

Escapaders of Distinction

From time to time, the Editors of *Escapade* have received letters from readers asking us to define the term *Escapader*. We have tried to offer an acceptable definition on a few occasions and, of course, the contents of *Escapade* are selected with the objective of pleasing the men (and women) we conceive to be *Escapaders*.

Another way of defining a term is to offer an example, and in this issue we offer an example of an *Escapader* with the presentation of our first *Escapader Cum Laude Award* to Ward Kimball, whose story appears on Page 40. We think that all who read this story will understand better what we have in mind when we refer to *Escapaders*, although most of our readers, no doubt, already have a pretty clear idea.

We'll admit that Ward is an exceptional personality, but basically the motives which move him are those which move all *Escapaders*. (Calling a person an *Escapader* is, in our opinion, just another way of calling him a nice guy, or her a nice gal.) Life offers opportunities for all sorts of escapades (lower case): mental, emotional, physical. The *Escapader* is the man who lives; who gets a lot out of life, and contributes a lot in return.

That's probably the best definition

From time to time, we will bestow our *Escapader Cum Laude Award* upon other personalities. They won't all be carbon copies of Ward Kimball. But they will all fit our basic definition of the term *Escapader*.

Now, let's take a look at some of the other features listed in the exciting Table of Contents in this issue.

Escapade was fortunate in being able to obtain a short story concerning a slam-bang escapade in the career of hard-boiled private eye Shell Scott, transcribed by his creator, Richard Prather, especially for this magazine. Hitherto, Shell Scott has appeared only in novel-length books, which have become the nation's leading best-sellers, but for *Escapade* Prather wrote this special short story, complete in this issue. It's full of guns, girls, intrigue, humor and action. See "Too Many Girls" on Page 11.

Greta Thyssen (pronounced Tysen) is the truly sensational beauty who currently is making quite an impressive showing in the Hollywood arena. Great things, as they say, are predicted for her, but we doubt that she will ever appear anywhere to better advantage than she does in the photo-story which starts on Page 22. This is quite a girl, well worth the price of admission!

Escapaders, or ninety-nine per cent of them, are more than mildly interested in jazz music. In the past, *Escapade* has represented with some consistency the cause of modern, or progressive, jazz. In "Can Jazz Be Progressive?" Dan Burley, himself a talented musician and writer of authority, flips the coin, taking the position that if it's progressive, it ain't jazz at all.

These are only a few of the outstanding features of this colorful issue. There's a great deal more: fiction, informative articles, satirical humor, funny cartoons and, naturally, girls.

This is strictly an *Escapaders'* issue, and we feel certain that all *Escapaders* everywhere (bless 'em!) will have a mighty fine time with it.



escapade

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DAVID ZENTNER
Editor and Publisher

JOE KNEFLER RAY RICH
Executive Editor Art Director

BETTY GRIES MARVIN RUBIN
Editorial Assistant Associate Art Director

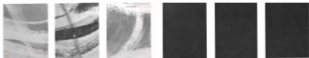
LEONARD MARTINEZ
Circulation Director



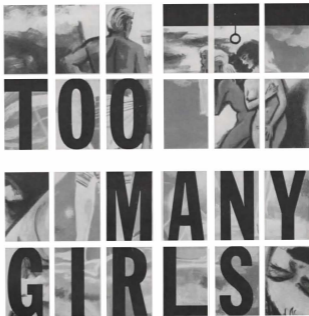
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shell scott's most exciting case — and not a corpse in sight



by Richard S. Prather

(FOREWORD: Dick Prather, by virtue of his creation of Shell Scott, the roughest, toughest *Private Eye* in the business, has become America's top-selling author. Both in hard-back and pocketbook editions, his reports on the activities of Scott have sold in the millions and Shell Scott fans can't wait for new novels about their favorite hero. This hard-hitting Shell Scott story was written especially for this issue of *Escapade*.)

I HAD LEFT Sheldon Scott, *Investigations*—my downtown L. A. office—about three p.m., so I reached my Hollywood apartment much earlier than usual. I went in, closed the door and stared at the beautiful naked blonde sprawled on my divan.

I blinked and shook my head like a maraca. There are good days and dandy days, but this was too good to be true.

"Whoops," I said, "pardon me, ma'am," and went out again and looked carefully at the number on the door. It was my apartment, all right. I went back in.

She was still there, still spread out on the chocolate-brown divan as if she lived on it—and I wished she did live on it, since she was a busty beauty with the longest white-blond hair and most golden sun-bronzed skin since Lilly Christine—but I'd never met this one before.

There was something familiar about her, and I was so delightfully dazed that for a moment I thought maybe it was that her hair was the same color as mine, and her skin was about the same tanned shade as mine—but there I stopped. Hell, she didn't look anything like me.

Right then there was a big flash. I thought: My brain has burned out! But then there was another flash, so I knew it wasn't my brain. Not even my brain could do that twice—and besides, the pulse of light had come from the bedroom. The blonde hadn't moved, except that her mouth had dropped open. I jumped past her and into the bedroom. There was another naked blonde on my bed.

(continued on next page)

But she wasn't alone. Close on her left was a short, husky guy with a camera looped around his neck, and on my right was a big ugly ape named Agony, swinging a sap down at my skull. I didn't even think about what I was doing. I just did it.

I bent my knees and threw my left arm up at the same time, and my left forearm caught Agony's descending wrist, then I was straightening up with my right fist slamming toward his stomach. The blow landed and bored in, and then I led with my right three or four more times. But the last couple, Agony knew nothing about. Before he hit the floor I spun around toward the other man.

The guy hanging onto the camera with its strobe-light flash attachment was a local photographer named Lomey Fain. He jumped backwards away from me, letting out a surprised yell.

Ordinarily, I don't slap medium-sized guys like Lomey around, since I am six-two and 205 pounds, but Lomey was a slimy punk who did work for the syndicate and the private eyes that peer through keyholes, and he peddled home-made pornographic pix on the side, and also he was in my bedroom and I'd about figured out why, and who was behind this circus. So I hit him on the mouth and it suddenly looked the way a mouth must look to teeth, all red and ugly, and Lomey sailed back through the air either dead and already gone to hell, or out cold for quite a while.

The pale white gal on the bed let out a little scream and jumped off it, and the sun-bronzed blonde from the front room came racing into the bedroom. Why? How would I know? Maybe to talk with the other blonde. Maybe anything. Why do gals run to bedrooms?

Both of them were running about stark staring naked—they were stark, and I was staring—and they looked at the two unconscious men and sort of jumped up and down making wailing sounds, and I stood pretty still making a sort of low wailing sound myself, and then I heard the shower running.

I groaned, then ran to the bathroom, threw open the door, stepped in and pulled the shower curtain away from my combination tub and shower. Sure enough, there was the third gal. A real dish, this one. A redhead with saucy white breasts and flaring hips, water streaming over her in glistening rivulets, and a wide-eyed startled expression on her striking face.

She squealed, "Who are you?"

"I'm Shell Scott, and—"

"Oh, you're Shell Scott!" She beamed at me, happily.

"Arrgh," I growled in frustration and wheeled around and ran out. Be calm, I told myself. Think. *Think!* That was the hell of it. I was thinking, and about all the wrong things.

One thing was sure: I had to get rid of these women fast. I groaned again. Here I was in my own apartment with three beautiful naked women and all I could think of was getting rid of them. Life can really be cruel sometimes. From where I was standing I could see out the living room window down to North Rossmore. A flash of white caught my eye.

A Los Angeles police car had just pulled up to the curb below. Another car was behind it. Across the street was the rest of that flash of white I'd seen—an all-white Lincoln Continental that belonged to one Victor Grieg. It was twelve-thousand dollars worth of car driven by a two-bit punk. Maybe four-bit, since Grieg was one of the top racket boys in L.A., but still punk.

There wasn't going to be time for me to get rid of these gals. I was *trapped* here with them. I thought: I'm dead. This

may be living, but I'm dead. If I knew Grieg, in addition to the policemen he'd have some reporters along and maybe even a judge and jury, and when they all swarmed in here it would be the end of Happy-Go-Lucky Shell Scott. In my mushy mind my license took wings, my mind took wings, everything got dizzy. I jumped to the door and locked it, then turned around with my back against the door, feeling breathless. And at the sight which met my eyes I got even more breathless.

All three babes were greatly excited, and running about every which way. It seemed for several dazed moments that there were guided breasts and thighs and fannies and all sorts of things flying about helter skelter, through the air, up, down, even sideways. Man, it was wonderful. But then they seemed to become aware of me standing with my back to the door, and I guess they decided to get out.

They all turned, as if with one mind, and ran at me.

Well, you know how it is with just *one* nude woman running at you. My brain sort of wobbled momentarily, and I thought: How'd this happen?

It had started happening with a phone call from the wife of the late Judge Phineas Latham. The judge had died recently in an apparently accidentally-started fire, but Mrs. Latham thought he'd been murdered. She'd hired me to check it. Nearly a month of investigation had convinced me she was right. And every lead I followed up pointed to a shadowy racket boy named Victor Grieg.

Grieg's motto must have been, "To Victor belongs the spoils," because he was so rich he had TV in the john, and it seemed he was involved in practically every crime except suicide. But I couldn't yet prove it. I was getting close to him, though, and he knew it. The fact that many of my friends on the L.A. police force knew I was trying to get Grieg made it almost impossible for him to have me shot in the head without virtually naming himself as responsible. So one day Grieg phoned and asked me, politely, to call at his office. I went.

I got there earlier than I'd estimated and glimpsed a long-limbed bleached blonde leaving Grieg's office. She walked with a loose-limbed sway that, combined with yellowish hair and a kind of meat-hungry look on her face, made me think of a tired tiger.

Victor Grieg himself was about forty or forty-five, with black hair and heavy brows, and he looked for sure like a tough customer. His words slid down icicles at me. It was a fairly long session, but what it boiled down to was that Grieg couldn't buy me off, or scare me off, and at the present time it would be inconvenient for him to have me killed.

He made several offers to get me to drop the case, all of which I refused, while becoming more sure that Grieg was responsible for the judge's death. His last remark was, "If you don't lay off, I'll squash you like a bug. I'll get you one way or another, and even if I got to do it legal, I'll do it legal."

I grinned at him and left. Two days later a friend called from Sacramento and told me there'd been pressure brought unsuccessfully, to have my State investigator's license revoked. That told me the direction in which Grieg was heading. If he could get my license jerked, it would be like pulling my fangs, and that should have warned me. . . .

(continued on page 16)

“. . . there were a couple of live ones.”



TOO MANY GIRLS (Continued from Page 12)

My brain continued to wobble, but gently now. The three nude babes were all over me, screeching and pawing at me, and trying to get through the door. As I broke out in a cold sweat, I realized what Grieg's next move had been.

I couldn't be sure of the details, but there is a section of the California Penal Code, referring to private investigators, which states that the applicant for or possessor of a license must be "of good moral character and temperate habits."

Well, it is widely known that I have an eye for the women. As a matter of fact, it is pretty well known that if I had eight eyes, I would have eight eyes for the women. But my morals aren't any more questionable than anybody else's. Than any red-blooded man's, anyway. Well, any *fuzzy* red-blooded man's. At least, nobody could *prove* anything. Not until now, I thought gloomily.

Finally, the gals calmed down. Apparently a couple of them had got the impression that I was a strange man who'd wandered in here and started knocking people unconscious. Once I made it clear that I lived here, sanity returned. All three of them were familiar in appearance, and now I recognized two of them—the white-blondie with the bronze tan and abundant breasts, and the saucy redhead from the shower—as lovelies who had often posed for pictures in the slick men's magazines. The kind of pix best framed and hung on the ceiling. But the third one, the pale white blonde, had me puzzled for some seconds longer. Then I recognized her. She was the tired tiger.

This was the long-limbed gal I'd seen so briefly outside Grieg's office. A few fast questions of the other two verified my suspicions. The two models had thought they were merely modeling for *Untamed Magazine's* monthly feature, "Apartment of the Month," and they'd been told the owner—Shell Scott—knew all about it. They had been getting ready to leave when I'd arrived. It looked very much as if, with them gone, I was to have reached home, here to be sapped neatly by Agony. Next Grieg's bleached blonde was to have taken over, still, like a dragon with halitosis, adding insult to injury. Loney was handy to record all these reasons for revoking my license. Arrival of the law and reporters would have smeared the three of Grieg's playmates along with me, I thought—but Grieg undoubtedly had convinced them that their sacrifice would be worth while. Probably he had agreed to let them stay alive. But my coming home early had fouled up the plot.

I explained my suspicions to the redhead and tanned blonde, and the blonde lovely exploded with anger, picked up an end table and swatted the tired tiger

over the head. She went out cold. It happened so fast I couldn't have stopped it, but it did fit in with my plans.

I said, "We've got maybe two minutes, girls. Here's what we do..."

I guess they had to break the lock to get in. Anyway, they made plenty of racket. I was in the shower singing at the top of my lungs, which is pretty loud, when they came in. In front were two plainclothes detectives from downtown. Flannery and Wilkins. I knew very well that they were here only because they had to be, and that they'd be on my side if given half a chance.

Behind them, in the next room, were a man and a woman, reporters from L. A. newspapers. Grieg had stayed below. Apologetically, Flannery showed me a search warrant.

"Where are they, Shell?" he asked me. "They?" I peered around the shower curtain.

"Well, we heard there was... an orgy going on up here."

I laughed. "You did, huh? Heard from who?"

"Grieg, Victor Grieg."

"That slab."

Flannery shrugged. "Grieg said he got word all hell was coming off. Somebody's supposed to've phoned him from here—rape, murder, sex, I dunno. Everything. We go to look around, anyway."

"Go ahead."

As the two officers went out, both reporters came into the john. You know how it is with some reporters, nobody has any privacy any place. The gal had a thin body, thin lips, thin brain, a face like those pictures on poison packages, and straggly hair done in a bun. It looked like a bun with a couple hot dogs in it.

I said, "Ma'am, was there something you wanted to use in here?"

She frowned and said slowly, "There were supposed to be some naked women..." She sounded disappointed.

I reached for a towel and wrapped it around me then pulled the shower curtain about halfway back and stepped out onto the floor. Right toward the female reporter. Keep them off balance, I say. Don't retreat, attack! She retreated.

Flannery and Wilkins came out of the bedroom wearing frowns. They hadn't found anybody. I'd known they wouldn't. I dripped into the front room and looked out the window. I could see Grieg sitting in his Continental. And then came my best break of the day. Around the side of the building staggered the tired tiger, with one hand pressed against the side of her undoubtedly aching skull, and not a stitch on. She saw the white Continental, shook her head, and then loped toward it. She had regained consciousness at precisely the right time.

"Well, look at that, would you?" I said to Flannery.

He stepped alongside me and looked at his mouth dropped open and his eyes got wide and then glazed over as if somebody had spilled milk in them. He let out a sort of tooting sound. Wilkins took a look and his eyes got about the same as Flannery's.

The nude gal was trying to get into Grieg's car. He was probably trying to push her away, in horror, but it appeared that he might instead have lost control of himself. I said to the officers, "Surely that sort of thing is against the law. Do your duty, men."

Maybe there were supposed to be two or three other nude babes around here somewhere, but that wasn't important to Flannery and Wilkins. A bird in the hand is worth two or three in the bush, and they took off like hungry eagles.

The male reporter was quick to follow them. Only Skull-and-Crossbones remained. I smiled at her and said, "Stay yourself at home, dear. I'm going to finish my shower—love to feel clean." I went back to the john. In a moment I peeked out, but she had gone up and was gone. A quick look toward the street showed me the whole gang of them waving arms. Grieg was red in the face. The blonde was in the Continental looking out and yacking.

So that took care of that. Grieg and weren't through with each other—babe started, in fact—but I figured the interruptions were finished for a while. I knew Wilkins and Flannery well, and that gang wouldn't be back—at least not today. I took a look out my bedroom window. One floor below, Agony and Loney sprawled on the lawn where they'd dropped them, still unconscious. There made a relatively soft spot upon which to drop Blondy.

I went back to the bathroom. I opened the shower curtain all the way. My two nude lovelies were still there, quiet as can be, big-eyed and pressed back against the wall. Like the Purloined Letter.

"They gone?" the blonde asked softly. "Yeah, All's clear. Well, you can get dressed now—I stuffed your clothes in the laundry bag, along with the camera."

The redhead grinned. "Keep your eyes off. What's the rush? You say they were gone."

I heard a siren. "There they go now. I said, 'I, uh, do you mean...'"

The blonde spoke, smiling an immense, desecrated smile, "Torchy and I were talking... just a second ago... and she said, well..."

Torchy, huh? It was high time I learned their names. The blonde—*Blondy*—told me what they'd been saying.

I had to chuckle. Me, Shell Scott, the guy who is usually examining the dead ones. This time I'd wound up with a couple of *live* ones.