

Cover by *Frank Cozzarelli*

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Biggest Risk

A Novelette

BY C. B. GILFORD



"Get it over with," she said. "I won't fight you." He laughed, because he didn't have that in mind at all.

HE PREFERRED to work in the sunshine. In the big department store parking lot, for instance, there was an attendant after dark. None during the day. So in a way that made it easier. But in another way it took more nerve. That made him feel good, knowing he had nerve.

He got there early in the afternoon, spent an hour or so before

he made his choice. He didn't appear suspicious to anyone, because he was well dressed, and he might have been there on legitimate business, such as waiting for his wife while she shopped. He strolled around, looking at the cars and at the people who got out of them. Especially the women.

He considered several. There was

the middle-aged lady in the black Cadillac who carried a huge purse. The purse interested him, but the lady was frail, possibly had heart trouble, might scare too easily. He didn't want that. There was the tallish blonde in the tailored slacks. The slacks interested him too, and the way she walked in them. He even followed her a bit. But she was athletic, she carried her head high, and was sort of fearless-looking. He felt slightly afraid of her. And he couldn't have that.

The choice eventually was a kind of in-between. She drove up in a fiery-red hardtop. He watched her climb out, nyloned legs first, then a sleek black dress and fur piece. Very stylish, he thought. Thirty maybe, undoubtedly married, with a good figure that was just beginning to incline a little to weight. Maybe she dyed her hair a bit, but her face was young, smooth, rather happy.

He followed her too. She was unaware of it, because her spike heels clattered noisily on the pavement. He liked her walk, her clothes. She had money, he thought, a husband who let her spend it, and not a care in the world. "You'll do," he said softly. "I'll wait for you." And he let her go into the store.

He sauntered back to his own car. It was easy to find among all the newer, shinier models. His was an eight-year-old sedan with imperfect paint and a layer of dust. But it was not old or dirty enough to

be conspicuous. He drove it to the empty parking place next to the red hardtop. He backed into the spot, so that the driver's doors of the two cars were side by side. Then he sat patiently.

An hour passed. Two hours. The autumn sun had made it warm inside the car, and several times he wiped perspiration from his face. He consulted his watch occasionally. But he was in no real hurry. Even if it got dark and the attendant came on duty and he had to leave, there was still no great loss. Tomorrow would be another day.

But she came, just before five o'clock. He saw the swishing black dress and heard the clicking of the spike heels. She carried no packages, which pleased him. He wasn't interested in the lingerie or perfume she might have bought. But she must have bought something, because she seemed happy. As she came close he could hear her humming gaily.

He allowed her to pass between the two cars, but before she could unlock and open the door of hers, he opened his own. She was trapped there, but she didn't realize it at first. She stood back, still humming, and waited for him to close the door and leave. When he failed to do this, but stared at her instead, she looked just a trifle annoyed and said, "Pardon me, but I'd like to get in my car."

"Get into mine," he told her, and showed her his gun.

This was the crucial moment, he knew. She could have turned and run, and he wouldn't have dared to pursue her or to shoot. Or she simply could have screamed, which would have made him jump into his car and drive away fast, hoping she wouldn't think to note the license number. But she didn't do either of these clever things, because he had the advantage of shock and surprise.

"Get in," he repeated in a harder tone.

Her face was deathly pale and her jaw was slack, letting tiny folds of flabby flesh show at her throat. She was thirty-five rather than thirty, he decided. But he still wanted her. He waved the gun in the direction he desired her to go. She climbed in hastily, wriggling desperately past the steering wheel. He put the gun in his left-hand coat pocket and followed her.

"Don't try to attract anybody's attention or I'll kill you," he warned.

She sat very still, staring straight ahead. She'll behave, he thought. He started the engine. The car moved unmolested out of the parking lot, headed down a side street, away from the mainstream of rush-hour traffic. They drove for fifteen minutes without conversation, weaving gradually toward the outskirts of town, using little-traveled roads. But he could just as easily have driven through the business sections. She gave him no trouble.

When he was almost at his destination, he gave her a curt order. "Get out of sight. Lie down on the seat."

She obeyed quickly. He drove on for two minutes more, to all outward appearances alone in the car. He turned into a driveway, through garage doors he had left standing open. Then he cut the ignition, got out, and shut the garage doors from the inside. When he returned to the car and switched on the dome light, she was still crouching where he had left her.

"You can sit up now," he told her.

She responded like a puppet. Her hat was somewhat askew now. She didn't look quite as stylish as before. "What do you want with me?" she asked in a hoarse whisper and with a kind of choking dread, as if she knew the answer.

He smiled, knowing what she must be thinking. And knowing how wrong she was, how she underestimated him.

But already it seemed that the uncertainty of her fate was frightening her the most. "Are you going to rob me?" she asked him. The flabby part of her neck twitched.

Yes, he thought, among other things. "Give me your purse," he said.

She handed it to him without question. He fished in it, found a wallet. It contained two twenties and three ones. He shoved the bills carelessly into his pocket, handed back the big purse and then com-

menced to examine the rest of the contents of the wallet.

"Mrs. Lucille Roth," he read from the driver's license. "That your name?"

"Yes."

"Always like to know who I've got."

She was looking around the interior of the garage. The dim wooden walls pressed close in around the car, and what might be beyond the walls or how near another human being might be, she couldn't know, of course. She was perfectly alone in this narrow space with him.

"Roth," he said. "Familiar name. Not the auto stores?"

"Yes. My husband is James Roth."

"Any children?"

"Two. Girl seven and a boy three."

Obviously she was wondering whether these facts would help her. So he wore a smile which told her nothing.

He consulted the back of the driver's license. "Looks like you've had a few tickets, Lucy," he commented, using her name deliberately. "Speeding, driving through a red light. I'll bet you don't like cops, do you, Lucy?"

Her eyes widened, but she said nothing.

"Bet you'd like to have a couple of them here right now though, wouldn't you?"

She stared at him, and he smiled again and continued exploring the wallet. Membership cards mostly,

Junior League, country club, Philharmonic Orchestra Association. P.T.A. All very high-and-mighty. Then at the bottom of everything was a small snapshot. The two kids. He waved it at her. "What are their names?" he wanted to know.

"Lisa and Douglas."

"Fancy."

She seemed to take a little courage from his sneer. "What do you want with me?" she asked him again.

"You wearing any jewelry?" he asked in return.

For an answer she peeled the black glove off her left hand, tugged a time or two, then handed him a pair of rings. He glanced at them. Wedding and engagement ring. The latter had a good-sized diamond in it. He put them into his pocket, although he knew he'd never have the nerve to try to sell them.

"What about the watch?" he said.

She gave it to him.

"Earrings?"

They came off quickly. She didn't seem to feel any pain as she wrenched them from her ears. He stowed everything in the same pocket.

"Is that all?"

"Yes, that's everything. Now will you let me go?"

He shook his head.

"But you wanted to rob me. You've got everything. Let me go."

"Who said I wanted to rob you?" he questioned mockingly.

"But you have."

"Oh sure. As long as you're here. But I didn't go to all this trouble just for forty-three bucks and some cheap jewelry."

She swallowed, and had trouble doing it. Her thoughts were clear in her face—she wasn't going to escape with the minimum loss and inconvenience—there was worse in store. "What are you going to do?" she asked slowly.

He was silent. Let her guess.

"Listen," she said after a moment. "My husband doesn't have a lot of money. Really he doesn't. We spend it too fast. But he can scrape together a few thousand. I know he can do that. And he'll do it without any questions. I'll write him or call him, whatever you want me to do. . . . This is a kidnapping, isn't it?"

He let her rave, then he answered quietly, "Who said it was a kidnapping?"

"But you want money, don't you?"

"Sure, everybody does. But money isn't everything."

She closed her eyes, seemed to be making a supreme effort to control herself. Even without eyes her face was eloquent. She was afraid, on the edge of terror.

"There's only one thing left," she said. "Rape."

Still he refused to give her a clue to his intentions. Finally she opened her eyes again; the terror was there, waiting to give voice to a scream. But she didn't scream.

"I have two children and I love my husband," she told him.

He merely looked at her.

"Get it over with," she said. "I won't fight you. I don't want to get hurt."

She was smarter than most, he thought. He liked that. It fitted in with his plans. Too bad for her though.

She'd closed her eyes again. He reached across the seat and took her by the shoulders. As she'd promised, she didn't resist. She came limply, like a sack full of something soft, or like a dead thing. He kissed her on the mouth. Dead flesh. He pushed her back, then struck as hard as he could with his left palm on the side of her face. She opened her eyes, surprised as he knew she'd be. He laughed softly.

"You think you're beautiful, I suppose, huh, Lucy? You think you're so damned beautiful that every man who sees you wants to rape you. You've got your nerve all right."

She sat back in her corner of the seat and stared at him. She seemed to be feeling something between relief and fear of the yet unknown. But the fear, because she was still here with him, was the stronger.

"What do you want then?" she wondered.

He didn't tell her.

"If it isn't robbery . . . or kidnapping . . . or rape . . . what is it then? What is there left?"

Now she was on the track.

She watched him with fascination as he reached into the dashboard compartment and drew out a flashlight. "Get out," he ordered, "and go around to the back of the car."

She obeyed, groping in the dimness, and he followed her. He'd taken the car keys with him and now he unlocked the trunk, lifted the heavy metal cover till it clicked into the full open position. "Get inside," he said.

For the first time she failed to do as she was told immediately. "What for?" she demanded with a sudden spark of courage.

He wondered, if she decided to fight, if he could handle her without harm to himself. A shot might be heard outside. He'd have to subdue her with his own strength. She was not a small woman. But she was soft. He knew that from having touched her. Reflecting on her softness renewed his own courage.

He spoke with remorseless authority. "I've drilled air holes in the floor, so you won't suffocate. And I've taken all the tools out, incidentally. So don't think you'll find a wrench in there to brain me with. Now climb in."

He illuminated her dark prison with his flashlight. She went into it slowly, gingerly, clumsily. He wanted to laugh—and he did—at the ridiculous picture she made, sleek nylons, tight black dress, fur piece and all, scrambling into that dirty, dusty hole. In the process she lost

one of her shoes. He picked it up from the garage floor, an expensive-looking black suede job. Hardly a weapon, but it would make a loud noise if pounded on metal.

"Gimme the other one," he ordered.

She handed it to him meekly. He threw them both into a corner. Then he took the little box from his pocket, opened it and showed her the small red capsule. "This will make you sleep, Lucy," he said.

She stared at the thing and shook her head.

"It's this or the gun butt," he threatened.

She accepted the capsule hastily and popped it into her mouth. He watched with amusement the difficulty she had in swallowing it dry. He probed inside of her mouth with his flashlight to make sure.

"You'll go to sleep in a few minutes," he said, "and I'll see you in the morning. But I won't be far away in the meantime. If you try to make any noise I'll kill you."

He knew from the look on her face that she believed him. She hadn't given any trouble yet, and wasn't likely to now. She was already too used to obeying him. And he'd been careful to hold out just enough hope to her to get co-operation in return. He could read her. If she behaved perfectly, there might still be a chance. But he laughed inwardly. There was no chance.

He closed the trunk and locked

it. Then he opened the garage doors and strolled out into the open air. It was almost dusk, six o'clock by his watch. He smoked a cigarette. Be patient, he told himself. Probably just about now they'll be expecting her home for dinner, James and Lisa and Douglas. The husband will wait maybe half an hour more. Then he'll start calling, her friends, the country club. When finally he doesn't locate her, he'll call the police. He'll tell them she went shopping, and that will lead them to the car. Then the hunt will be on. But it will all take time. Be patient. Tomorrow the real fun begins.

Half a dozen cigarettes and almost an hour later he unlocked the trunk to look at Lucy. She lay still, breathing deeply. The flashlight shining directly in her eyes failed to disturb her. He was satisfied. She'd keep till morning. He locked the trunk again, locked the garage, and went into the house.

"Where have you been?" his sister asked him without interest.

"Over at Eddie's," he said. He knew several Eddies, and she didn't care anyway. He made himself a sandwich and had a bottle of beer. After that, as he often did, he watched television till past midnight. There were several newscasts, and he was a little disappointed when none of them mentioned Lucille Roth.

He checked the car trunk again before he went to bed. All was well.

Be patient, he cautioned himself again. It would be ridiculously easy to kill her now and dump her somewhere. But it would be too easy. Anybody could do it that way.

He went inside and had another bottle of beer. He wasn't a narcotics user. Beer was enough for him. It made him sleep.

...And it did. He awoke fairly late, almost nine, and had a solitary breakfast because by this time of day he was alone in the house. The portable radio told him the nine o'clock news. Which included just a very brief announcement about a Lucille Roth being missing.

He went out to the garage to see Lucy. He found her only half awake, still groggy from the sedative. And she'd been crying. Her soiled face was tear-stained.

"I'm thirsty," she whispered to him. "Can I have a drink?"

"Maybe later," he told her. "I don't want you to be able to scream very loud for a while."

That brought her fully awake quite suddenly. To the half-remembered fears of yesterday, a new one now was added. She questioned mutely.

"I'm going to drive to a certain place," he went on. "You may know where we are when we get there. You may want to scream to attract attention. I can promise you something though. If you do scream they'll never get you out of that trunk alive. I've got a gun, remember." He showed it to her again.

"I'll empty it right through the trunk lid. And you'll never know whether they get me or not."

He watched her to calculate the effect of his words. Then he told himself he didn't have to worry. Her answer was written in her face. She didn't want to die just so that he might die too. She wanted to see Lisa and Douglas again. He closed the trunk and locked it.

He opened the garage doors, got into the car, and backed out. Then he headed off in an unfamiliar direction. He drove at a moderate pace and obeyed all traffic signals. No one knew he was not driving alone.

He found the Roth house without much difficulty. Once he was on the right street he needn't have known the exact number. Two police cars were in front of the place. He approached slowly, circled the block once, and returned. This second time he rediscovered his nerve. He parked just across the street from the police cars.

There was a cop in one of the cars. This cop looked at the new arrival for a moment, but there was no curiosity in the look. The cop went back to listening to his radio.

He smiled at the cop's reaction and breathed easier. Then he studied the house. A real nice place, a new ranch type, almost a mansion. Lucy had had things real soft, he thought. A lot softer than that hard trunk floor.

Almost half an hour passed with-

out visible activity. There were cops in the house, of course. They would be questioning James Roth. Is there any place, Mr. Roth, that your wife might have gone that you haven't mentioned yet? Was your wife in good physical health? Anything seem wrong with her mentally? Well, did she have any enemies?

It was all very funny.

He got out of his own car finally and strolled over to the police car. The cop in it instantly became a little more alert. But not a lot more.

"What can I do for you, buddy?" he wanted to know, not unfriendly.

"This is the Roth home, isn't it? Heard on the radio that Mrs. Roth is missing."

"That's right. You know anything about it?"

"Oh no."

"What do you want then?"

"Just curious."

"You a friend of the Roths?"

"Don't know 'em."

"Why are you so curious then?"

"I'm a student of criminology."

The cop seemed amused. "Think there's been a crime?" he asked.

"Probably. Rich people. Things always happen to rich people. You don't mind if I hang around, do you?"

"No, I guess there's no law against it."

So he hung around. This particular cop wasn't very talkative though. The radio chatter wasn't very interesting either. He got tired

of it quickly and went back and sat in his own car.

Another car drove up while he waited. A man got out of it and went into the house. He looked like a reporter. Within fifteen minutes still another car arrived. One of its occupants went into the house while the second snapped a picture of the house itself. The caption under that picture, when it appeared in the afternoon paper, would undoubtedly read, "This is the palatial residence of Mr. and Mrs. James Roth, from which Mrs. Roth disappeared sometime Tuesday..."

Both the reporters came out after a while and they and the photographer drove away. It was too bad, because they just missed another good picture. The red hardtop came down the street and swung into the driveway. It had scarcely braked to a complete stop when four more men came out of the house.

As he sat there watching, he realized with a sudden thrill that one of these four must be James Roth. It was the big, bare-headed, shirt-sleeved man. The other men seemed to be asking him questions about the car and he kept nodding. Yes, this is my wife's car. But where is my wife? Where is Lucy? And then this James Roth seemed to lean against the car and put his forehead down on the roof of it. Even from a distance one could see that his shoulders were shaking.

"I love my husband," Lucy had

said. Well, Lucy, maybe your husband likes you too. That's something to live for, isn't it? Too bad.

The other men led James Roth back inside the house, and the red hardtop stood there all alone. The cop in the parked cruiser listened to the radio. The newspaper men were probably thinking about what they were going to put in the afternoon editions...

He had lunch at a drive-in restaurant. He had two hamburgers and a chocolate milkshake. He ate them in the car. On the way back to the Roth home, he stopped at a filling station and bought a dollar's worth of gasoline, regular grade.

"Hear about the rich dame that got lost?" he asked the attendant.

The man stood with one foot on the rear bumper while he pumped gas. "Mrs. Roth?" he said. "Yeah, she used to stop in here. Nice-looking gal. They won't never find her alive."

Can you hear that, Lucy? Recognize the man's voice? Why don't you call to him, let him know you're in there? But you know what I'll do if you make any noise, don't you?

He gave the attendant a dollar bill and drove away, and out of the man's hearing he laughed. He felt warm inside. There was a pleasurable tingling in his blood. There'd been the danger, the horrible danger, because you never know what a woman will do. Now there was the immense, wonderful relief. He

didn't know which feeling he liked best. But this was the real thing. This was living ...

When he got back to the Roth home, he didn't hesitate. No driving once around the block. The police cars were still there, but this time he pulled up boldly just opposite them and parked.

And he got out and walked right over to them. There was the same policeman he'd talked to that morning, and there was another one, a sergeant with three stripes on his sleeve.

"What's new?" he asked.

"Who are you?" the Sergeant wanted to know.

The other policeman supplied that information. "He was hanging around here all morning. He's a criminology student."

Both the cops laughed. Finally the Sergeant said. "Well, maybe we need a criminologist. We're not getting anywhere."

"You haven't found Mrs. Roth?"

The Sergeant shook his head.

"Any clues?"

"Net yet. This one's going to be a real dozey. She left her car in the parking lot. She went into the store. We know that because at least two clerks remember waiting on her. And they saw her walk out of the store. But nobody saw her after that."

Right then somehow he knew exactly how he wanted to do it. This Sergeant seemed willing to talk. It was just a matter of making

him say the right things in the right place.

"This sounds very interesting, Sergeant," he said. "Do you mind if I get my notebook and write some things down. And I'd like to know if you have any theories on the case."

The Sergeant looked properly flattered. "Sure thing," he agreed.

He hurried back to his own car and delved into the littered glove compartment. There was a notebook in there somewhere that he had used for his horse bets. He found it now and a pencil too. But he didn't return to the Sergeant. Instead he went back and stood at the rear of his own car, just a couple of feet from Lucy, and made a show of looking at the Roth house and jotting something down.

Come over here, Sergeant, he said to himself over and over. Come over here, because I want Lucy to hear all of this.

And that's the way it happened. For a minute or so the Sergeant seemed puzzled by his inquisitor's behavior. But then, partly because he didn't have anything else to do, he came over. He too stood close to Lucy.

"Now what was it you wanted to know, buddy?" he asked.

"Oh ... yes ... by the way, can I have your name, Sergeant?"

"Hallock."

"Pardon me?" He made just the smallest pretense of not being able to hear too well.

"Sergeant Hallock," the Sergeant said, much louder, and spelled it.

"Have you been officially assigned to the Roth case, Sergeant Hallock?"

"Yes, temporarily. I'm working with Lieutenant Johns."

He wrote all this down faithfully. "Sergeant, is there anything at all peculiar about this case?"

"Well, the peculiar thing is that we haven't any leads."

"You don't know why Mrs. Roth disappeared?"

"Well, she either disappeared voluntarily or she was kidnapped. Since there doesn't seem to be any good reason why she should walk off on her own, we're assuming she was kidnapped."

"Why?"

"Well, the family's well off. Maybe she's being held for ransom. But we haven't heard from the kidnapper yet. But maybe it was just robbery."

"If it was robbery though, Sergeant, why hasn't Mrs. Roth come back?"

"Don't you ever read the papers, boy?" The Sergeant heaved a massive sigh. "That kind of robbery is usually complicated. The victim gets a good look at the criminal for later identification. Then to prevent later identification, the criminal gets rid of the victim."

"Murder?"

"Sure. And if that happens, the body usually isn't found for a few days."

"Sergeant, would there be any

other possible motive for the kidnapping?"

"Oh, out-and-out murder, I suppose. But Roth says his wife had no enemies."

"Any other motive?"

The Sergeant put one sizeable shoe up on the rear bumper and thought. "Oh, I guess anything's possible. There are just so many logical reasons for something like this. But maybe there are lots of illogical reasons. I mean reasons that nobody ever thought of till some particular guy gets some screwy idea, and then that's his reason. And it's a new reason. That's what makes it hard for us cops sometimes."

"That's very interesting, Sergeant," he said, writing. Inside he felt very proud. Was this an absolutely new reason for kidnapping a woman?

Then after a while he said, "Sergeant, how is Mr. Roth taking all this?"

"Pretty bad. I just saw him in the house there. He's kind of broken up, I'd say. I got the impression he was pretty much in love with Lucy."

"Lucy?"

"Yeah, Mrs. Roth. Name's Lucille, but he called her Lucy."

"Uh huh." He made a note of it.

And now came the really big moment. The big trial for Lucy, and the big one for himself too. He swallowed before he could make himself ask the question.

"How are the kids taking it?"

Sergeant Hallock grimaced and his jaw hardened a little. "That's the worst part of it," he said. "They're a couple of real nice kids. At first they tried to keep the news from 'em. You know, Mummy's over to Aunt Ethel's or something like that. But that kind of thing works just so long. Should have got the kids out of the house entirely. But I guess Roth didn't think of it. Thought his wife would show up any minute. And now it's too late. The kids saw the shape their father is in. And it's hard to fool kids anyway. I think they realize now that something's happened to their mother. They keep wanting to know where she is and when she's coming back. They asked me even, you know that? They'd been sent to their room to keep 'em out of the way, I guess, and I was standing in the front hall while the Lieutenant was in the kitchen with Roth. Well, those kids sneaked out, and they asked me, they asked me personally, 'Policeman, will you find our Mummy for us?' Tears in their eyes too, you know. I tell you, I had to get out of that place."

There was silence for a long moment while the Sergeant rubbed his nose with a nervous forefinger and looked away. A silence all around, a silence where the slightest word or sound would come like thunder.

This was it. He knew that. He put a hand into his coat pocket and

fingered the gun, the gun which made a bulge the Sergeant had never noticed. But the gun was there. Well, Lucy? What are you going to do? One little word, Lucy, and we're both dead. I'll kill you and this cop will probably kill me because he'll think I'm shooting at him. But I'll be shooting at you, Lucy. Do you want to take the chance? Look at the chance I'm taking, Lucy. I like taking chances. What about you? You heard what the man said. We're right in front of your house, and your kids are in the house, and they're crying for you. Well, Lucy?

"What's the matter with you, buddy?" the Sergeant asked suddenly.

"What do you mean?"

"You look white as a sheet. Something wrong?"

"It was you talking about those kids, I guess..."

"Sure, I know what you mean."

He found himself suddenly weak, and he had to lean against the side of the car for support. He heard the Sergeant talking but didn't know what he was saying. Groping, he opened a door and climbed inside. He was afraid he was going to faint.

But he didn't. He pulled away from the curb leaving the Sergeant standing there looking at him, muttering something about "these criminologists." He drove slowly for a while and gradually he felt what he'd done. He'd taken the

biggest risk he knew how to take and he'd won. He'd taken it to them and driven off with it, leaving them standing there. "Hey, cops, guess what I've got in the trunk of my car!" He was supremely happy . . .

It was close to midnight when he got home. He'd driven around rather aimlessly for a while, and then had had his dinner at another drive-in restaurant. Finally he'd watched a double-feature at a drive-in movie. He didn't worry about Lucy at all. If she had kept her mouth shut in front of her own house with a cop standing right next to the car, she wasn't going to give him any trouble anywhere else.

He shot the car into the driveway, past the garage doors that he always kept open. Then he got out, locked the garage doors, and went into the house through the back.

In the living room were his sister, his brother-in-law, and two cops.

"That's the guy," Sergeant Hallock said.

He was too surprised to be frightened. "Sure, I'm the guy you talked to this afternoon," he said, rather foolishly.

"We'd like to have another look at your car," Hallock said.

He stared at them stupidly. This couldn't be happening, he told himself. He felt the weight of the gun still in his pocket. He could reach for it, shoot it out with them, one

against two. He wasn't a coward, he'd proved that this afternoon. But he didn't do it.

"How did you find me, Sergeant?" he asked. He was alert now, and really curious.

"When I decided I wanted to find you, I realized I remembered your license number. I guess I've got an automatic memory for those things. And I was standing right by it . . ."

"Yes." It was funny again somehow. "You were standing right by it, Sergeant. Well, come out to the garage. I'll show you."

He led them out and he opened the garage doors and then he opened the trunk for them. And he laughed out loud when they gasped at what they found in there.

He was still laughing when they handcuffed him and took his gun away from him and took him to the police car while the Sergeant radioed to headquarters.

"Yeah, Mrs. Roth," Sergeant Hallock said into the microphone. "She's alive. She just gouged her wrist with a piece of glass. Pocketbook mirror—broke it into slivers. And then she let the blood drip through the air holes this guy had drilled into the floor of the trunk. I saw the blood on the street when he drove away . . ."

It was then that he interrupted the Sergeant and grabbed the mike, handcuffs and all, and shouted the most important part. "The guy that did this had real nerve. Put

her in the trunk and drove right up in front of the house and talked with the cops...a cop was standing with his foot right up on the back bumper of the car...right there beside her all the time..."

