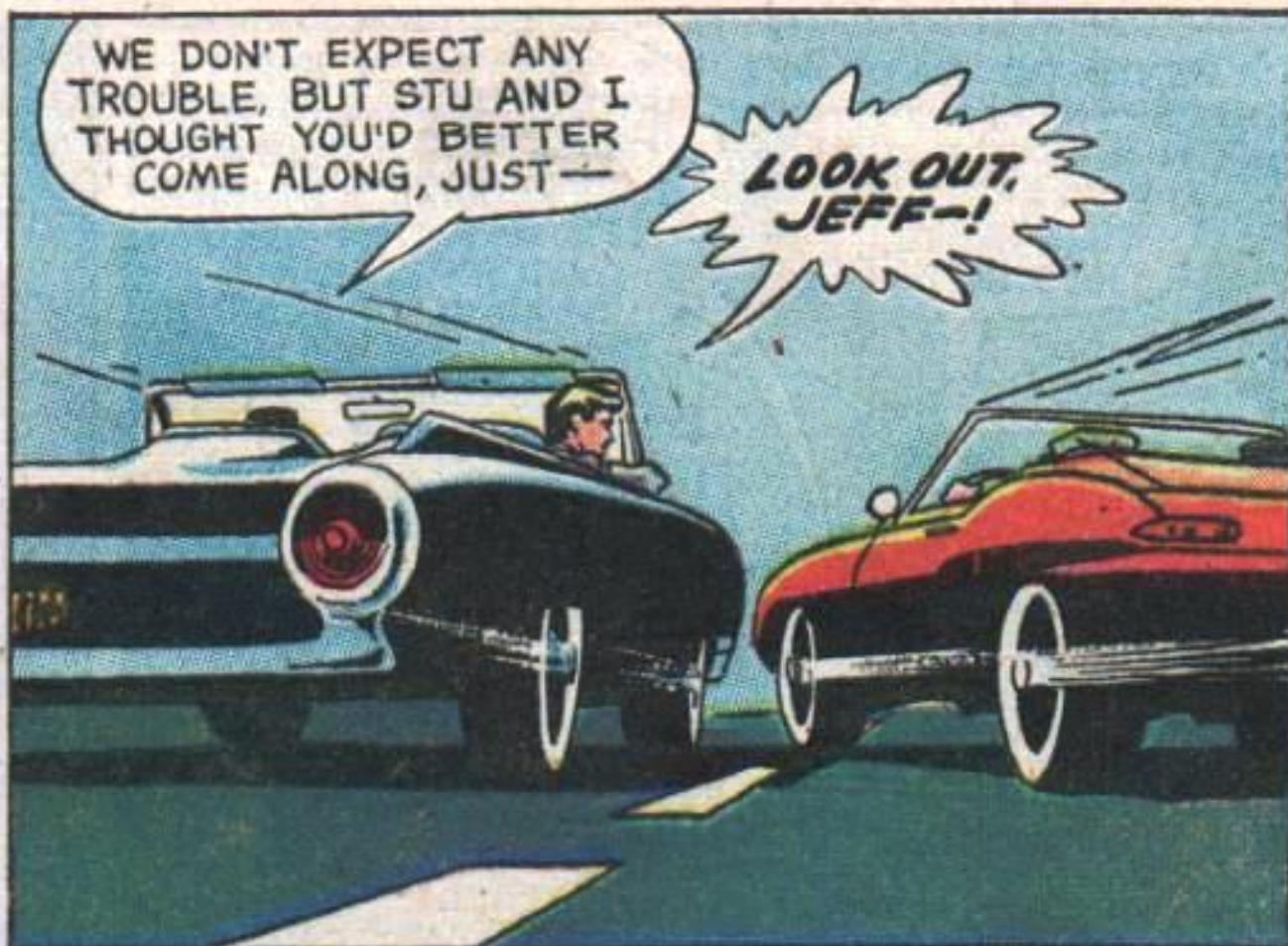
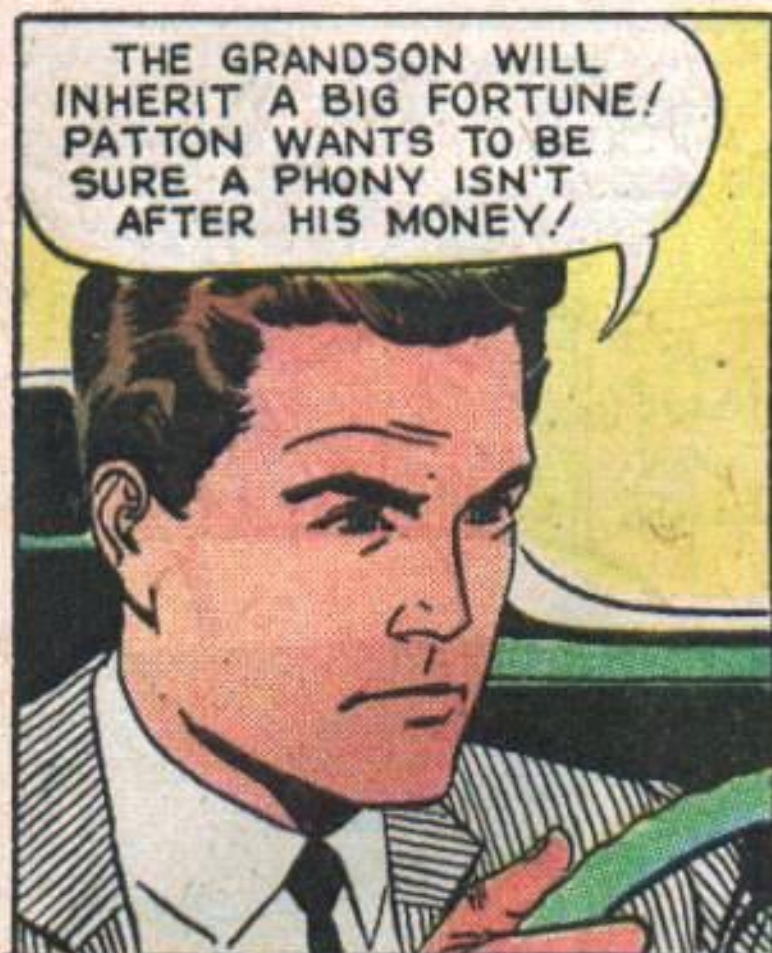
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THE HOURS PASS AND...

HOW ARE WE DOING ON OUR TIMETABLE, KOOKIE?

RIGHT ON THE DOT! SCHEDULE SAYS, LUNCH STOP, ONE O'CLOCK, DOBIE'S DINER! IT'S EXACTLY ONE! AND THERE'S DOBIE'S DINER!



I'M READY FOR FOOD! HOW ABOUT YOU?



SORRY, FELLAS! DIDN'T SEE YOU COMIN! THOUGHT THE WAY WAS CLEAR!

SURE GLAD YOU TWO GUYS ARE OKAY!

SO ARE WE!



THE GARAGE NEXT DOOR CAN FIX THAT HEADLIGHT! SEND THE BILL TO THE ABC VAN LINE! NO ARGUMENT ABOUT US BEIN' TO BLAME!











FINALLY,  
LATE THAT  
NIGHT...

WELL, WE'VE MADE IT  
THIS FAR WITHOUT ANY MORE  
**ACCIDENTS!** BUT WE'RE TWO  
HOURS LATE IN OUR TIMETABLE!

WHICH MEANS WE  
GET ONLY FOUR HOURS  
SLEEP, INSTEAD OF SIX!  
KEEP A SHARP LOOKOUT  
FOR THOSE TWO GOONS!



SOON...

I LOOKED  
AROUND THE PLACE!  
NO SIGN OF OUR  
PALS!

THIS WAS  
THE LAST VACANCY!  
SO THEY'LL BE OUT  
OF LUCK, IF THEY  
SHOW UP!



THREE HOURS PASS...

JEFF! WAKE UP!  
I HEAR NOISES IN THE GARAGE!  
WE'D BETTER TAKE A LOOK!

O-O-KAY...!



SOMEBODY'S  
IN THE GARAGE,  
ALL RIGHT!

WHEN I GIVE THE  
WORD, WE'LL JUMP  
THEM TOGETHER—!

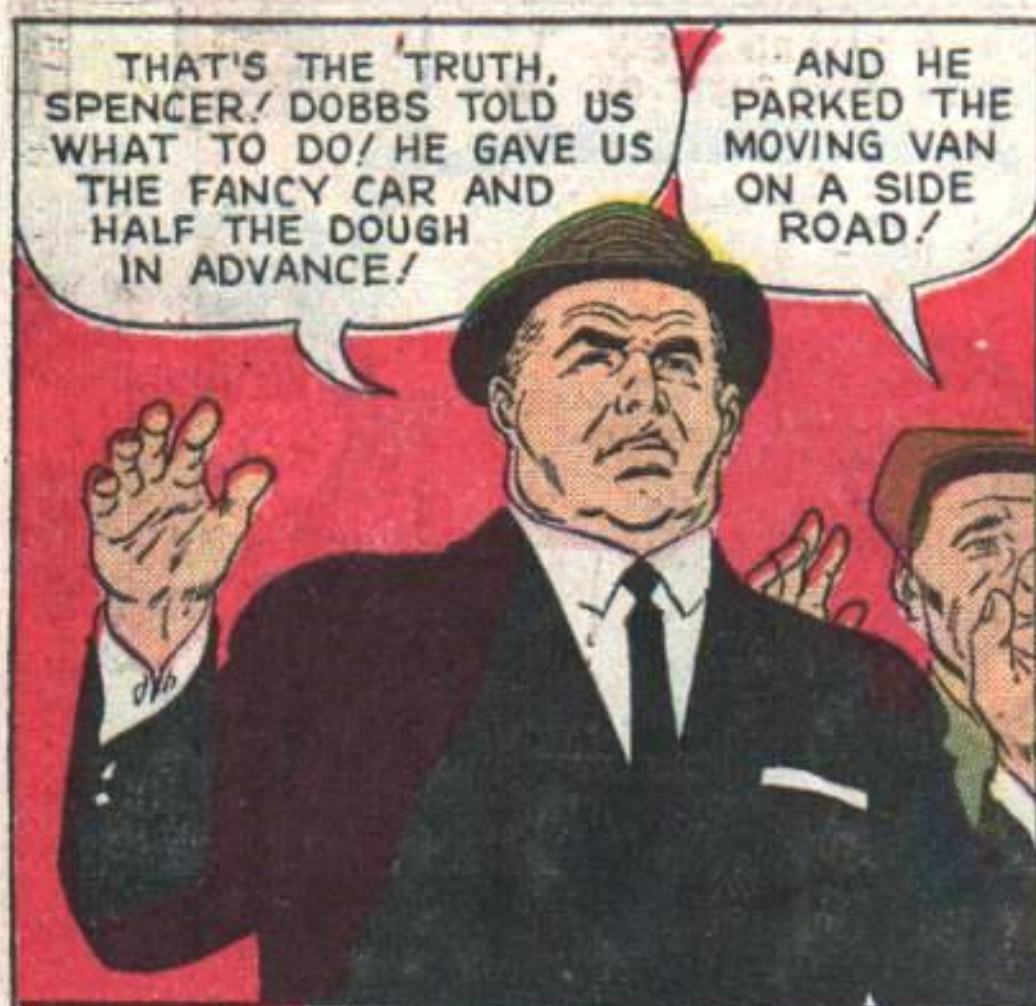


READY!  
OPEN  
'EM  
WIDE!

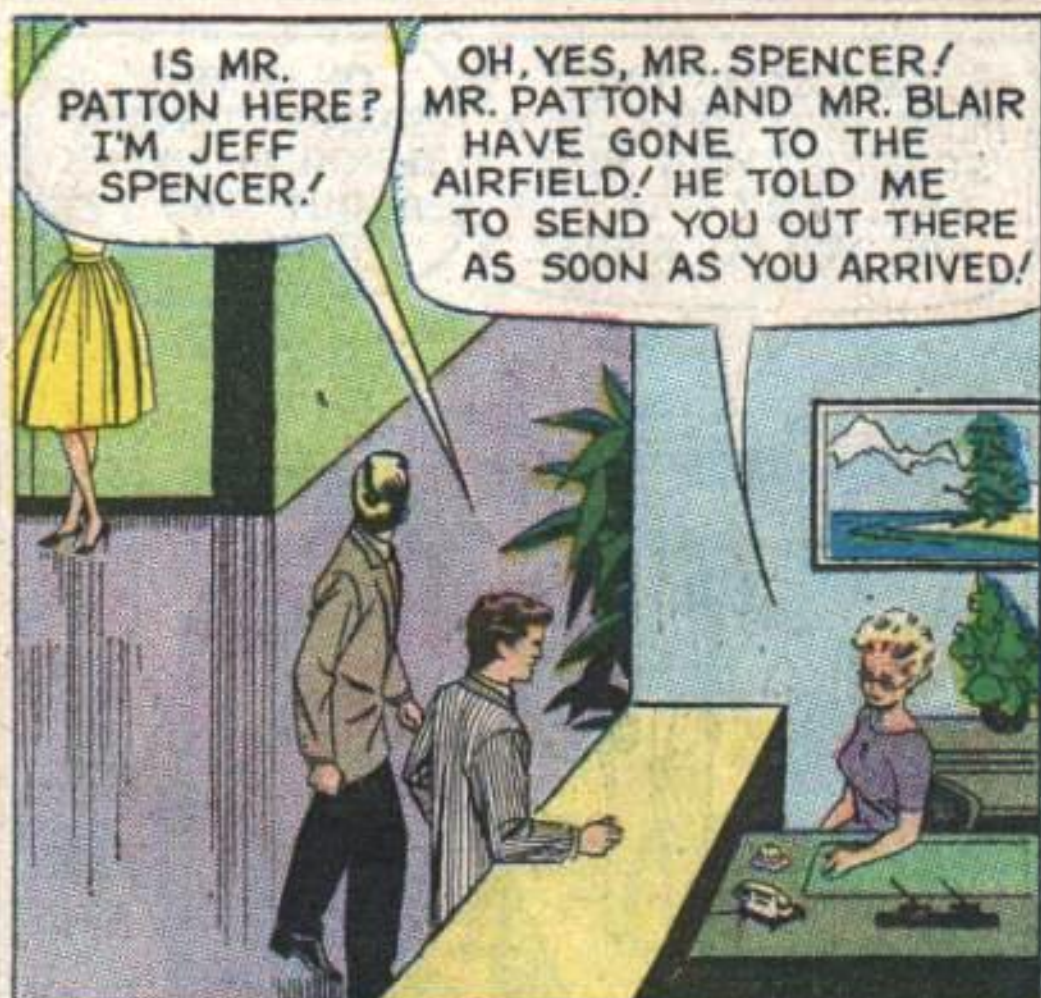














WHEN THEY ARRIVE AT THE AIRFIELD, JEFF GREET'S SAMUEL PATTON AND INTRODUCES KOOKIE...

I'M VERY GLAD YOU MADE IT ON TIME, JEFF! THE PLANE IS DUE ANY MINUTE NOW!



CAL! COME OVER HERE AND MEET JEFF SPENCER AND HIS PARTNER! SAY, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

OH, Y-YES! SORRY! I WAS THINKING ABOUT... ABOUT THE PLANE!



GLAD TO SEE YOU, SPENCER! THE PLANE SHOULD BE HERE NOW! ARCHER'S NEVER LATE! BUT WE'VE LOST RADIO CONTACT WITH HIM! I'D BETTER CALL AIR PATROL!



WHO IS ARCHER, MR. PATTON?

HE'S MY REGULAR PILOT! HE'S BEEN WITH ME FOR YEARS! I ALWAYS FEEL SAFE WHEN HE'S AT THE CONTROLS, BUT I'M A LITTLE WORRIED NOW, JEFF!



BLAIR SEEMS MORE THAN A LITTLE WORRIED, MR. PATTON! HE ACTS ALMOST SCARED!

HE'S BEEN EXCITED AND WORRIED EVER SINCE WE KNEW YOUNG SAM WAS COMING! CAL'S MY RIGHT-HAND MAN... ALMOST LIKE A SON!

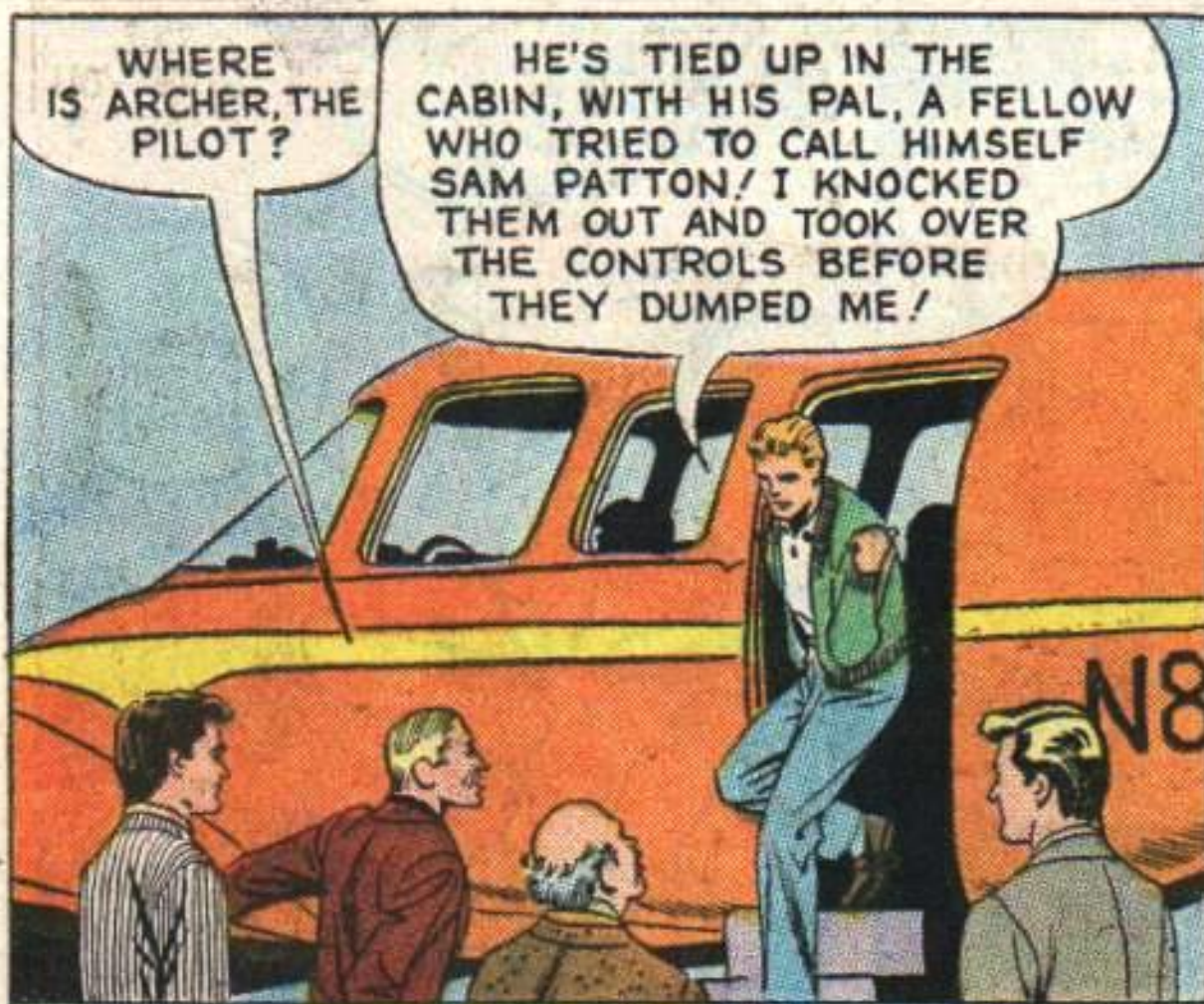




**THE ANXIOUS MINUTES PASS SLOWLY...**







WHERE IS ARCHER, THE PILOT?

HE'S TIED UP IN THE CABIN, WITH HIS PAL, A FELLOW WHO TRIED TO CALL HIMSELF SAM PATTON! I KNOCKED THEM OUT AND TOOK OVER THE CONTROLS BEFORE THEY DUMPED ME!



I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! NOT ARCHER! LET ME SEE HIM! I'LL FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON!



WHAT HAPPENED, SAM?

ARCHER MET ME AT THE SEATTLE AIRPORT WHEN I LANDED FROM ALASKA! HE SAID HIS SHIP WAS IN A SERVICE HANGAR, READY TO TAKE OFF FOR HIGHPOINT!



WE WALKED INTO THE HANGAR AND SOMETHING HIT ME! WHEN I WOKE UP, I WAS LYING ON THE FLOOR OF THIS PLANE'S CABIN AND WE WERE IN THE AIR! ARCHER AND THE OTHER FELLOW WERE UP FRONT!



THIS IS TERRIBLE... TERRIBLE...

I HEARD THEM PLANNING TO DUMP ME OVERBOARD WHERE I'D NEVER BE FOUND! I SURE SURPRISED THEM! THEY THOUGHT I WAS OUT COLD... OR DEAD!



WE WERE 'WAY OFF COURSE OVER ROUGH COUNTRY! THEY'D JAMMED THE RADIO! BUT I FOUND A GUIDE MAP...!

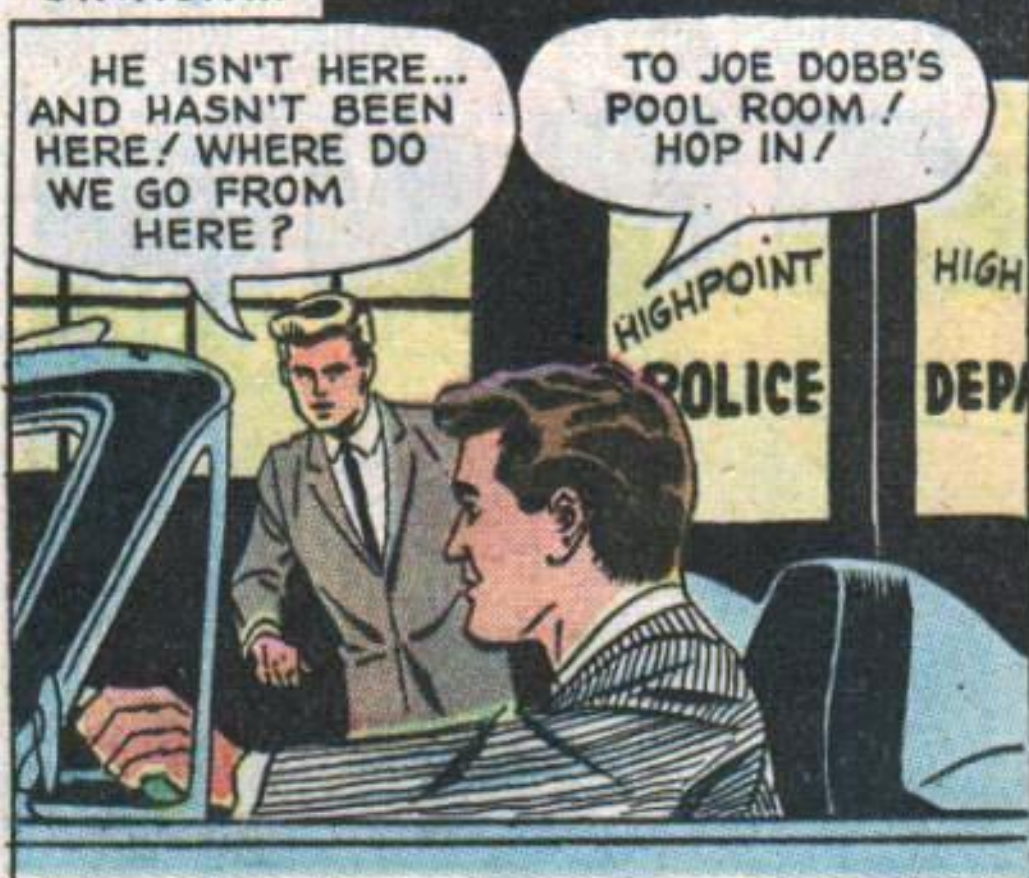
IT'S ARCHER, ALL RIGHT... AND A STRANGER! THEY'RE BOTH STILL UNCONCIOUS! I'LL TAKE THEM TO THE POLICE STATION!







THEY CHECK THE HIGHPOINT POLICE STATION...



SHORTLY...







YOU'RE WRONG, BLAIR!  
**DON'T MOVE!**

**WE**  
SUSPECTED  
YOU... AND  
NOW WE CAN  
PROVE OUR  
SUSPICIONS!!  
**LIFT YOUR  
HANDS, ALL  
OF YOU!**



GET OVER  
WITH YOUR PALS,  
DOBBS! I'LL GET  
THEIR GUNS,  
JEFF!

WHY'D  
YOU  
DO IT,  
BLAIR?

TO GET THE  
PATTON LUMBER  
COMPANY! I WAS  
OLD SAM'S HEIR,  
BEFORE HIS  
GRANDSON  
SHOWED UP!



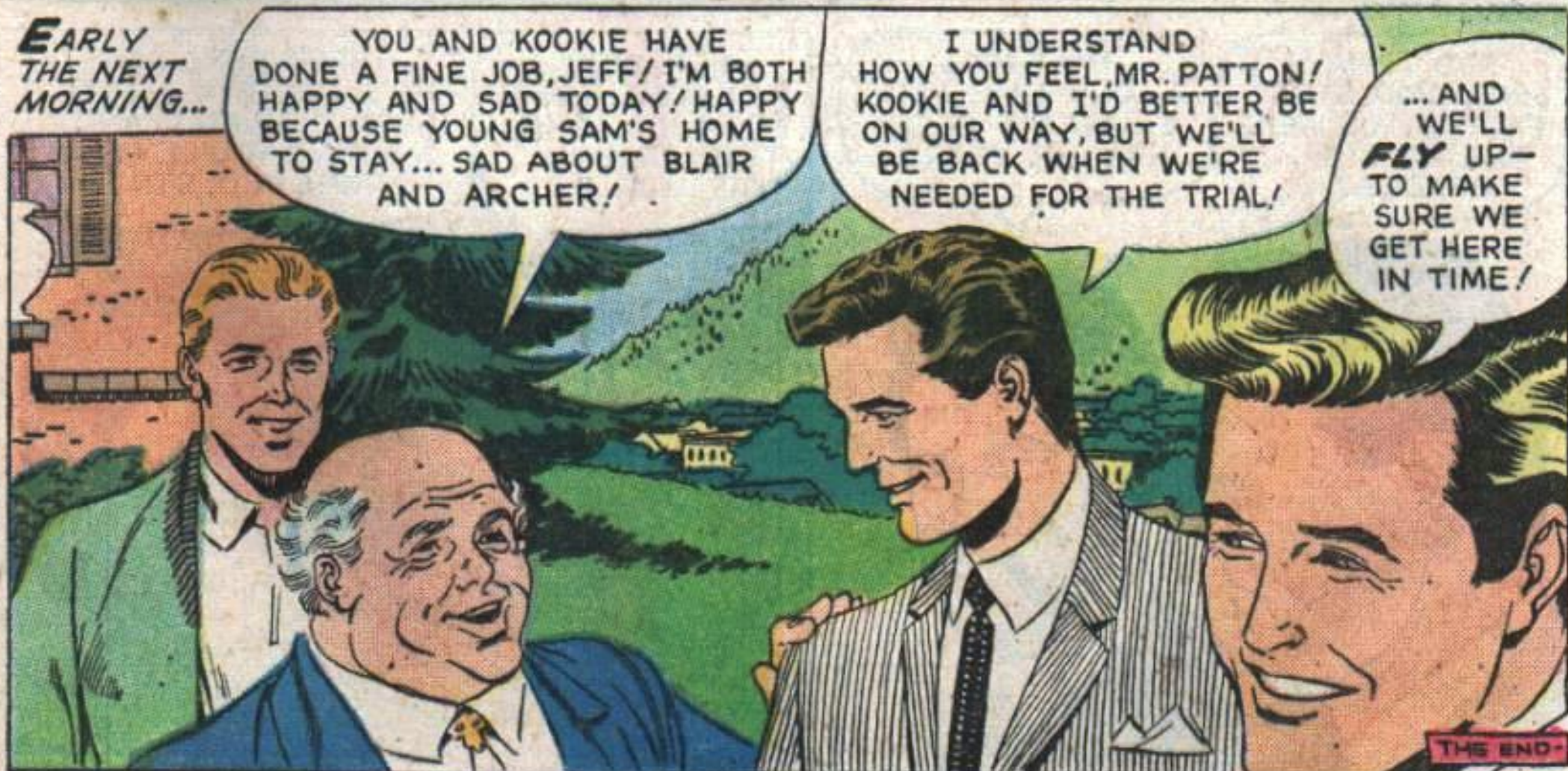
WHERE  
DID THAT  
LEAVE THE  
FAKE  
GRANDSON?

HE'D BE ONLY A FIGUREHEAD  
FOR ME! I'D RUN THINGS! THE  
OLD MAN CAN'T LIVE LONG...  
AFTER HE WAS GONE, I PLANNED  
TO SELL THE COMPANY AND  
PAY OFF THE PHONY SAM!



WHAT  
ABOUT  
**YOU**,  
ARCHER?

**MONEY!**  
MY FLYING DAYS'LL  
SOON BE OVER!  
BLAIR PROMISED  
ME A BIG SLICE OF  
THE PATTON  
MONEY!



**EARLY**  
THE NEXT  
MORNING...

YOU AND KOOKIE HAVE  
DONE A FINE JOB, JEFF! I'M BOTH  
HAPPY AND SAD TODAY! HAPPY  
BECAUSE YOUNG SAM'S HOME  
TO STAY... SAD ABOUT BLAIR  
AND ARCHER!

I UNDERSTAND  
HOW YOU FEEL, MR. PATTON!  
KOOKIE AND I'D BETTER BE  
ON OUR WAY, BUT WE'LL  
BE BACK WHEN WE'RE  
NEEDED FOR THE TRIAL!

... AND  
WE'LL  
**FLY UP—**  
TO MAKE  
SURE WE  
GET HERE  
IN TIME!

THE END



# THE 77 SUNSET STRIP TELLTALE TRIDENTS

STUART BAILEY AND HIS FRIEND, VAN LANSING, A WELL-KNOWN LAWYER, GO TO THE COUNTY JAIL TO VISIT LANSING'S YOUNGER BROTHER, WHO HAS BEEN ARRESTED FOR THE MURDER OF THE MYSTERIOUS "HERMIT-OF-THE HILLS"...

I'M GLAD YOU'VE AGREED TO TAKE THE CASE, STU! I **KNOW** ROD'S NOT GUILTY... I'M DEPENDING ON YOU TO PROVE IT!

I HOPE I CAN! BUT IF ROD WON'T TALK TO YOU, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE'LL TALK TO ME?



ROD ALWAYS LIKED YOU, STU! FACT IS, YOU WERE ONE OF HIS HEROES!

THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO! I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM FOR YEARS!

WHEN DID ROD COME BACK FROM HIS LONG TRIP AROUND THE WORLD?

THREE DAYS AGO! HE'S CHANGED A LOT... GROWN SILENT AND MOODY! YOU'LL BE SURPRISED, STU!









LATER,  
THEY  
ARRIVE  
AT THE  
SHACK  
WHERE  
THE  
HERMIT-  
OF-THE-  
HILLS  
HAD  
LIVED  
ALONE...



SOMEONE  
ELSE IS  
HERE, STU!

POLICE FROM THE  
HOMICIDE BUREAU! THAT'S  
LIEUTENANT GILMORE'S  
CAR!



HELLO, GIL! YOU KNOW  
VAN LANSING! WE CAME TO  
LOOK AROUND! NEITHER OF  
US HAS EVER SEEN  
THE PLACE!



CAN  
WE GO  
INSIDE?

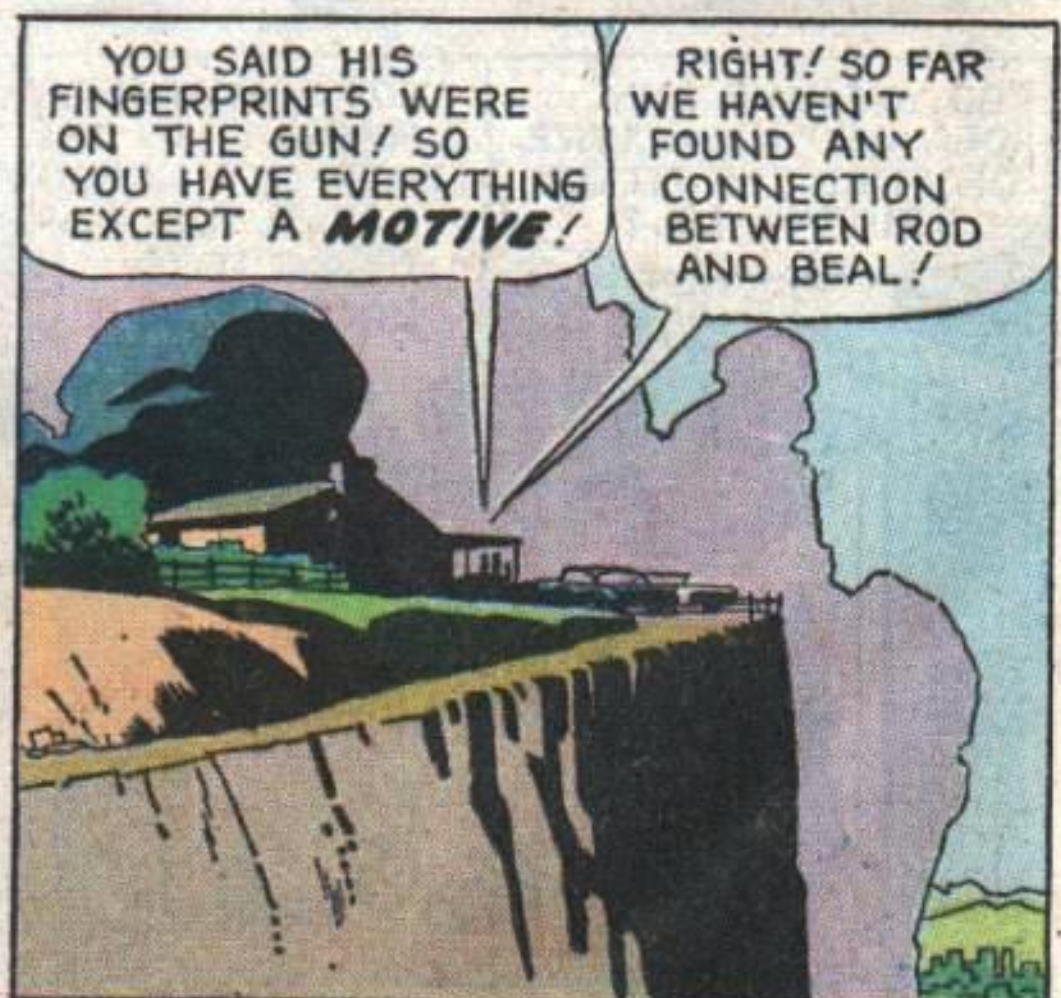
SURE! SERGEANT  
BLAKE AND I HAVE BEEN  
GOING OVER THE PLACE,  
BUT WE HAVEN'T FOUND  
ANYTHING THE BOYS  
MISSED LAST NIGHT!



I FOUND **THIS**, LIEUTENANT!  
IT HAD SLIPPED DOWN BETWEEN  
THE FLOOR BOARDS!

IT'S SHAPED  
LIKE A TRIDENT!  
TAKE A LOOK  
AT IT, STU!











**BAILEY REPORTS THE DAY'S ACTIVITIES TO HIS PARTNERS...**



LIEUTENANT GILMORE GAVE ME ALL THE INFORMATION THE POLICE HAVE! ROD LANSING'S THE ONLY SUSPECT SO FAR!

WHAT DO THEY KNOW ABOUT THE HERMIT?

HE WAS A RETIRED SEAMAN! NO POLICE RECORD... LIVED ALONE AND RAISED FLOWERS! THERE'S NO EVIDENCE HE EVEN KNEW ROD LANSING!



MAYBE THE ANSWER'S IN THIS LITTLE TRIDENT AND IT'S TWIN THAT WAS FOUND IN BEAL'S SHACK! IF WE CAN FIGURE OUT SOME MEANING...

IT'S THE EMBLEM OF NEPTUNE, THE SEA GOD!

IT HAS THREE PRONGS! THE NUMBER **THREE** MIGHT...



I THINK YOU'VE HIT ON SOMETHING, JEFF!

THERE MAY BE THREE TRIDENTS AND THEIR OWNERS MAY BE CONNECTED WITH THE **SEA!**



MR. BAILEY! I REMEMBERED THE CAR! IT WAS A VERY SHARP FOREIGN JOB! THE DRIVER LOOKED LIKE BIG MONEY!

DO YOU HAPPEN TO KNOW HIS NAME OR REMEMBER THE LICENSE NUMBER, J.R.?

NOW YOU'RE ASKING FOR MIRACLES, STU!







AND I'LL GIVE YOU ONE!

THE RESTAURANT DOORMAN KNEW THE BIG MONEY MAN WHEN I DESCRIBED HIM! HE'S GORDON MACKEY... OWNS THE MACKEY IMPORTING COMPANY!



GOOD WORK, J.R.! WE WON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT THIS, EXCEPT LIEUTENANT GILMORE! SO WE'LL TRUST YOU TO SAY NOTHING!

MUM'S THE WORD MR. BAILEY! SO LONG!



LATER...

DO YOU BELIEVE ROD LANSING'S INNOCENT, STU?

I'M NOT SURE... BUT I REALLY THINK HE IS!



IF HE *IS* INNOCENT, THE ONLY WAY TO PROVE IT IS TO FIND THE GUILTY MAN! I'LL CALL ON GORDON MACKEY TOMORROW MORNING!

WE'D BETTER CALL IT A DAY NOW, STU!



MR. MACKEY JUST DROVE ONTO THE LOT! ANOTHER MAN'S WITH HIM! MACKEY'S LOOKING FOR SOMETHING! WHAT SHALL I DO?

HELP HIM LOOK... BUT **DON'T TELL HIM WHAT YOU FOUND!** I'LL WANDER IN AND HELP, TOO!

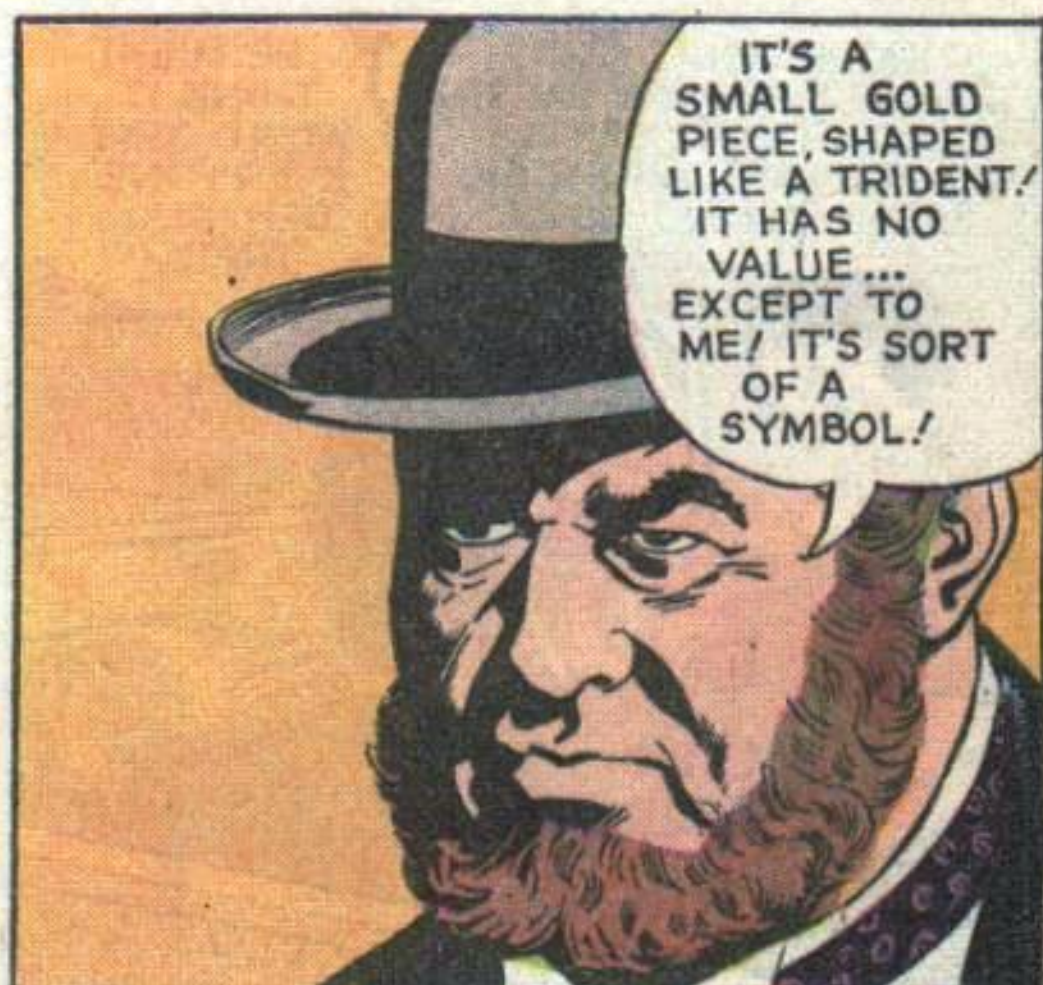
SUNSET STRIP

WE'LL WAIT HERE FOR YOU, STU!





**WITH J.R.'S FLASHLIGHT, BAILEY JOINS THE SEARCH...**





**BAILEY AND SPENCER FOLLOW GORDON MACKAY AND STEVEN RULE TO A LARGE HOUSE IN AN EXCLUSIVE DISTRICT...**



**THEY PARK THE CAR OUT OF SIGHT AND START ON FOOT TOWARD THE DARK, SILENT SHACK...**

**SUDDENLY, THE DIGGER AND HIS LANTERN DISAPPEAR...**







**BAILEY MOVES CAUTIOUSLY DOWN THE  
STEPS AND FINDS HIMSELF IN A SHORT,  
NARROW TUNNEL, LEADING INTO A  
DIMLY-LIGHTED CELLAR UNDER THE SHACK...**

**HE SIGNALS SILENTLY TO SPENCER  
TO FOLLOW HIM...**



**THEY MOVE NOISELESSLY  
INTO THE CELLAR...**



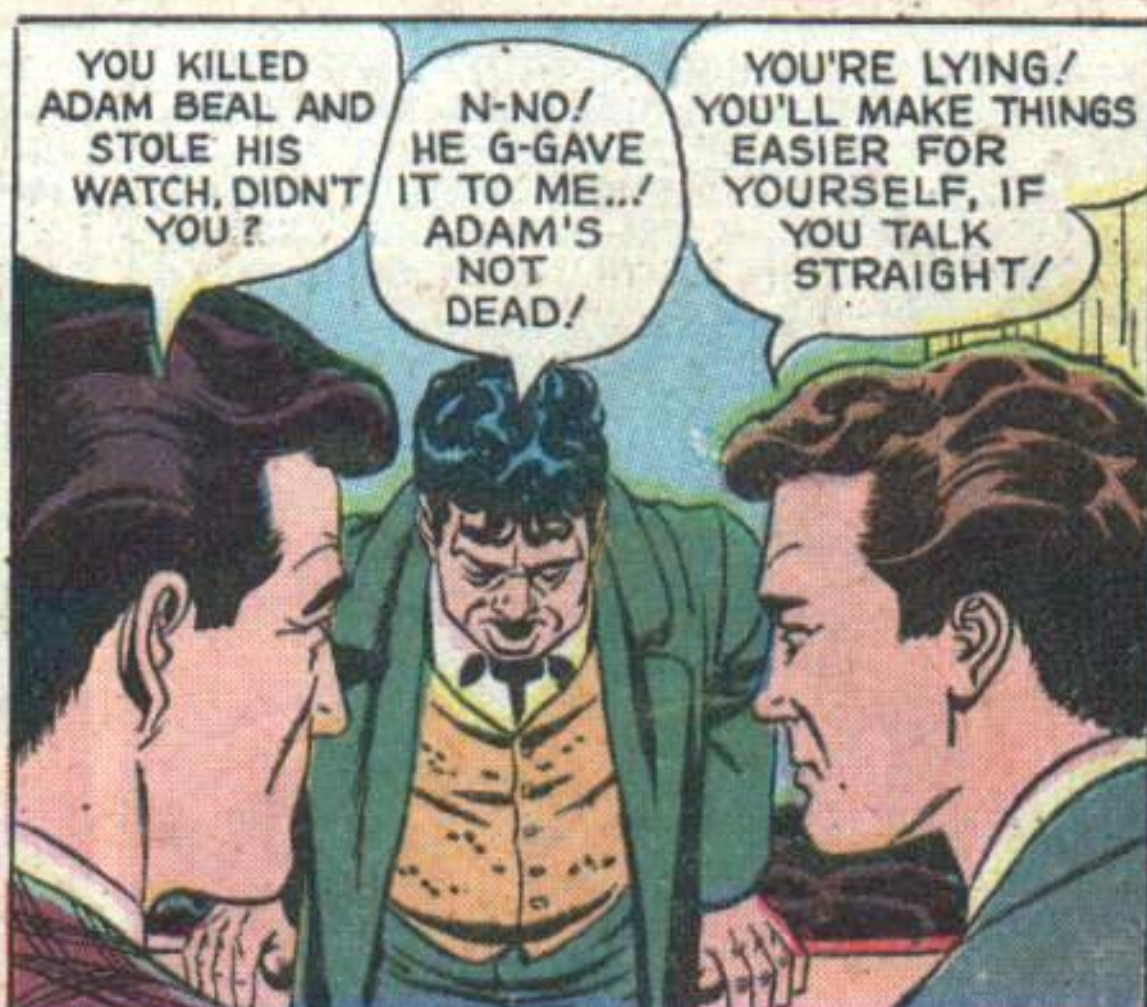




**WHILE BAILEY COVERS THE MAN,  
SPENCER SEARCHES HIM...**













LATER THAT NIGHT, IN LIEUTENANT GILMORE'S OFFICE...



YOU'VE DONE A FINE JOB, FINDING A KILLER, AND HIS MOTIVE, AND UNCOVERING A SMUGGLING RACKET!

THAT'S A **THREE**-WAY OPERATION.. STEALING, SMUGGLING, AND SELLING! THE TRIDENTS HAVE **THREE** PRONGS,..!



I HAVE A HUNCH THE TRIDENTS ARE THE **THREE** LEADER'S CREDENTIALS!

WE KNOW THE OWNERS OF TWO, BEAL AND MACKAY! I FIGURE THERE **MUST** BE A THIRD... THE TOP MAN!



I'D GUESS THE THIRD ONE'S VAN LANSING! ROD KNOWS ABOUT THE SMUGGLING AND IS KEEPING QUIET TO PROTECT VAN! I'LL BRING LANSING AND MACKAY IN FOR QUESTIONING!

WAIT ONE DAY, GIL!



GIVE US A CHANCE TO FIND SOME **REAL** EVIDENCE AGAINST THEM! ALL WE HAVE NOW IS SUSPICION!

OKAY, STU! I'LL HOLD OFF ONE DAY! BUT NO LONGER! I WANT THOSE TOP SMUGGLERS!



NEXT MORNING, BAILEY VISITS VAN LANSING'S OFFICE...

SORRY TO INTRUDE, VAN! I **MUST** TALK TO YOU FOR A MOMENT! IT'S IMPORTANT!

COME IN, STU! I THINK YOU KNOW STEVEN RULE! WE ARE OLD FRIENDS.. AS WELL AS CLIENT AND LAWYER!









THEY TALKED ABOUT THE SMUGGLING AND THE PLANS TO KILL THE HERMIT!

THEY MENTIONED VAN'S NAME SEVERAL TIMES! I DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS THEIR LAWYER FOR THEIR LEGITIMATE BUSINESSES!

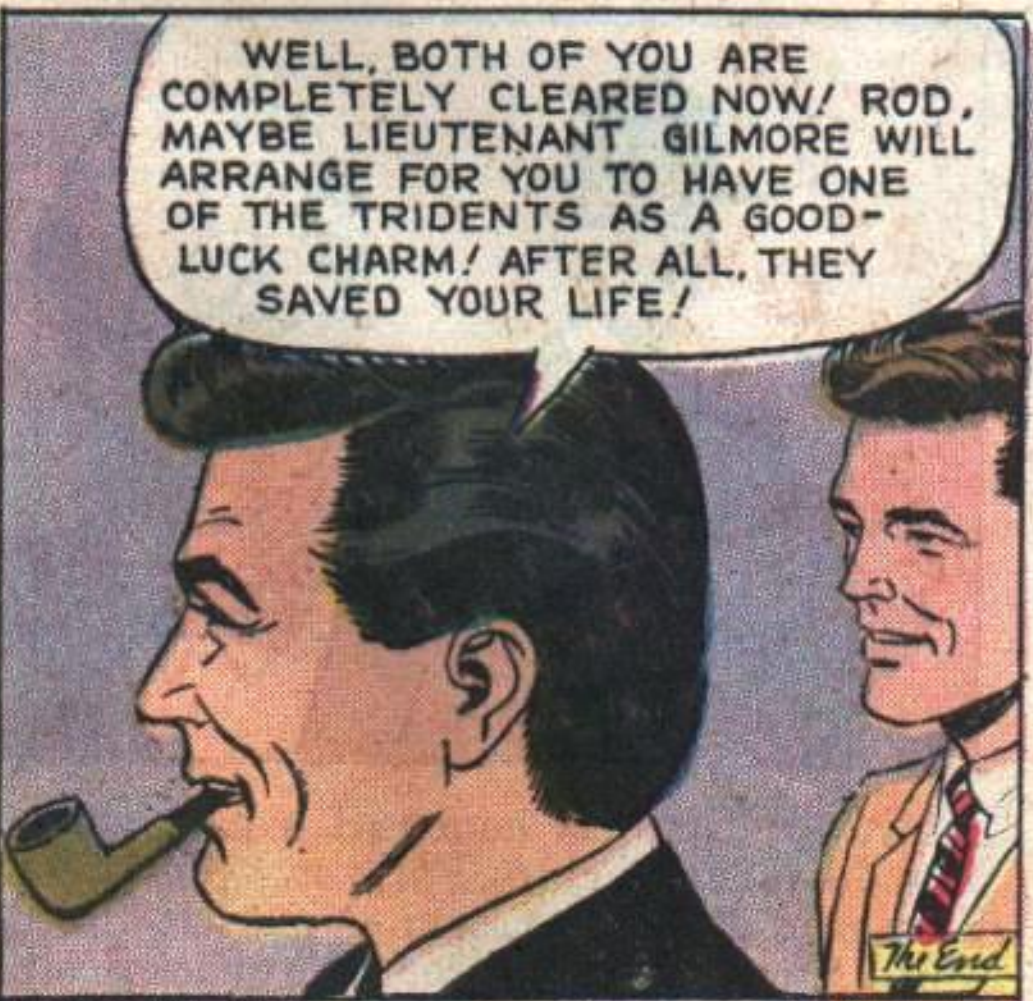
## WHAT'S IN A NAME?



I WENT TO THE HERMIT'S SHACK THAT NIGHT TO WARN HIM! I THOUGHT VAN HAD HIRED THE KILLER!

AND YOU KEPT QUIET TO PROTECT ME! THANKS, ROD!

The word thug is not a slang word, nor is it a coined name used for a ruffian or a robber. Thugs were a caste of professional robbers who terrorized India, from the mid-1100's to the mid-1800's. They worshipped Kali, the Hindu goddess of destruction, and they plundered and killed to make sacrifices to her. Thugs usually strangled their victims with a neckerchief.



WELL, BOTH OF YOU ARE COMPLETELY CLEARED NOW! ROD, MAYBE LIEUTENANT GILMORE WILL ARRANGE FOR YOU TO HAVE ONE OF THE TRIDENTS AS A GOOD-LUCK CHARM! AFTER ALL, THEY SAVED YOUR LIFE!

Men of wealth were singled out by the Thugs to become their victims. After slyly working his way into the victim's confidence, the Thug killed him and took his possessions. Women and persons who owned a sacred cow were never molested by Thugs. The order was brought under control by the British, but the name lives on, being associated with lawless men, who rob and kill, and with ruffians in general.



# 77 SUNSET STRIP

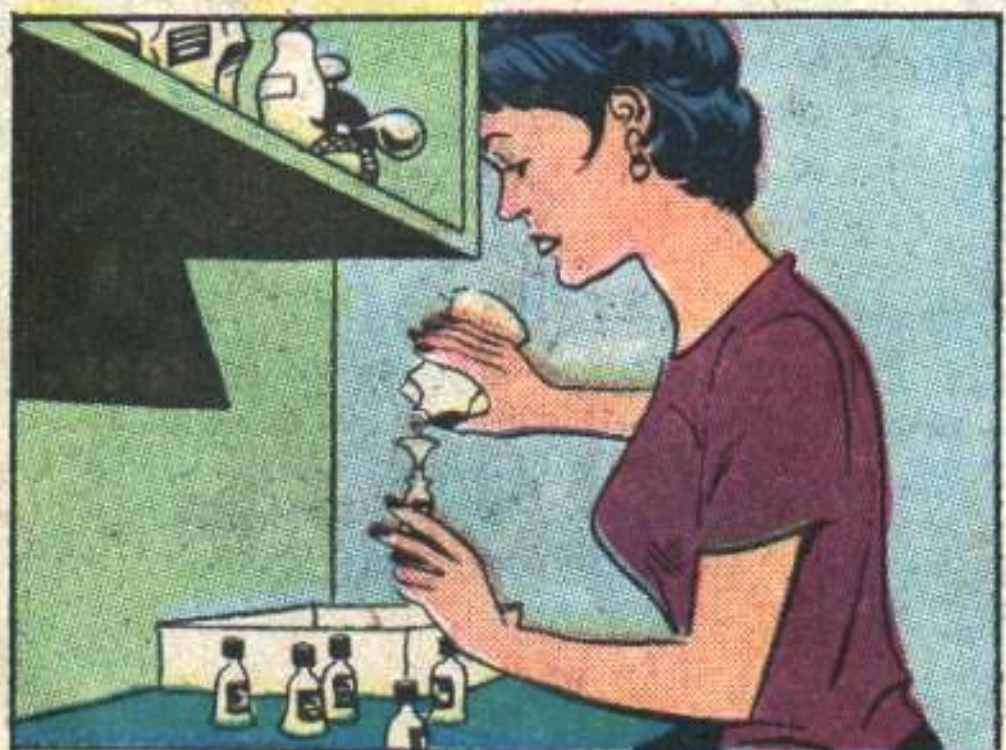
## FRAUD!



Any false representation or deceitful practice aimed at gaining unfair advantage over another person is fraud. Acts of fraud are apparently as old as mankind.



The most ancient deceptions are still used to trick the unwary, such as the sale of worthless shares of stock in oil wells or mineral mines, which do not exist.



Cologne, diluted, placed in small bottles, and sold as perfume at seemingly bargain prices is a common practice of fraud, as well as labeling imitation scents with the initials or names of well-known perfumes.



Fraudulent fraternities reap sizable rewards by soliciting funds for fake charitable organizations. Some solicitors don uniforms closely resembling those of approved organizations for easier "takes."



The sale of plants often is fraud. Photos of beautiful blooms and names that sound impressive entice buyers, who receive dried-up cuttings that will not grow.

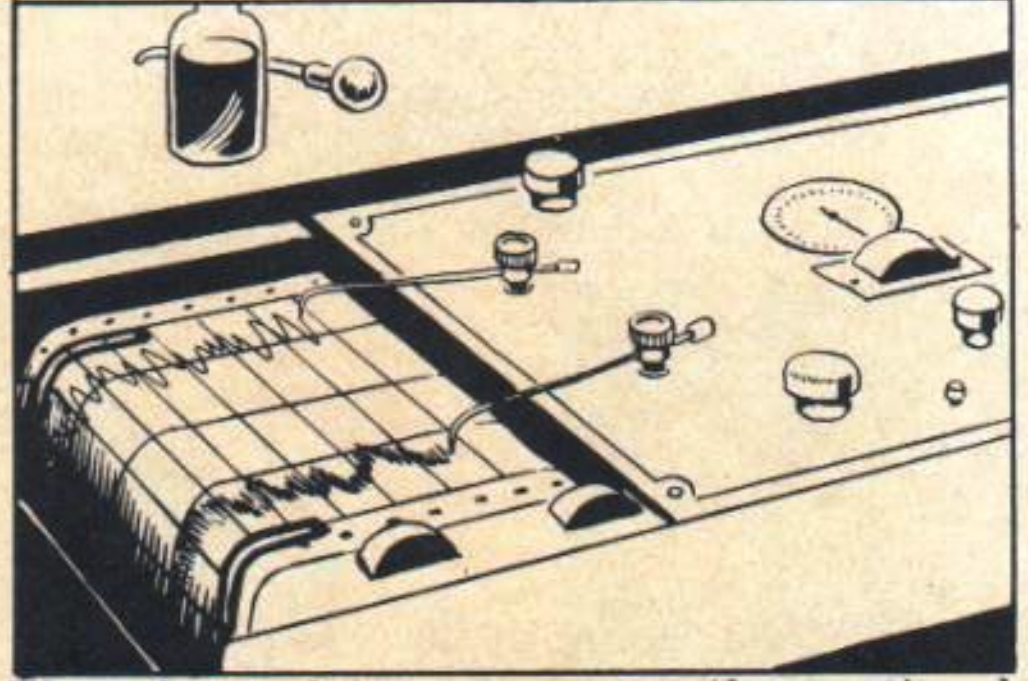


However, there is honor of a sort among fraudulent characters. For, though most will matter-of-factly perform numerous deceptions, they, as others, scorn the quack doctor as the most despicable fraud of all.





The detective has no aid more valuable than the polygraph, or lie detector, and he makes frequent use of it. To the innocent suspect, it can be a lifesaver; to the guilty, it appears like a more terrifying monster than a fire-breathing dragon.



The polygraph traces on paper the emotional reactions of the person being tested. A criminal may be able to control his facial expressions, but he cannot control his pulse, blood pressure, or breathing. It is these that the polygraph records.



The part the polygraph plays in *keeping* people honest is little known. In banks and department stores, where theft is a constant threat, the periodic use of the lie detector deters employees from stealing. Knowing that, at any unspecified time and as a matter of routine procedure, the machine will be used and their guilt discovered, they do not commit the crime.



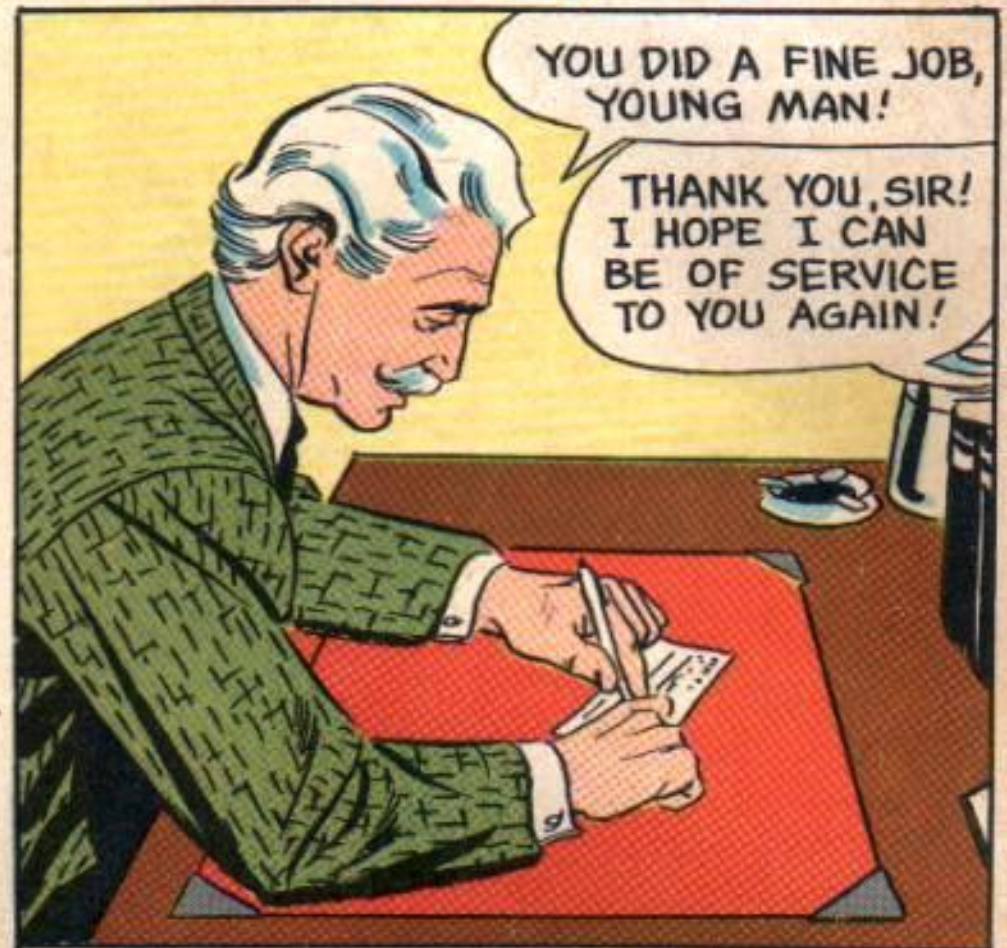
The polygraph is used to prove innocence as well as guilt. In an attempt to do full justice, a case may be reconsidered when a convicted man persists in proclaiming his innocence. Often, the lie detector will help in proving him to be not guilty.



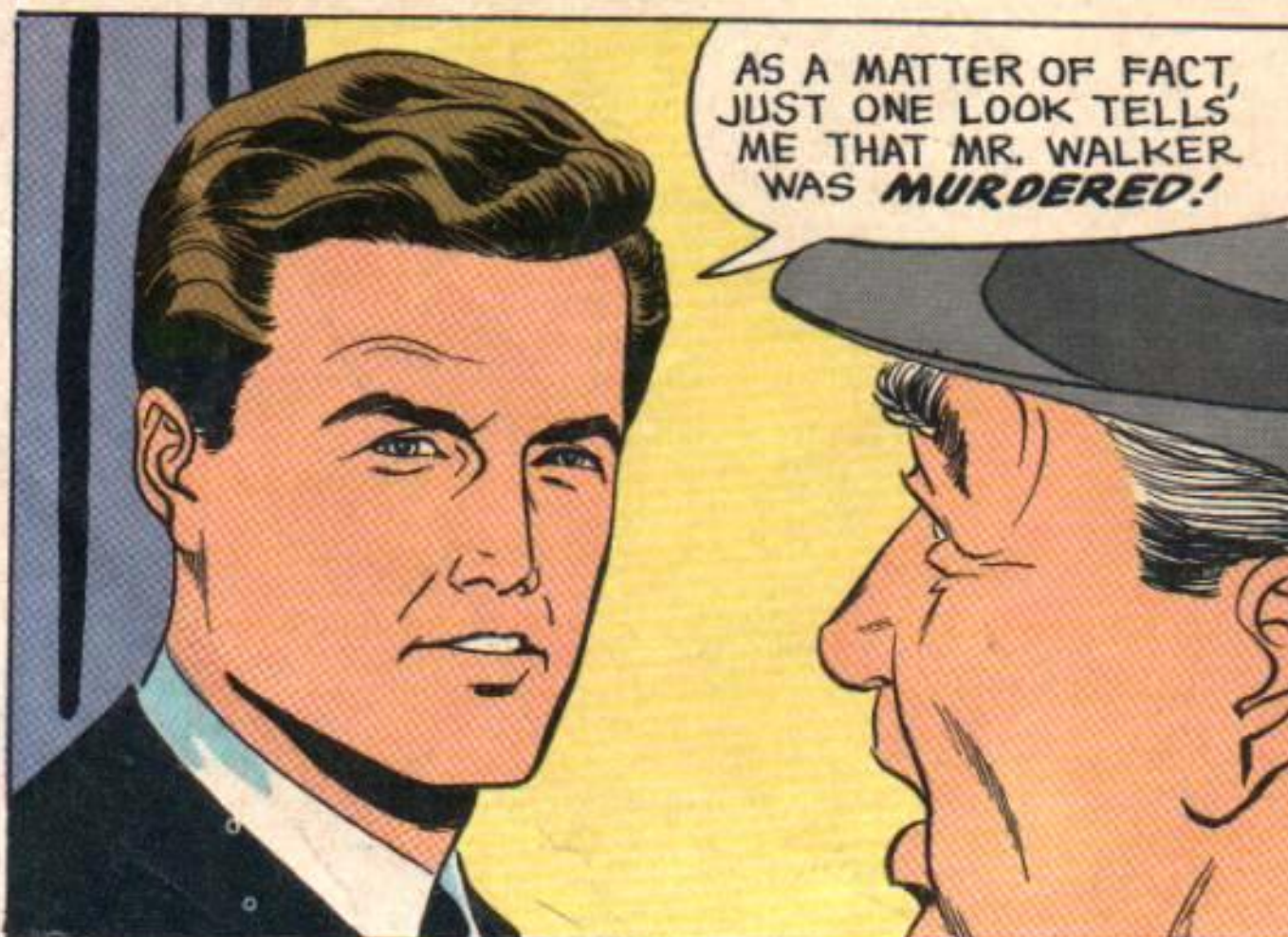
Although the lie detector is as modern as the jet plane, rice powder was used in ancient China for the same purpose. When a criminal is faced with discovery, fear makes his mouth go dry. The fine powder, with no moisture to congeal it, will choke him.



# A CHECK ON CLUES



LATER...



YOU HAVE SEEN AS MUCH AS JEFF SPENCER SAW! WHAT WAS THE CLUE THAT TOLD HIM THIS WAS A CASE OF MURDER?

WALKER REACHED FOR THE PEN AND WROTE THE CHECK WITH HIS LEFT HAND! HAD HE KILLED HIMSELF, HE WOULD HAVE USED HIS LEFT HAND, TOO! BUT WHEN HIS BODY WAS FOUND, THE GUN WAS IN HIS RIGHT HAND!