

K MANHUNT

WORLD'S BEST SELLING CRIME-FICTION MAGAZINE

APRIL, 1957

35 CENTS

Body on a White Carpet

BY
AL JAMES

•

Also:

JACK
RITCHIE

C. B.
GILFORD

RICHARD
WORMSER

DAVID
ALEXANDER

WILLIAM
CAMPBELL
GAULT

•

EVERY STORY
NEW!



MANHUNT

VOLUME 5, NO. 4

Cover Painting by Tom O'Sullivan

APRIL, 1957

CONTENTS

NOVELETTES

LOCKER 911 by Richard Wormser.....	36
DEATH OF A BIG WHEEL by William Campbell Gault.....	52

SHORT STORIES

BODY ON A WHITE CARPET by Al James.....	1
"USE FIVE GRAND?" by Michael Zuroy.....	5
NIGHT JOB by Robert Plate.....	10
THE PERCENTAGE by David Alexander.....	13
WAS IT WORTH IT, MR. MARKELL? by Lawrence Spingarn.....	21
OBJECT OF DESIRE by Paul Swope.....	25
JOY RIDE by C. B. Gilford.....	27
YOU SHOULD LIVE SO LONG by Jack Ritchie.....	32
HONEY-CHILD by Leslie Gordon Barnard.....	45
EXPRESS STOP by Jason January.....	48

MICHAEL ST. JOHN, Publisher

R. E. DECKER, General Manager

WALTER R. SCHMIDT, Editorial Director

WILLIAM MANNERS, Managing Editor

CHARLES W. ADAMS, Art Director

N. F. KING, Associate Editor

GERALD ADAMS, Assistant Art Director

JOE SHORE, Advertising Rep.

MANHUNT VOLUME 5, NUMBER 4, April, 1957. Single copies 35 cents. Subscriptions, \$4.00 for one year in the United States and Possessions; elsewhere \$5.00 (in U. S. funds) for one year. Published monthly by Flying Eagle Publications, Inc., 545 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, N. Y. Telephone MU 7-6623. Entered as Second Class matter at the Post Office, New York, N. Y. Additional entry at Concord, N. H. The entire contents of this issue are copyrighted 1957 by Flying Eagle Publications, Inc., under the International Copyright Convention. All rights reserved under Inter-American Copyright Convention. Title registered U. S. Pat. Office. Reproduction or use, without express permission, of editorial or pictorial content in any manner is prohibited. Postage must accompany manuscripts and drawings if return is desired, but no responsibility will be assumed for unsolicited materials. Manuscripts and art work should be sent to Manhunt, 545 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, N. Y. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and/or institutions appearing in this magazine and those of any living or dead person or institution is intended and any similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Printed in U. S. A.

BODY

on a white carpet

by AL JAMES

"Come to my place," the girl said. And, of course, Mac thought he was headed for an evening of pleasure.



MAC COULDN'T REMEMBER when he first noticed the broad. It might have been after the fifth shot of rot gut or when the muted juke box in the corner of the gin palace started playing something dreamy that made him think of his mother. Only she didn't look like his mother. At least not as he remembered his mother slobbering over a hot stove with five kids pulling at her skirt tails.

Mac dawdled over the colored fire in the shot glass and eyed the broad down at the other end of the wood. Even in the dim light of the bar she looked like the real thing. He shifted his bulk on the bar stool so that it rode easier and he could get a better look. Most of what he could see was white. He saw a white creamy face punctuated by

very juicy lips sucking in an ultra sophisticated manner at the frost covered glass she clutched in her gloved hand. And even at the distance of six bar stools he could see plenty of her breasts as she stooped low over the bar. Mac moistened his lips with the tip of his tongue. Jeez, he thought, what a handful.

He drained his glass and dropped another sin on the bar as a hint to the barkeep to get going on another drink. Then he mentally calculated the dough he had left from the last job. Enough, he decided, to show the broad a good time and perhaps purchase a room for the night befitting her royal manner.

Then he made his move. Nothing subtle. He picked up his drink and change and moved to the

other end of the bar just in time to snap a light to her unlighted cigarette. He returned the gold lighter, he'd kept out of the jewelry store loot, to his pocket and smiled.

She smiled back.

"Another drink?" He indicated her empty glass. She continued to smile and nodded yes.

Mac snapped his fingers and the barkeep came quickly, like a well trained police dog, and refilled her glass.

She tilted the two ounces and drained it.

Mac smiled and pushed his long, black hair out of his eyes. Sliding easily off the tall bar stool, he ambled toward the multi-colored mechanical marvel that hid the cracked plaster in one corner of the bar room. He slid two bits worth of nickels in its giant maw and flicked his brown eyes over the choice of selections. Habit forced his finger to something soothing by Elvis Presley, but at the last minute he decided on some concert stuff. Over his shoulder, he noticed the broad looking interestedly at him. A high class dish like her would dig upper story music. He hated it, but figured it was a small sacrifice if it would help him make time with her.

He shuffled back over the sawdust covered floor and remounted his stool, giving her the eye as he settled into place. Close up she was all cream, ready to be lapped up. Every strand of the blonde hair hung in its proper place, the whole mop sweeping luxuriantly down across her naked shoulders. Mac wet his lips again because the low cut dress didn't cover much, just kept her inside the law.

She poised the cigarette in mid-air and again flashed her teeth in a smile. Mac tingled a little in the lower regions as he wondered what it would feel like to squash her lips with his. He snapped his fingers and soon two new drinks appeared.

"If I may be so bold," he began, swinging his eyes over the length of the crummy bar, "what is a dish like you doing in a joint like this down on South State Street?"

The gold headed broad put the rot gut right on top of the other in her gorgeous stomach and held her smile. "You might say I was looking for someone." Her voice purred like a caddy engine at low throttle. She shifted her shape so that her left breast ended up nudging Mac's arm leaning on the bar. He pressed and she didn't move by a hair's breadth.

"Have you found the joker yet?" he asked, trying to be casual and trying not to spill the drink halfway to his lips.

She pressed closer until he could smell the perfumed fragrance of her and that left breast threatened to burn a hole in the sleeve of his coat. "I don't know," she purred. "Have I?"

Mac needed air. He guzzled his glass and lit a cigarette. There was no doubt about it, he thought, that this doll was the champagne type and he was way out in deep water with her. But hell, it was about time he quit running around with chorus

floozy and climbed a little. He thought of Mabel and felt a little guilty. He'd just come into the bar to down a few while she finished her last strip across the street. But gals like Mabel were ten for a dollar and the price of a room. It would be a novelty to down a broad with five dollar panties. Maybe a little of her class would rub onto him.

The blonde broke the long silence by pointing a long, well manicured finger nail at her empty glass. "May I have another?" she said sweetly.

Mac snapped his fingers and the barkeep raced down to the end of the bar and slopped the glasses full.

Mac noticed the glare of her diamond incrustated hand. "It looks as if you've found your boy," he said.

"It could very well be," she agreed. Her sullen blue eyes turned up to full candle power and hit Mac dead center. "What I want is a favor," she went on. Then added, "A very small favor."

Mac placed a calculated hand on her knee. "Sure," he said. "You name it. I'll do it." He slid his hand upwards over her skirt, feeling the heat of her leg. "What's the reward?" he chuckled.

The juicy blonde leaned toward Mac until he caught the scent of her lipstick. With her left hand she snuffed out her cigarette, with the right she pulled his hand in a massaging motion over her torso. Mac's temperature shot up to the danger mark.

He found his voice after awhile. "Good enough," he said huskily, descending from the bar stool. He held out his arm and the blonde, flashing teeth, eased down to the floor.

He and the girl side-slipped out of the bar onto State street. And before Mac could determine the direction he wanted to go, Brogan, the local cop, strolled up to the couple. His eyes were chipped stone as they mentally frisked Mac.

"Well if it isn't the boy delinquent," he sneered, his eyes moving to the girl and over her. "You're out of your class tonight. What, no jewelry stores available?"

Mac sniffed in contempt for the man in blue. The truth was he'd had a place cased and ready to push over, but other interests had come along. The cop didn't know how lucky he really was.

Mac flagged down a cab and pulled the girl into it before the cop could make any more observations.

She crossed her legs, flashing the white of her thighs. Mac put his arm around her bare shoulders. She leaned against him. "Well?" he asked. "Where to?" He was feeling like one of the big number boys with this girl at his side. It was about time he was getting up in the world, he thought. Instead of a fast heist, maybe next time he'd do a bank job. Another year and he'd be pushing twenty-two. A man had to improve himself. This blonde was a good omen.

"I'd like to have you do the favor first," she said sweetly, rattling her silver arm bracelet as she fumbled for a cigarette.

"Okay," Mac said. "Anything you want." He lit her cigarette for her and lit one of his own. "Where to?"

She snuggled closer. "Come to my place."

Mac choked on his cigarette. It was going to be quite an evening.

The cab pulled football through the loop, place kicking a few pedestrians and then scoring a touchdown as it slid over the Michigan Avenue bridge, finally, making the extra point by skidding up to the address the girl had given the driver.

They got out and the yellow roared back into the game, leaving Mac and the girl at the bottom of a building with clouds for a top floor. Mac whistled and followed the broad. This was grade 'A' class, having an apartment in a section like this. She punched a button in the glistening, marble lobby and they slid through the door that obeyed the command of her finger. She punched another and the elevator hummed up and up and up.

"I appreciate this," the blonde purred, moving in on the sweating Mac. He came to life and put his palms on the small of her back and started drawing her nearer. She beat him to it, plastering her size nine figure to his body and closing in on his mouth. But her lips touched his only briefly, tantalizingly. Then she pulled away and turned her back to him. "Unfasten my blouse," she said.

Mac hoped his rib cage would manage to hold his pounding heart. He dried his hands down the sides of his pants. "Hadden't we better wait until we're in your apartment?" he asked, a little surprised at his sudden timidity. The doll was a little fast for him. He liked speed but . . . The rest of the thought dropped to the floor.

"Silly," she smiled. "This *is* the apartment. It's my private elevator to the penthouse."

"Oh how stupid of me," Mike chuckled. He wiped his hands again and unfastened the four buttons that held the back of the blouse together. He wondered how many thousand feet the elevator had traveled.

The blonde slipped out of the thin piece of black and let it fall to the floor. And what Mac saw sent his heat up again. The tiny net brassier didn't cover anything. He wiped the sweat from his forehead, while she whipped off the remaining covering.

He was about to go for her when the elevator doors slid open.

Mac followed the blonde as she waltzed into the dimly lighted, plush living room. The girl, calmly oblivious of the naked front she was exhibiting, plucked a pastel colored cigarette from the gold case on the ebony black coffee table and struck a silver lighter to it. She offered Mac one, but he refused. He didn't go for green cigarettes. Instead, he stuffed a white one in his dry mouth and shakily succeeded

in lighting it. Then, once again, he started for her. "Not yet," she told him. "You promised to do me a favor."

Mac wet his lips with the tip of his tongue and slipped back into first gear. "Yeah," he said. "I did. Well let's go to it so we can begin the party. What have you got?" He glanced around at the lush layout. "A leaky faucet?"

She smiled at his joke and led the way down a long carpeted hall to a door with a silver plated door knob. Reaching inside, she flicked on the light. "In here," she said.

Mac slipped by her and stopped cold, his scalp trying to crawl off his head.

If the man wasn't dead, he was giving a mighty convincing performance. The naked corpse was spread like an eagle in flight on the white carpet and a small red hole neatly punctuated his forehead. Next to him, a small caliber, ivory-handled gun was almost lost in the deep nap of the rug.

With an effort, Mac started breathing again and about faced. "Ugh, ugh, baby. This is my stop. I think I heard my mother calling."

The girl pouted, "But you said you'd do me a favor."

Mac wiped the sweat from his dripping forehead. "Look, honey. A leaking faucet is one thing but . . ." He waved helplessly in the direction of the corpse.

The blonde walked into the lighted room and sat on the bed. Mac couldn't keep his eyes off of her. She smiled and flicked the zipper on her skirt, tossing it and her half slip into the corner of the room, followed by her spiked shoes. She stood up and dropped her jewelry on the bed and slowly retraced her steps toward the perspiring Mac. She encircled him with her arms and pressed her open mouth to his, breathing, "I've a lot to offer as a reward."

And the poor fish was hooked. Mac wanted her bad. She was class and that was what he was after. When he came up for air, he asked, "Friend of yours?"

She drew away and a frown crossed her face. "No," she said shortly. "He was blackmailing me."

"For what?"

"Something I did a long time before I met my husband," she said.

Again Mac approached the girl, but she drew back. "After you've dumped him." She pointed to the body as if it were a hunk of something that had spoiled.

Mac sighed and ripped the sheet off the bed and wrapped the body in it. "Where are his clothes?" he asked.

She jerked them off the chair and he stuffed them in the sheet. Then he hoisted the bundle on his shoulder and headed for the elevator. He turned before he entered the cage. "By the way. Where is your husband?"

The girl laughed a musical tinkle. "He won't be here when you get back for your reward, don't worry."

Mac didn't miss an alley in East Chicago. He staggered through the darkness with his heavy load trying to figure out the best place to get rid of it. He finally wound up in Lincoln Park amongst the shrubbery, as good a place as any, for his burden, he decided. Mac folded up the sheet and checked the man's pockets for any loose change. Nothing. Tucking the sheet under his arm, he ambled back to the apartment house, planning just how he would make love to the blonde.

Whistling, he punched the elevator button and was lifted towards his evening of love. It hadn't been hard at all, he thought. Just getting rid of a body for a chance in bed with a dish like the blonde. He nearly drowned in his own saliva, before the doors opened again.

The girl was sitting on the couch, fully dressed in a high necked blouse, when he strode into the velvet-lined love nest. She looked up from her magazine as he approached. "May I ask what the big idea is, barging in here at this time of night?" she demanded haughtily.

Mac stopped like he'd hit a brick wall. "We have a date," he said when he'd recovered his voice.

The blonde put down the magazine and stood up. "A date?" She said it like she'd just discovered a cockroach in her perfume. "I'm afraid you are mistaken whoever you are."

Mac stood frozen to the small square of rug.

The blonde continued staring through him as though he were window glass. He shook his head to clear away the fog. "Yeah," he said. "A date. I dumped a body for you in the park less than half hour ago. When I left here you was ready to trot when I got back."

The blonde reached for the small white phone. "You're drunk," she accused. "If you don't leave here this minute, I'll call the police."

"I get it," Mac said. He wasn't quite sure of what he'd got, but he had one hell of a good idea. "You needed someone and I was the holder of the short straw." He laughed mirthlessly and retreated to the elevator as she picked up the phone and began dialing. On the way down he grew hotter with every floor. By the time he hit ground, steam all but streamed from his ears. With determination he began walking.

The apartment was dark when the elevator doors opened. Mac sweated through the blackness and felt his way down the long hall, opening the doorway at one end and feeling around for the light.

The sudden glow flowed over the girl in bed. She opened her eyes and sat bolt upright, staring at Mac and opening her mouth to scream.

"Ugh, ugh, baby," Mac warned. I wouldn't do that if I was you. We got company." He tugged his bundle over to the bed and spilled it out onto the floor. The body rolled a few feet and lay face up on the carpet. "You better get dressed, doll," Mac said, "and go hunt up another sucker."

Mac turned then and went quickly out the door, slamming it after him.

