
A MARTINI

PLEASE!

By Paul Ketelsen

Did you ever have a spat with your wife and just walk out. Well, I did, and believe me, spat or no spat, I am going to stay home from now on. Gosh! was I ever disillusioned on life.

I left the house in a hurry and went to the nearest bar. It was a ritzy sort of place where all the drinks cost plenty. But then I was mad enough to pay no matter what the cost. It was at the bar that it all began. I sat down next to a fellow and we began to talk. You know how it is, when you're in that state of mind, you've just got to talk to some one. Pretty soon we moved over to a table. He was a carefree sort of fellow, a little bleary eyed perhaps but then I didn't care. The story he told me and the way he told it. Well, I suppose the whole thing is good enough to write, so I have written it just exactly as he told it.

He started out just like the story was about himself, then swung into a story about a boy named Jimmy.

It seems Jimmy was a cop. The boys on the force were all proud of him. He was young; in fact he was the youngest on the plainclothes squad. He was a good shot with a pistol and that is how he managed to get in with the older fellows. His shooting had won plenty of blue ribbons for them.

Jimmy was a very likeable sort of a guy, blonde, tall and had a steel face. At least that is the impression he left on everyone. His wife was nice too. Of course he had a wife; hasn't every goodlooking guy Jimmie's age got one. By the way, he was twenty-four.

He was to have a home, not one that he owned but one he was paying on. He had everything, that guy. It is still a mystery how it all happened. What? Well, if you will call the waiter and order me a Martini, I can tell you about it.

I'm not much at telling stories but I am a good detective and I have the solution all figured out. But first let me give you the details of the story.

Every year, you know they have the policemen's ball. Everyone goes and there's a swell time had by all. Well, we had ours last March and that's how it all started.

Jimmy and his wife came and it was very obvious that they were there to have a good time. About one o'clock Jimmy went home. Yes, of course his wife went with him. If she hadn't there were plenty of them there that would have given their right arm to go. But anyway they went home.

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The next morning I woke up feeling like some one had been playing the anvil chorus in my head all night. I walked down to the drug store to get a bromo and the morning rag. Then's when I really sobered up. No, it wasn't the bromo; I just drink those from force of habit. It was what I read in the morning paper. The headlines were that Jimmy had shot his wife and turned the gun on himself. Now for a man who is feeling jittery that is really no way to start the morning off. It was a great shock, Jimmy my best pal committing suicide and not saying a thing to me about it. Why it was impossible.

I grabbed a cab and hustled over to the house. Yes, stupid, Jimmy's house. There were cops all over the place. The chief was even there; yeah he kinda liked Jimmy too. In fact everyone did.

Well I guess that is all I can tell you right now. Oh, another Martini? Well, yes, I believe I will. I can tell you the rest right now. You know there's nothing like on of these things to loosen a fellow up. His tongue I mean. Heck no, I'm not drunk, I've only had about ten of these so far.

Like I said, there were cops all over the place, running around doing nothing. The bodies were still there and me with my press pass got to see it all. Sure, I'm a reporter. What's the matter with that. Well O. K. then if you want to hear the rest of this story you'd better sit still and keep still.

Jimmy's body was at the bottom of the stairs and his wife's was at the top. There was nothing wrong in that, but when I saw that his wife had been shot twice I began to think. Jimmy would never shoot her in the arm and then in the head. He was too good a shot for that. Besides his wife had a handful of twenty-two bullets. Now that didn't make sense to me, but I could do nothing about it.

Well, what do you know, my glass is empty. I suppose I should be getting along. You know, news hunting and all that. No, I couldn't. Well, if you insist. Waiter, bring me another Martini.

There is not much else to tell, I tried to convince those dumb flatfeet that Jimmy had not committed suicide but would they believe me? You can bet they wouldn't. I kept telling them that Jimmy was too good a shot to have to shoot twice to kill. But they said he might have been a wee bit tipsy—I know that wasn't so, because I had been at his elbow all evening and he hadn't touched a thing.

All of them figured it was a suicide killing and let it go at that. I went out and got good and plastered and cursed the whole force for being so dumb.

That is all there is to it. Oh, oh, say I'm late for an engagement. Will you excuse me. The solution? Well it's not very important; thanks for the drinks; I'll be seeing you.

The way that guy got off made me kinda sore, here I had been listening to a tear jerker and didn't even know the whole story, it was kinda like a serial. The guy had never introduced himself and neither had I so I called the waiter and asked him who he was. That fellow that just left, you mean? Oh, he's just a bum, goes around telling everyone about a guy named Jimmy. Then when he gets near the end he runs off. I heard it the first time two months ago, and still haven't heard how his solution came out.

Believe me, right then and there, I decided that home was the best place after all. Spat or no spat.