

GUILTY

DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE

Vol. 2 — No. 5

March, 1958

CONTENTS

SHORT STORIES

- VAMPIRE GIRL *by Bryce Walton* 2
She had a delusion she needed to drink blood
- HIRED FOR THE KILL *by Al James* 14
Paul had a sure-fire set-up for murder
- WOMAN AND THE AXE *by C. B. Gilford* 23
His wife thought he was sick mentally
- THE SHOWDOWN *by Gilbert Schechtman* 32
Bernie was out of stir. Could he stay top dog?
- CRIME LESSON *by Arnold English* 37
The kid got instruction from his victim
- DESPERATE KIDNAPPER *by Sidney Roberts* 46
Kent was given one year to live
- YOUR DAUGHTER WAS ATTACKED *by Carroll Mayers* .. 57
The law was too slow for a father's vengeance
- HOT MONEY *by James P. Duff* 66
Harry wanted cash and a new woman
- ONE MINUTE TO DEATH *by Dan Stribe* 79
Convicted of murder, must I die now?

NOVELETTES

- MOVE IN, TAKE OVER *by Robert Bowen*86
Joey tried to crash to the top of the gang
- NIGHT OF HORROR *by Koller Ernst* 112
A doctor's hideous revenge on young hoodlums

W. W. Scott — Editor

GUILTY DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE is published bi-monthly by Feature Publications Inc., at 1 Appleton Street, Holyoke, Mass. Editorial office at 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y. Entered as second class matter at the post office at Holyoke, Mass., August 20, 1956, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Single copy 35c. Subscription rates, \$4.00 for 12 issues. Not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts; and all such material must be accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelopes. All stories printed in the magazine are fiction, and any similarity between the characters and actual persons is coincidental. Copyright 1957 by Feature Publications, Inc. All rights, including translation, reserved under International Copyright Convention and Pan American Copyright Convention. Printed in the U.S.A.

HOT MONEY

by JAMES P. DUFF

Harry wanted to change his
luck with money and women



HE was a tired-looking little man with a stomach going to fat and reddish hair thinning on top and lines of bitterness around his tight mouth. He sat at the dining room table, his shirt sleeves rolled up to his elbows, going over the carefully typed reports again and again. He was positive this time, so positive. He felt the pride of a job well done, and the smallness of a grin touched his face, stayed there until he heard his wife calling his name from the bedroom. He sighed. She called again, and he sighed again. He got up, wearily, and rolled down his shirt sleeves and went into the bedroom.

"Do you have to go out again tonight?" she asked. She could have been a pretty woman at one time, but now she was loose and flabby and no longer took care of herself. She

lay on top of the bed clothes, a fluffy nightgown of some kind hiding the obscene mounds of her flesh.

He took his coat from the closet, not answering her.

"Why, Harry?" She was whining now, playing the part she had so many times in the past. "They don't give a damn for you down at that office. Why do you do it?" She didn't wait for an answer. "I know why you do it, damn you Harry! You enjoy it, don't you? You like to stick your nose into other people's business, grub around in their dirt, don't you?" She was almost screaming now.

He walked out of the room, still not answering her. He knew there was no answer he could give that would satisfy her; he had learned that over the years.

He stood on the sidewalk below, in the darkness, lighting his nightly cigar, and then looked up at the lighted window of their apartment, and wondered what had happened to them. It had been different in the beginning; there had been something between them

then, and now there was nothing.

He knew she was right: they didn't give a damn for him at the office. Twenty-two years he had spent with them, doing the hardest jobs, the almost impossible jobs, and then they had passed over him for a man younger than he to head the district office. But he would show them their mistake. This time, he had solved one of those impossible jobs; this time, he would save them \$150,000, and then they would know about Harry Decker.

He drove down Wilshire to the shoddy, low-rent district around MacArthur Park. He parked in front of the three-story apartment building with the false-brick front and the marks of neglected age on it. He sat there and finished his cigar and felt the moment of triumph. It had been a long and hard trail, and now it was at its end, and he would show his wife and he would show them, and they would all realize their mistake.

THE woman lived on the third floor. He was puffing by the time he got up there,

puffing and a little embarrassed from having caught the two kids necking on the second-floor landing. He stood before her door, letting his breathing return to normal, and then knocked.

She opened the door and that moment of triumph returned. He said, "Mrs. Maxwell?"

"Yes?"

He took his card from his wallet and handed it to her. "I'm Harry Decker, Mrs. Maxwell. Coast States Insurance Company."

She didn't bother looking at the card. He grudgingly admired her coolness. She was tall, taller than he, with dark hair cut short in the popular Italian style, and wide, innocent-looking blue eyes, and a body that would be looked at and admired and sought after by men, and envied by women. He knew her hair was dyed; it had been blonde at one time. He knew a lot about this woman.

"I'm afraid," she was saying, "that I don't need any insurance."

"I'm not a salesman, Mrs.

Maxwell. I'm here on another matter."

"Oh?"

"May I come in? It's rather important."

She was wearing burnt-orange colored shorts and matching halter, and fuzzy bedroom slippers. She studied the toe of one of the slippers for a moment, then opened the door to admit him. The inside was clean and neat; she had done the best she could with what she had. It must have taken a lot from her, not to have spent the money, to have lived in holes like this for the past two years; she was a woman used to the better things. Again, the admiration for her came to him.

She lit a cigarette and sat down on a flowery sofa, and crossed her legs. She didn't ask him to sit down.

"Alright, Mr....?"

"Decker."

".....Mr. Decker. What is it that's so important?"

He sat down in a canvas chair opposite her. One of her legs was cranking back and forth over the other, a little gesture that betrayed her nervousness. He was pleased to

see that. He smiled, and said, "I must say that I admire you, Mrs. Maxwell. I've been an insurance investigator for 22 years. You've been very difficult to follow, Mrs. Maxwell. Or should I say, *Mrs. Chandler? Mrs. Ray Chandler?*"

She tried to hide the shocked surprise, but failed. The leg cranked harder and one of her slippers came off. He noted the bright red polish on her toenails.

"I'm afraid I.....I don't understand," she said.

"I think you do. Please, let's not play silly games with each other. I have too many facts at my disposal. It's taken me a long time to trace you down, Mrs. Chandler."

She rose to her feet, her head tilting angrily. She replaced the slipper on her foot. "I think you'd better leave."

He shrugged. "If that's the way you want it." He got to his feet slowly. "I'm not a policeman, Mrs. Chandler."

"My name is Maxwell!"

"As you prefer. As I said, however, I'm not a policeman. I'm not interested in the whys and wherefores of the case. I'm only interested in seeing that

the money is returned, the \$150,000 to be exact. Really, Mrs.....Maxwell, it's useless to you. The bills are all marked. You can't spend any of it."

"I haven't the faintest idea what you're talking about." She lit another cigarette from the first one. She looked at him, carefully, and then giggled a small giggle. "What an absurd idea, Mr. Decker. Do you think if I had that much money—was it \$150,000?—that I'd be living here, like this?"

"You would if you were smart, and you are smart, Mrs. Maxwell." He took a small notebook from his inner coat pocket, opened it, and read: "On May 19, 1954, one Ray Chandler was married to one Helen Ericson in the city of Las Vegas, the county of Clark, the state of Nevada." He put the notebook away. Her face was composed, studiously calm. "On February 11, 1955, Ray Chandler and two other men held up the Northern Independent Grocers Association of Redwood, California. They got away with \$150,000. Chandler and his accomplices,

were caught, Mrs. Maxwell, and are now serving terms in San Quentin. However, the money was never recovered. My company insured that loss. It would be quite a feather in my cap if I could recover it."

"This whole thing is ridiculous," she said. "I've never heard of this: . . . this Ray Chandler. I'm a war widow, Mr. Decker. My husband was killed in Korea."

"I'll give you time to think it over, Mrs. Maxwell. You have my card. I'm sure you understand my position, as well as your own. Good night, Mrs. . . . Maxwell."

THERE was a note on his desk in the morning, asking him to see Mr. Emerson, the district manager, as soon as possible. He disliked seeing Mr. Emerson; in fact, he disliked Mr. Emerson. The man was too young for his position, too young and too self-confident and too patronizing.

Mr. Emerson sat behind his desk in a richly-furnished private office, a long yellow pencil in his hands, a quick smile on his handsome, sun-tanned face. Decker wondered how

he ever found the time to acquire a sun tan.

"How's the Redwood case coming, Harry?" Mr. Emerson asked.

"Slow. Very slow."

"Anything new?"

"Well, I—" he hesitated; this was his, his personally, and he didn't want anyone else sharing the glory "—there might be something. But if you don't mind, Mr. Emerson, I'd like to keep it to myself for a few more days. I might be wrong, you know."

"I understand, Harry."

There was a meaningful slur behind the words, and Decker didn't like it. A quick retort came to his lips, and stayed there.

"We'll let that ride for now, Harry," Mr. Emerson said. He put the pencil on his desk, leaning back in his chair. He was embarrassed about something, obviously, and Decker wondered what it could be. "I guess the best thing for me to do is to be blunt. I hope you won't take offense, Harry. Your wife called me last night, at my home. I know you were disappointed when they gave me this job, but. . . ."

"She had no right to do that, Mr. Emerson."

"....She did, though." He studied his hands. "Harry, this is a trifle unpleasant for me. You've been with the company for 22 years. If you're having trouble at home because of the situation here in the office, I wish you would see to it that the trouble stays there."

"I apologize for my wife's actions," he said.

"I know you do. I know this is as embarrassing for you as it is for me. But I wanted you to know how I felt, Harry. This job is demanding, as you very well know, and I have neither the time nor the inclination to get involved in any family squabbles. I don't think I need to say any more about it."

"I appreciate your frankness, Mr. Emerson." He rose to his feet. His stomach ached with the embarrassment, the humiliation, he felt. "Is that all?"

"For now, yes. But going back to the Redwood case, I certainly hope you turn up something soon there."

"I will, Mr. Emerson, I will."

Mr. Emerson watched him leave. He shook his head, then leaned across his desk, pressing a button on the inter-com. "Susan, get in touch with Ken Brady. Tell him I want to see him as soon as possible."

HE knew she was sitting there, staring at him, waiting for him to bring it up. He had never been quite so disgusted with her. The food tasted bitter in his mouth; he pushed the plate away, wiping his lips with the napkin.

"You haven't said anything about my calling Mr. Emerson," she said. "I'm sure he told you."

"He told me, Martha."

"Well?"

"Well what?"

"I hope he realizes that at least one member of this family has the backbone to stand up to him."

"Oh, cut it out!" he snapped. "It embarrassed me, if that was your intention."

"You don't fool me, Harry. I've been on to you for a long time. You don't work on these cases night after night. There's a woman some place."

"Don't be ridiculous, Martha."

He got up and walked into the living room, and she followed him. He was so tired of these nightly arguments, so tired of her whining and griping. She picked and picked, about the office, about other women; she should have known better. He turned to look at her, her face set in the usual angry lines, her hands gripped before her so tightly that the knuckles showed white. A sudden feeling of pity came to him.

"We used to have so much fun together, Martha." He spoke quietly, almost tenderly. "Just the two of us. Remember the time we. . . ."

"Oh, grow up, Harry! That was years ago. I could believe you then. But now I'm cooped up in this damn little apartment day after day, night after night, and I know what you're doing, the way you're running around."

It was senseless, and he knew it. He stood there, wondering what the solution was, how it could resolve itself, and then the phone rang, and he waited while she answered it.

She shoved the phone into his hands, the smile superior and all-knowing on her face.

"Mr. Decker," the voice on the other end said, "this is Helen Maxwell."

"I've been expecting your call."

"I apologize for calling at your home. I. . . . I thought it might be better than calling at your office."

"I understand."

"Could I see you, Mr. Decker?"

"Of course. I'll be there in 20 minutes."

He hung up and went for his coat. Martha gripped his arm, swinging him around to face her.

"*I'll be there in 20 minutes,*" she mimiced. "You've got a lot of gall, Harry, having her call here."

"Martha! For crying out loud. It's business."

"I suppose she's young and attractive and she tells you all the things you want to hear. You don't fool me, Harry. You haven't fooled me in a long time."

She was beyond reason. He refused to talk to her. He got his coat and started to leave,

and the last thing he heard was her shrill voice saying: "One of these nights, I'll lock that door so you can't get back in, and then you'll. . . ."

But he didn't hear the end of it. It was an old song; she had made the threat so many times in the past.

SHE was dressed in a too-tight skirt that accentuated her curves and a low-cut blouse allowed as much viewing as was decently possible. He knew what was coming. He had run up against it before, many times, and he'd always turned it down.

"Well, Mrs. Maxwell," he said, "I'm glad that you've finally decided to cooperate."

"You're reading too much into the call, Mr. Decker. May I fix you a drink?"

"I don't drink, Mrs. Maxwell. This isn't a social visit."

"Alright then, I'll get to the point. You've been following me, Mr. Decker. You're annoying me. I'm tempted to call the police."

"Why don't you?"

She laughed lightly. "Let's not be childish. Supposing—just supposing now—that I ad-

mit being the wife of this Ray Chandler. What would that prove?"

"It wouldn't *prove* anything."

"I thought not," she said.

She bent over the coffee table, getting a cigarette, letting him have his look. When she raised up again, her mouth was open, the lips wet and red, so red, and he thought of Martha in the apartment and the accusations she had made. It would be so easy. He was getting older; there wouldn't be many more like this.

"What would you do—is it, Harry?—if I was this Mrs. Ray Chandler and I did have the money?"

"I'd see it was returned."

She got up and moved across the room to close a door. She walked with a lithe gracefulness, enticing, inviting. "I've been in this business long enough. . . ."

"Long enough to know all the angles?"

He knew what she was driving at. "Long enough, Mrs. Chandler," he said, "to know that you can't get away with such things."

The floor show continued as

she sat down, crossing her legs.

"I'm going to be frank with you, Harry. I am Mrs. Chandler. I do have that money. I've had it all the time." The tempo of her voice quickened. "God, you can't imagine it. I look at it all the time, look at it and count it, all \$150,000 of it. I have to fight myself not to spend it, and I'm losing that fight."

She re-crossed her legs for his benefit. "But I know the bills are marked, and I know I can't spend them. But I know something else, too, and that is that there are men who'll buy *hot* money. I know that much, and yet I can't do anything about it. Believe me or not, I didn't know what Ray was when I married him. I don't have thethe connections to dispose of the money. I've been waiting for someone like you, Harry, someone who would know who to see and how to change the money." She leaned forward, her blue eyes intent on his face. "I've been waiting a long time, Harry."

He had to laugh, and he knew it came out as a nervous sound. "I told you I'd been in

this business a long time, Mrs. Chandler. I know what you're trying to do. I've had it tried before. It won't work. I'm too old a horse to get caught up in anything like this."

She got up and came over to him. Her fingers lifted his face to hers. The kiss was long and exciting and demanding and when she moved away he felt himself losing ground. He rose to his feet, avoiding her eyes.

"Good night, Mr. Decker," she said, and laughed.

He walked to the door, and then stopped. He turned to look at her and what he saw made him want it, and he fought against this. He stood there and thought about it, remembering the way Martha was, remembering the excitement of the kiss, the promise of the kiss, with this woman. What, after all, did he owe them? What had they given him after 22 years? What had Martha given him?

"You couldn't get full value for it," he said. "Maybe 30 cents on the dollar, maybe a little more. Certainly no more than \$50,000."

She came over to him then, knowing she was winning, and

put her arms around him. Her lips brushed against his ear and she whispered, "I'm tempting you, Harry, aren't I?"

He wasn't thinking about the money; he wasn't thinking about anything but the woman next to him. He grabbed her roughly, and she returned that, that and more, and then he was lost in the violent passions that he had thought he had forgotten.

MR. Emerson rose and shook hands with the man who had entered his office. "Sorry to keep you waiting, Ken," he said.

"No hurry, Mr. Emerson. It's your time and your money."

"You don't have to remind me. I don't like hiring an outside investigator to have one of my own men followed." He hesitated. There was something almost distasteful about this. "Anything to report?"

"He's stepping out on his wife. He's been seeing quite a bit of a war widow, a Mrs. Helen Maxwell." Brady's smile was quick. "I can't say as I blame him much, looking at them both."

"Something bothers me here, Ken. I can't explain it. Maybe it's just a hunch. God knows I hate doing this, but stay with it a few more days, will you?"

"Like I said. Mr. Emerson, you're paying for it."

HE rolled over on the bed, and sat up. His back was tired and his head ached, and he heard Helen murmur his name from the other side of the bed. He got up quickly. He was too old for this sort of thing, too old and too played-out.

She came around to him, standing beside him in the darkness, the nakedness of her body punishing his. She whispered something trite in his ear, and then moved away, switching on the light. He hated for her to see him in the light, the way his stomach protruded out, the way his mussed-up hair showed the bald spot. It was almost vulgar, his body against hers, young and alive and demanding. He hurriedly began dressing, while she lay back on the bed, stretching her wantonness before his eyes.

"When?" she asked. "When's it going to be, Harry?"

He didn't answer.

"And then Mexico," she went on. "Just the two of us. Oh, Harry, I'm so glad you found me, so glad." She sat up, quite suddenly, and her eyes were serious on his face. "I still don't like it, though, you taking the money to your place. What if that wife of yours finds it?"

"She won't find it. And I've told you before, the money is safer there. If I traced you, someone else could do the same."

He looked at his watch, and knew the time was near. He turned and she was against him again; her mouth grinding against his, demanding and wanting. But there was nothing left in him.

"Get dressed," he said, "and pack your clothes. We're going tonight."

The surprise showed on her face. "Why didn't you tell me before?"

"I thought it better that you didn't know until the last minute. Hurry now. The plane

leaves at 11:30. We have a lot to do before that. Pick up the tickets and then go by my place and get the marked money. The man is meeting us at 10:30."

"How much, Harry?"

"\$45,000."

"Is that all?" She couldn't hide her disappointment.

He watched her dressing, and wondered if it was worth it. He knew that he should have wondered about that before. It was too late to turn back now.

HE walked up the hallway, searching his pockets for the key. He stood in front of the door for a moment, and knew that this would be the last time he would go through that door, the last time he would see Martha. The faintest twinge of nostalgia touched him, and then left. He had made his decision. The plane tickets were in his pocket; Helen was waiting downstairs in the car; the man with the \$45,000 in unmarked bills would meet them at 10:30 and then, an hour later, they would be winging on their way to Mexico City, and Mr. Emer-

son and the company and Martha, all of them, would only be a dim memory. He had been an honest man all his life; now, for the first time, he was doing something dishonest, and he was surprised at the lack of guilt he felt.

He raised the key to the lock, but it wouldn't go in. He stepped back, surprised. He tried it again, and still it didn't fit. He looked at the brass number above the door. He was at the right apartment. He tried the key a third time, with the same result. His hands began shaking. The \$15,000 was on the other side of the door, tucked away in a safe hiding place. What in the world had Martha done?

He dropped the key. He stooped down, picking it up. He very carefully pushed it against the lock again. Good God!

Panic waved over him. He pounded his fists against the door and yelled, "Martha! Martha!" But there was no answer. He pounded again and again and yelled her name again and again. He kicked at the door, trying to break it

down. Damn her! Damn her, damn her, damn her!

He hadn't heard them behind him, not until he felt the hand on his shoulder, and then he turned and saw them, Mr. Emerson and the other man, and the two policemen.

"It's no use, Harry," Mr. Emerson said.

He slumped back. His knees gave way beneath him, and he sat down on the floor, and shook his head. "I guess not," he said, slowly. "I should have known better."

"You should have," Mr. Emerson said.

The door opened a crack, and Martha stood there, a puzzled look on her face. She saw him sitting on the floor, and she hunched up her shoulders and smiled broadly. "It won't do you any good, Harry," she said. "I had the lock changed. I'm not going to let you in, even if the police are with you."

One of the policeman said, "The girl's downstairs."

Decker nodded his head. "It's in the bedroom, in the bottom drawer of the bureau, underneath my shirts."

Martha stepped out into the hallway. Anger had replaced the victorious smile on her face. "What's this all about? Who's downstairs? What's in the bureau drawer?"

"It's no use, Martha," he said. "There's \$150,000 in stolen money in there."

"You must be joking!" She had snapped the words out. She realized that he was telling

the truth, and she looked down at the huddled little figure on the floor, and her mouth twisted itself into an ugly grimace. "Why? Why in the world would you do such a thing, Harry? Why?"

She was whining again. That was the way he would remember her.

THE END

STATEMENT REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Section 233) SHOWING THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION OF

Gully Detective Story Magazine published bi-monthly at Holyoke, Mass. for October 1, 1957.

1. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher Feature Publications, Inc. 1790 Broadway, N. Y. 19, N. Y., editor, W. W. Scott, 1790 Broadway, N. Y. 19, N. Y., managing editor, none, business manager, Maurice Rosenfield, 1790 Broadway, N. Y. 19, N. Y.

2. The owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual member, must be given.) Feature Publications, Inc., 1790 Broadway, N. Y. 19, N. Y., Paul Epstein, 1790 Broadway, N. Y. 19, N. Y., Estate of Michael M. Bleier, 1790 Broadway, N. Y. 19, N. Y.

3. The known bondholders, mortgagees,

and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) NONE

4. Paragraphs 2 and 3 include, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting; also the statements in the two paragraphs show the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner.

5. The average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the 12 months preceding the date shown above was: (This information is required from daily, weekly, semiweekly, and triweekly newspapers only.)

Maurice Rosenfield (Signature of business manager). Sworn to and subscribed before me this 19th day of September, 1957.

WILLIAM THOMA

Notary Public, State of New York
Qualified in Bronx County No. 03-396282
Cert. filed in N. Y. & Bronx County
Commission Expires March 30, 1959