77 Sunset Strip

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

Efrem Zimbalist, Jr.
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.
I WISH YOU'D CHANGE YOUR MINDS AND GO BY PLANE... YOU'D BE SURE TO GET THERE ON TIME!

STOP WORRYING, SUY! WE CAN EASILY MAKE THE TRIP IN TWO DAYS, AND WE'LL NEED A CAR UP THERE!

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

HOLD THE FORT WHILE WE'RE GONE, STU!

I'LL 'PHONE PATTON, YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY! GOOD LUCK!

WHEN STUART BAILEY ENTERS HIS OFFICE...

LET'S MOVE, NICK...
Hey, boy! Was that Jeff Spencer driving the convertible that just left here?

Yes sir!

Sure our tough luck to miss him! But maybe we can catch him! Do you know where he's going?

I heard him say they were heading north on Highway 101.

At that same time...

Stu said you'd brief me on our mission after we started? Who's this Patton?

He's Samuel G. Patton, the lumber king! He owns miles of timber land and dozens of sawmills. He's getting old now and lives on his estate near Highpoint.

Patton's son quarreled with him years ago, went to Alaska and never came back. The son and his wife died recently, and left one boy... Sam Patton the third.

A month ago, Patton received a letter from his grandson, saying he'd like to visit his grandfather! Young Sam's arriving at Highpoint tomorrow evening.

So how do we fit into this big reunion?

Patton has never seen his grandson, but I have... so I'm to identify him when he arrives, to make sure an impostor isn't trying to pass himself off on the old man.
THE GRANDSON WILL INHERIT A BIG FORTUNE! PATTON WANTS TO BE SURE A PHONY ISN'T AFTER HIS MONEY!

WE DON'T EXPECT ANY TROUBLE, BUT STU AND I THOUGHT YOU'D BETTER COME ALONG, JUST—LOOK OUT, JEFF—!

GET OVER, YOU IDIOTS! WHAT'RE YOU TRYING TO DO... WRECK US—??

MAN! THOSE CHARACTERS MUST BE CRAZY! THEY HAD PLENTY OF ROOM TO PASS US!

MAYBE THEY DELIBERATELY TRIED TO RUN US OFF THE ROAD, KOKIE!

WHY? THEY WERE STRANGERS! I'M SURE I NEVER SAW THEM OR THE CAR BEFORE!

WE MIGHT BE RUNNING INTO THAT TROUBLE WE DIDN'T EXPECT!
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!

The garage next door can fix that headlight! Send the bill to the ABC Van Line! No argument about us bein' to blame!

So are we!
I KNOW I'VE SEEN THOSE TWO VAN DRIVERS SOMEWHERE! ARE THEY REGULAR CUSTOMERS HERE?

I DON'T KNOW WHO THEY ARE, BUT I PASSED THEM ON MY WAY TO WORK. THE VAN WAS PARKED ON A SIDE ROAD AND THEY WERE DRIVING A RACY-LOOKING CAR INTO IT!

I KNEW THEY LOOKED FAMILIAR. THEY'RE THE CHARACTERS WHO RAN US OFF THE ROAD.

NOW I'M SURE THERE'S A DELIBERATE PLAN TO SLOW US DOWN... OR STOP US COMPLETELY!

BUT THIS TRIP IS SUPPOSED TO BE SECRET. HOW'D THEY KNOW WHERE TO FIND US?

THE NEWS MUST'VE LEAKED OUT SOMEWHERE!

SHALL WE TRY TO CATCH 'EM?

WE WON'T HAVE TIME NOW. WE'LL GO AFTER THEM LATER, WHEN WE FINISH OUR JOB IN HIGHPOINT!

TWO HOURS LATER...

HERE WE GO AGAIN!

AND WE'LL HAVE TO DRIVE LONGER TO MAKE UP THE TIME WE'VE LOST!
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-Okay...!

Somebody's in the garage, all right!

When I give the word, we'll jump them together!

Ready! Open 'em wide!
YOU TWO AGAIN! WHAT KIND OF AN ACCIDENT ARE YOU FIXING UP THIS TIME?
WHATEVER IT IS—UNFIX IT FAST!!

SECONDS LATER...
NOW TALK! AND TELL THE TRUTH!
WHY DID YOU TRY TO KILL US?

THIS LITTLE BOMB WOULD HAVE BLASTED US AND THE CAR INTO ORBIT, JEFF!

WE WERE JUST FOLLOWING ORDERS... ANYTHING TO KEEP YOU FROM GETTIN' TO HIGHPOINT!

WHO GAVE YOU THE ORDERS?
I'M NOT TALKIN'!

I'LL TELL YOU, SPENCER! I'M NOT GOIN' TO TAKE THE WHOLE BLAME!
IT WAS JOE DOBBS, THE FELLA THAT RUNS THE POOLROOM IN HIGHPOINT!

DOBBS SAID SOME BIG SHOT WOULD PAY FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR THE JOB! WE COULDN'T SEE TURNIN' DOWN BIG MONEY LIKE THAT!
THAT'S THE TRUTH, SPENCER! DOBBS TOLD US WHAT TO DO! HE GAVE US THE FANCY CAR AND HALF THE DOUGH IN ADVANCE!

AND HE PARKED THE MOVING VAN ON A SIDE ROAD!

DOBBS SAID TO USE THE VAN IF OUR FIRST TRY FAILED! HE DIDN'T TELL US THE BIG SHOT'S NAME! OR WHY HE WANTED YOU STOPPED!

WE'LL FIND OUT!

AT DAWN...

WHERE ARE YOU TAKIN' US?

TO THE JAIL IN THE NEXT TOWN! YOU'LL BE LOCKED UP THERE WHILE WE GO ON TO HIGHPOINT!

THE Mysterious "BIG SHOT" MUST WANT TO KEEP YOU FROM MEETING PATTON'S GRANDSON!

IT SURE LOOKS THAT WAY!

I'M AFRAID THAT CAN MEAN ONLY ONE THING... THE YOUNG MAN WHO'S ARRIVING THIS EVENING IS NOT PATTON'S REAL GRANDSON!

AT LAST...

THERE'S HIGHPOINT! WE MADE IT ON TIME, JEFF!

YEAH... AND SOMEBODY'LL BE MIGHTY SURPRISED TO SEE US ROLL IN! WATCH FOR REACTIONS, Kookie!
There's a place called Joe's Pool Room, Jeff! That must be Dobb's layout!

We can get him later! The Patton Office is straight ahead! We'll go there first!

Do you think Patton will be waiting for us here?

Maybe! But he's probably at his private airfield, waiting for his grandson to arrive!

Is Mr. Patton here? I'm Jeff Spencer!

Oh, yes, Mr. Spencer! Mr. Patton and Mr. Blair have gone to the airfield! He told me to send you out there as soon as you arrived!

Mr. Patton sent his own plane to Seattle to bring his grandson here. You can't miss the field! Just follow the route on this map!

We'll find it! Thanks!

By the way, did you say someone was with Mr. Patton?

Yes, sir! Mr. Calvin Blair, the general manager of the company!
When they arrive at the airfield, Jeff greets Samuel Patton and introduces Kookie...

I'm very glad you made it on time, Jeff! The plane is due any minute now!

Call! 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...

Air patrol is trying to locate the ship, Sam! They'll find it!

Now I am worried, Jeff! Something must have happened...

Here comes a plane now!

It's ours, all right! Thank goodness, it's safe!

Remember, Sam. There's a chance the young man's a fraud. You must be prepared to face that disappointment!

I am prepared, Cal! But with Jeff here to identify the boy, at least I'll know the truth right away!

A few minutes later...

Jeff Spencer!! I didn't expect to see you here—!

And I didn't expect to see you in the pilot's seat, Sam!
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 UNCONSCIOUS! I'LL TAKE THEM TO THE POLICE STATION!
It doesn't seem possible that Archer...

He'll do plenty of talking when he wakes up in jail.

Somebody hired Archer and his pal to do this! I think I can find the man who did it!

The job's yours, Jeff!

I'll give you a hand with them, Blair!

Shortly...

That won't be necessary, Spencer! I can handle everything alone! You'd better drive Mr. Patton and young Sam to the house.

Kookie or I'll go with you, Blair!

Blair drives quickly away...

I can drive Grandfather home, Jeff, if you and Kookie want to go to town!

Good! I'd like to be there when Archer wakes up!

Blair's a smooth character, Jeff! He wasted no time getting those crooks away from here!

I think you're right! I also think Blair'll never take them to the police station!

A little later...

I can't see Blair's tail lights now, Jeff! We've lost him!

You mean he's lost us!

I have an idea where we might find him, if he's not at the police station!
They check the Highpoint Police Station...

He isn't here... And hasn't been here! Where do we go from here?

To Joe Dobbs' pool room! Hop in!

Shortly...

We want to see Joe Dobbs!

He's gone fishing! The place is closed till he comes back... So move on, fellas!

Keep him quiet, Kookie, while I take a look in that back room!

If you make one sound, it'll be Sleepsville for you, Dobbs!

Step back, mister! We're coming in to look around!

You are Joe Dobbs, aren't you?

Y-yeah!

You two and Dobbs get out of town and stay out! My whole plan's ruined... Now we've got to save our own skins!

What about you, Blair?

They'll find me in the station wagon in the ditch! I'll say you jumped me and got away! They'll believe it... Nobody suspects me!
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.
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 HOPE I CAN! BUT IF ROD WON'T TALK TO YOU, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE'LL TALK TO ME?

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!

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!
HELLO, ROD! I'VE BROUGHT AN OLD FRIEND TO SEE YOU!

I TOLD YOU I DON'T WANT TO SEE ANYBODY! GO AWAY AND LEAVE ME ALONE!

YOU'LL SEE ME WON'T YOU, ROD? STU BAILEY... REMEMBER?

I SURE DO! YOU SAVED MY LIFE ON A FISHING TRIP IN CANADA! SORRY I WAS RUDE, STU!

WHY DID VAN BRING YOU HERE?

TO TALK TO YOU! HE HOPES I CAN FIND EVIDENCE TO CLEAR YOU!

THANKS FOR COMING, STU! BUT I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY TO YOU... OR THE POLICE!

ALL RIGHT! BUT IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND, JUST LET VAN KNOW!

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HOW ROD WAS MIXED UP WITH A STRANGE CHARACTER LIKE THIS ADAM BEAL, THE HERMIT!

LET'S DRIVE OUT TO BEAL'S PLACE IN THE HILLS! I'M CURIOUS TO SEE IT!
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!
IT'S A LITTLE GOLD TRIDENT, ALL RIGHT? I'D SAY IT WAS A WATCH CHARM OR LUCKY PIECE.

IT WAS PROBABLY HANGING ON A CHAIN OR KEY RING...COULD HAVE BEEN BROKEN OFF IN A STRUGGLE.

NO CHAIN OR KEY RING WAS FOUND ON BEAL/ DID YOUR BROTHER HAVE ONE, LANSING?

I DON'T RECALL ANY! I KNOW I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS GOLD TRIDENT BEFORE, LIEUTENANT!

IT'S STILL BRIGHT AND UNTARNISHED, SO IT MUST HAVE BEEN DROPPED HERE VERY RECENTLY!

THEY LOOK AROUND THE CLUTTERED LEAN-TO STOREROOM...

DID ROD SAY ANYTHING LAST NIGHT?

NO! HE WAS TOO DAZED! BUT HE STILL HAD THE MURDER GUN IN HIS POCKET!

WHAT ABOUT THAT BRUISE ON ROD'S HEAD?

BEAL MUST'VE HIT HIM IN THE STRUGGLE/ ALL THE EVIDENCE POINTS TO ROD... THERE'S NO SIGN ANYONE ELSE WAS HERE!

YOU SAID HIS FINGERPRINTS WERE ON THE GUN/ SO YOU HAVE EVERYTHING EXCEPT A MOTIVE!

RIGHT/ SO FAR WE HAVEN'T FOUND ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN ROD AND BEAL!
It is late afternoon when Bailey returns to his office.

How'd you make out with the LANSINGS, STU?

Come in the office and I'll tell you - hey! Let me see that key ring, Kookie!

Where'd you get the little gold TRIDENT?

J.R., the parking lot boy, gave it to me for a good luck charm!

J.R. found it on the ground in the parking lot yesterday! Why all the interest, STU?

It might be important! Let's talk to J.R.!

Do you have any idea who might have dropped the little TRIDENT, J.R.?

Not a glimmer! I found it in the back lot! Nobody's asked for it, so I gave it to Kookie for a good-luck piece!

It COULD be a lead to a murderer, J.R.!! Try to remember what cars you parked in the lot yesterday! I'll be in my office.

Come on Kookie, I'll explain!
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!
LOSE SOMETHING, GENTLEMEN?

YES! A GOOD-LUCK CHARM! I WAS TAKING MY FRIEND TO HIS CLUB WHEN I MISSED IT... SO WE STOPPED BY TO SEE IF I DROPPED IT HERE, EARLIER!

EXCUSE ME, SIR! I HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF A CUSTOMER!

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

I APPRECIATE YOUR HELPING US, GORDON! MACKEY! THIS IS MY FRIEND, STEVEN RULE, OF THE RULE STEAMSHIP COMPANY!

GLAD TO KNOW YOU BOTH, BAILEY! IS THE CHARM LARGE OR SMALL?

IT'S A SMALL GOLD PIECE, SHAPED LIKE A TRIDENT! IT HAS NO VALUE... EXCEPT TO ME! IT'S SORT OF A SYMBOL!

IT'S GETTING LATE, GORDON! WE'D BETTER GIVE UP THE SEARCH! CHANCES ARE, YOU DROPPED IT SOMEWHERE ELSE! IT'LL TURN UP!

THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR HELP, BAILEY! SORRY WE HAVE TO RUSH OFF, BUT WE HAVE AN APPOINTMENT!

THAT REMINDS ME... SO HAVE I! I HOPE YOU FIND YOUR TRIDENT, MACKEY!
Bailey and Spencer follow Gordon Mackey and Steven rule to a large house in an exclusive district...

That's Van Lansing's home, Jeff!

I wonder what business Mackey and Rule have with Lansing?

Maybe Lansing owns the third Trident, and Rod's keeping quiet to protect his brother!

That doesn't make sense, Jeff! Van Lansing wouldn't hire us to investigate and risk being found out!

He might think it would throw everyone off his trail!

There's something strange about everyone in this case, including the hermit! Let's go up to his place! I'd like to see it!

Good idea! We can look around while no one's there!

Look, Stu! Someone is digging in one of the flower beds! Shall we move in on him?

Not yet! Wait and see what he's after!

Suddenly, the digger and his lantern disappear...
He's vanished!! He dropped out of sight!!! Let's see where he went! Come on, Jeff!

There's the answer. Steps leading under the shack! They were hidden under that box of flowers!

I don't hear or see anything! I'll go down first! Cover me!

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...
Hold it, Mister! Turn around slowly! With your hands o-o-okay! O-don't shoot!

I'm not doin' anything wrong. An old shipmate lives here! But he's not home, so I came down here to get some of my things!

While Bailey covers the man, Spencer searches him...

You can put your hands down now... what's your name?

Fred Moss!

What's in all these boxes and packages?

Hey! I dunno! They belong to Beal. He stores 'em here for safe-keepin'!

What're you doin', Mister? That's my watch!

Give it to me! If you have no right...

If this watch is yours, why is it engraved with the initials, AB, instead of FM?

Suddenly...

Hahh-!
STOP... OR I'LL SHOOT!
DON'T SHOOT, JEFF! WE WANT HIM TO TALK!

GOT HIM, STU!

ON YOUR FEET, MOSS!
NOW, YOU'LL ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS AND TELL THE TRUTH... IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU!!

YOU KILLED ADAM BEAL AND STOLE HIS WATCH, DIDN'T YOU?

N-NO!
HE GAVE IT TO ME... ADAM'S NOT DEAD!

YOU'RE LYING!
YOU'LL MAKE THINGS EASIER FOR YOURSELF, IF YOU TALK STRAIGHT!

WE'RE PRIVATE DETECTIVES! THIS WATCH WILL CONVICT YOU OF BEAL'S MURDER! IF YOU'RE SMART, YOU'LL TELL THE WHOLE STORY!

OKAY, I'LL TALK!
I DID KILL ADAM BEAL!

BUT I HAD TO DO IT, OR BE KILLED, MYSELF! IT WAS AN ORDER FROM THE TOP MAN! I DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS/ NEVER SAW HIM/ ALWAYS TALKS ON THE 'PHONE!
WAS ROD LANSING PART OF THE PLAN?

NO! HE JUST HAPPENED TO COME TO THE SHACK—THAT NIGHT! I DON'T KNOW WHY! I KNOCKED HIM OUT AND RIGGED HIM FOR THE KILLING!

GO ON!

I FIGURED IF HE WAS IN ON THE DEAL, HE'D BE TOO SCARED TO TALK ANYWAY!

WHAT DEAL?

SMUGGLIN' STUFF INTO THE COUNTRY. DIAMONDS, PAINTINGS, PERFUMES AND FURS, LIKE THESE! THEY STOLE 'EM IN OTHER PLACES, BROUGHT 'EM IN BY SHIP, STORED 'EM HERE TILL THEY SOLD 'EM!

I WAS PAID TO PICK UP THE STUFF FROM A HIDING PLACE ON THE DOCK AND BRING IT HERE! BEAL'S THE ONLY MAN I EVER SAW!

WHY WAS BEAL KILLED?

HE WANTED TO QUIT THE DEAL! THEY WERE AFRAID HE'D TALK! I WAS SENT HERE TONIGHT TO GET THE STUFF BEFORE THE COPS COULD FIND IT!

BAILEY SHOWS MOSS THE LITTLE TRIDENT FOUND IN THE PARKING LOT...

DID YOU EVER SEE THIS?

SO YOU FOUND IT? IT BROKE OFF BEAL'S WATCH CHAIN WHEN WE WERE FIGHTIN'!
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 Mackey! 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 Mackey 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.
Van and I have finished our business, Mr. Bailey, so I'll go.

Don't go on my account, Mr. Rule! Say! That's an interesting gold piece... a little trident! May I look at it?

It's a watch charm!

Like the one Mackey lost in the parking lot? Like the one found at Adam Beal's place?

Don't move, gentlemen! I'm sorry to do this.

Van, I think you know what Bailey's saying.

Steve!! Have you gone crazy? You can't get away with this!

You've gone as far as you're going, Rule! Drop your gun!!

The police already have your friend, Mackey!

Jeff Spencer!! How did you know??

I didn't! But with the suspicion beginning to point to you, I waited outside, just in case you tried to leave in a hurry!

Later that day...

Why did you think your brother was part of the smuggling deal, Rod?

I came home on the same ship with Rule and Mackey! By sheer chance, I overheard one of their conversations!
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!

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!

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!

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.

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.
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.

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 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.

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.

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.

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.
That finishes our little transaction, Mr. Spencer! I want to write you a check, but I seem to have misplaced my pen! May I borrow yours?

Of course, Mr. Walker!

You did a fine job, young man!

Thank you, sir! I hope I can be of service to you again!

Later...

This is Inspector Burns, Jeff! Mr. Walker is dead! Can you come over immediately?

I'll be right there, Inspector!

This is just routine, of course, Jeff, because you were the last person to see him alive! It's obvious that Walker took his own life!

It's not obvious at all, Inspector!

As a matter of fact, just one look tells me that Mr. Walker was murdered!

You have seen as much as Jeff Spencer saw! What was the clue that told him this was a case of murder?