Playback Short Guide

Playback by Raymond Chandler

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Characters

In his famous essay, "The Simple Art of Murder," Raymond Chandler insisted that in a crime narrative the hero "is everything." In his private notebooks, published since as "Twelve Notes on the Mystery Story," he was equally resolute: "The hero of a mystery story is the detective. Everything hangs on his personality. If he hasn't one, you have very little." In Philip Marlowe, Chandler created one of modern literature's most famous and enduring characters, a hero so vivid and real that even his off-stage life became the subject of interest.

Chandler, obliging, fleshed it out when asked to do so. In a 1951 letter to D. J. Ibberson, entitled "The Facts of Philip Marlowe's Life" which was published in Selected Letters of Raymond Chandler, we learn that the detective is about forty, has no living relatives, attended college for a couple of years, worked as an investigator for an insurance company and then the Los Angeles County district attorney's office. He is a hair over six feet tall, and tips the scales at two hundred and ten pounds. These and a slew of other details add up to a picture of a handsome, husky, intelligent, sensitive, and morally nuanced hero, who is a romanticized composite of features that have little in common with real-life sleuths. Chandler summed up the difference in this way: "The real-life private eye is a sleazy little drudge from Burns Agency, a strong-arm guy with no more personality than a blackjack. He has about as much moral stature as a stop and go sign."

Chandler, for whom the hard-boiled novel was a vehicle for mood and character as much as plot, painted Philip Marlowe as a modern-day urban knight. In the first scene on the first page of his first novel, as the hero enters General Sternwood's mansion to get his first assignment, he notices a stained glass panel showing a knight in dark armor rescuing a lady tied to a tree. "I stood there and thought that if I lived in the house, I would sooner or later have to climb up there and help him," Marlowe reflects, articulating Chandler's own vision of romantic sordidness. Gradually emerging from the hard-boiled mold of the stories and early novels, in Playback the detective is a complex character with an equally complex personal life. He is a man of feeling, as well as action, who no longer hesitates to become involved with people around him.

"To me," admitted Chandler, "Marlowe is the American mind: a heavy portion of rugged realism, a dash of good hard vulgarity, a strong overtone of strident wit, an equally strong undertone of pure sentimentalism, an ocean of slang, and an utterly unexpected range of sensitivity."

Although the hard-boiled detective hero is by now a distinct fixture on the American literary horizon, his roots can be traced to Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn: undereducated, poor, solitary, pragmatic, independent, with plenty of common sense, good coping skills, distrust of phony intellectualism, flair for the vernacular, and a heart of gold—a representative of the American.

In all other respects, Marlowe from Playback—older, more tired, slower, and more cynical than ever—is still a man to be reckoned with. Awakened from a dead sleep early one morning by a phone call from a big-shot lawyer, Marlowe nonetheless has the presence of mind to exchange quips when the lawyer tries to intimidate him; Marlowe still talks tough when the occasion calls for it. But he is more human than ever before. Marlowe suffers from insomnia. He drinks too much, and sometimes he gets beat up; it is all in a day's work for him.

Although he is better educated, quicker, and more eloquent than most other toughguy detectives, Marlowe is still a model of raw masculinity, and the "dames," no matter how blonde, sharp, or cool, are drawn to him. Marlowe, savvy and street-wise, can also be smooth when the need arises. His knack for sizing up people and situations, and his intuitive grasp of human psychology allow him to rely on his wits as well as his fists when he is in a tight spot.

However, for all his toughness, Marlowe is always ready to save a damsel in distress.

He is full of compassion for the weak and defenseless on whose behalf he willingly endures physical hardship. For these reasons, a routine case often becomes a crusade that pits Marlowe against the pervasive evil that defines the society in which he lives. In The Long Goodbye Marlowe says: "I'm a romantic. I hear voices crying in the night and I go see what's the matter. You don't make a dime that way. You got sense, you shut your windows and turn up more sound on the TV set." Naturally, the reader empathizes with Marlowe and feels the need for heroes like him precisely because he refuses to "shut the window." For that matter, there may be existentialist echoes in his Sisyphus-like choice to roll the stone of virtue up the hill of corruption and decay.

Unlike many movie detectives, Marlowe does not consider himself above the law, yet in the spirit of American self-reliance (perhaps civil disobedience) he is not above using the law to his advantage when necessary. While Marlowe typically claims his ethics are in tatters, in reality he is a devoutly ethical man whose own morality and sense of fair play simply outweigh the letter of the law (which he nonetheless always tries to follow in spirit).

If every hard-boiled novel needs a "dame in distress," Betty Mayfield fills the role in Playback. A runaway from a troubled past, she wants nothing more than to start a new life, and yet she is curiously unsurprised when her previous life catches up with her.

Betty is a beautiful woman and a skilled actress; she readily uses her physical assets, wits, and charm to get what she wants. She is also an inveterate liar, one who is completely unapologetic and cynical. She sounds almost indifferent when she tells Marlowe: "All right, I'm a liar. I've always been a liar." Although she is drawn to the hero, and even daydreams about their future together, everyone (including her) knows that it will never happen. Betty uses men like pawns, although she seems to be a victim of circumstance and not a premeditated murderess of her rich husband. To Marlowe, this is simply a playback of many temptation scenes from previous novels. As a character type, Betty (and the femme fatale in general) is a fascinating incarnation of modern

woman. She is fiercely independent, sexually liberated, and not much of a homemaker, but she is able to get on with her life independent of men, and she is determined to hold her own in a man's world—be it in shady business, sex, drink, smoke, or tough talk.

Besides these two central characters, Playback is like other Chandler novels in that it presents a broad cross-section of society— from melodramatically hyperbolic power figures to everyday people in everyday jobs.

In the order of Marlowe's investigation, we meet with the expensive lawyer Clyde Umney; his secretary Helen Vermilyea; the runaway suspect Eleanor King (who is now Betty Mayfield); a train station porter; a petty hustler and hotel lounge lizard Larry Mitchell; cabbies; motel receptionists; a cleaning woman; another detective named Goble; a taxi driver by the name of Joe Harms; a garage night man, Ceferino Chang; a hotel detective, Javonen; an old hotel guest, Henry Clarendon IV; several cops; Captain Alessandro of the local police; the hatchet man, Red Harvest; Mr. Cumberland, tycoon, city-owner, and Betty's father-in-law; and the racketeer and ex-gangster, Clark Brandon.

One character who should be singled out for discussion is one whose presence in the book seems to be a bow to Dashiell Hammett. Just as Hammett featured in his own novel as Dan Rolff, the thin man with tuberculosis, in Playback Chandler makes his own cameo appearance in the guise of an aging hotel-lobby philosopher named Henry Clarendon IV. The notion for this bit of whimsy may have germinated in the writer's mind after his 1950 collaboration with film director Alfred Hitchcock (who mischievously put in a cameo in all of his films) on a script for the movie version of Patricia Highsmith's novel Strangers on a Train. Chandler writes himself into his last novel as an old, wealthy, intelligent and cynical hotel patron. The character's hair is neatly parted, he wears white gloves (in his later years Chandler was plagued by an unsightly skin condition), and his eye, astute in causal observation, is drawn to the female form. Clarendon engages in a conversation with his own creation, Philip Marlowe.

Social Concerns

In 1957, when Raymond Chandler wrote Playback, his seventh and final detective novel, he was sixty-nine years old, famous, and well-to-do. He was also terminally cyncial and wasted by long years of hard drinking. (In fact, it is said that he wrote most of this book while drunk.) Playback was published in early 1958, and according to Frank MacShane in his biography The Life of Raymond Chandler (1958), it "is the weakest of [his] novels." MacShane went on to note that "Playback is full of autobiographical echoes, and the ending of the book mirrors Chandler's own wishes" for love and intimacy at that stage in his life.

Chandler had found fame and adulation as one of the fathers of the school of writing that has become known as the "hard-boiled" detective novel, a uniquely American genre. In 1998, Time magazine noted that "Chandler has inspired more poses and parodies than any other writer of the [twentieth] century, save Hemingway." The reasons are obvious: Chandler at his best was one of the freshest, most elegant literary voices of his day, and his trademark character, detective Philip Marlowe, is an American original who has emerged as one of the most memorable characters in the canon of modern English literature; Marlowe rates alongside Dashiell Hammet's legendary gumshoe Sam Spade, as the archetypal wisecracking, tough-guy private eye. Marlowe is a kind of latter-day Don Quixote; hopelessly romantic, he is a lonely and tarnished knight who goes forth on behalf of the weak and the downtrodden to battle against the evil that haunts the mean streets of Los Angeles—the supposed "City of Angels."

Chandler's literary landscape is an unforgettable one that is corrupt, feral, and deadly; Philip Marlowe knows it, as surely as he knows that his struggles are largely futile.

He is fighting forces that are so much bigger and more powerful than he is, but still he soldiers on, and fights the good fight.

Chandler, a successful oil company executive who turned to writing when in 1932 he lost his job for drinking too much, honed his literary skills by churning out scores of stories for the pulp fiction magazines that became so popular during the lean years of the Great Depression. Chandler's first novel, The Big Sleep (1939), grew out of that hothouse experience. The book was a huge success with readers and critics alike. Readers were enthralled with Chandler's knight errant, Philip Marlowe, and with Chandler's literate style, his keen powers of observation, and his ear for the rough argot of the streets. Marlowe is the archetypal American hero; he is the little guy who uses his gun, his fists, and his wits to carve out a place for himself in the wilderness. By the 1930s, the great frontier had become an urban jungle, but the hero's odds were still long —the battle remained a David-andGoliath struggle. In the dark days of the Great Depression and the uncertain years of World War II, the great moral crusade of modern times, readers identified with Marlowe and what he was trying to do. Chandler followed up his initial success with a series of popular novels that included, Farewell, My Lovely (1940), The High Window (1942), and The Lady in the Lake (1943), among others.

However, the same personality traits that shaped Chandler's wry, cynical world view were the same ones that drove him to selfdestruction and self-loathing. Following the death of his beloved wife in 1954, his drinking accelerated, and it became almost impossible for him to write. Playback was actually based on an unproduced Hollywood film script that he had written a few years earlier. By 1957, his creative well was all but dry, and it was desperation rather than inspiration that spurred Chandler to recycle this story, which was not well received and was one of his least successful books.

Times and public tastes had changed, and so had Raymond Chandler.

At the height of his literary career, Chandler was a breathtakingly original stylist.

He wrote powerfully, and with an almost poetic elegance. British poet W. H. Auden, who was among the many well-known literary figures of the day who admired Chandler's writing, praised him as a writer who was "interested in writing not detective stories, but serious studies of a criminal milieu, the Great Wrong Place."

What kind of Great Wrong Place does Playback evoke for the reader? Although it was published in the late 1950s, when Americans were smug in the belief that they lived in the best of all times and in the best of all countries, the book is still close in sensibility to Chandler's earlier novels. Nobody in his fictional world is outraged by crime, graft, vice, or corruption, which are so widespread as to be endemic. After half a lifetime of sifting through society's human debris, Chandler's hero, Philip Marlowe, has seen it all, and his world-weary, cynical view of crime, is really the author's vehicle for pointing out that the line between criminals and society-at-large is at times wafer thin, at best.

Two of Chandler's favorite targets are guns and lawyers, two icons of the relationship between Americas and the uneasy Rule of Law; in Philip Marlowe's world, neither guns nor the law can solve any problem satisfactorily or fairly. To the detective, guns "are just a fast curtain to a bad second act."

The justice system is but another nightmare, designed to profit lawyers and crooked cops at the expense of average folks.

Betty Mayfield, the lady in distress whom Marlowe is hired to tail in Playback, makes no distinction between lawyers and blackmailers. When told that she may need a "good attorney" she scoffs at the very notion. "That's a contradiction in terms," she sneers. "If he was good, he wouldn't be a lawyer."

Another target of Chandler's criticism in the latter stages of his career was the state of America's post-war urban environment, conveyed through the actions and words of his brooding and sometimes melancholy detective hero. There is little to cheer about; at the beginning of Chapter Seven, Marlowe contrasts the fictional town of Esmeralda with the dismal reality of Anytown, U.S.A., with its tawdry, shabby streets, which are littered with glaring billboards, smoky pool rooms, lethal street toughs, and greasy spoon restaurants. Such images of urban blight, roadside wreckage, human misery and poverty, the backdrop for Marlowe's investigation of the town's underbelly, are a fitting prelude to Chapter Twenty. There the plot of the novel takes a back seat, while an

inconsequential motel owner deplores the transformation of Esmeralda. This type of socio-economic analysis, not common in a genre fueled typically by murder and mayhem, is not uncommon for Chandler, a writer who always deemed plots superfluous to the spirit of hard-boiled realism.

Chandler's reflections, all the more profound in the mouth of an average joe, conjure up the decline in America's social and urban landscape: the splintering of communities, the loss of neighborhood group identity and cohesion, and the triumph of the me-first, dog-eat-dog mentality.

Playback lacks the type of sadistic cop who was almost a stock character in a lot of Chandler's earlier fiction. The fact that Marlowe thanks the local police for treating him fairly underscores the enmity between cops and private citizens that is a recurring theme of Chandler's fiction. As he implies, the very existence of private detectives amounts to an indictment of the efficacy and integrity of the cops, bureaucrats, and politicians, who are the very ones who are supposed to see that society runs smoothly and honestly. In Playback, where a tycoon like Henry Cumberland deems himself to be above the law because he "owns" the town in which the law is dispensed, and where an exgangster like Clark Brandon lives comfortably, instead of being in jail for his past crimes, we see the reality of America's twotiered system of social justice; it is reminiscent of F. Scott Fotzgerald's novel The Great Gatsby. Clark Brandon, like Jay Gatsby, is a former racketeer and bootlegger, who buys himself respectability by moving to a new place, acquiring lavish property, throwing crime-tainted money around and mingling with the local Establishment (and muscling anyone who gets in his way).

No discussion of the social themes dealt with in Playback would be complete without a mention of the depiction of women in the America of 1958. Two passages in the novel provide insight into this. First, when Marlowe is hired to shadow Betty Mayfield, he looks at her photograph and remarks on the absence of a wedding band on her hand.

Betty had been married, yet the implication of Marlowe's comment is clear: a woman in her late twenties who is not married is suspect. For another, when Marlowe is invited to the house of Miss Vermilyea, his employer's executive secretary, he inquires, "You've been married, of course." This assumption again underlies the notion that a woman's identity is defined by a husband; no single woman could possibly own her own place.

Techniques

Some critics have expressed doubts that Chandler was as inventive a plotter as some other crime fiction writers. In a letter from 1957—at around the time he was finishing Playback, Chandler admitted: "I'm a good dialogue writer, but not a good constructionist." Whether or not this self assessment is valid is debatable. For example, it may take Playback readers a while to realize that the real target of Mitchell's blackmail is not Betty but Clark Brandon, which suggests that Chandler may be a more intricate constructionist than he realized. What is not open to debate is that the author had a keen eye for image and an unerring ear for language.

Born July 23, 1888, in Chicago, Illinois, but raised and educated in England, Chandler acknowledged: "I had to learn American just like a foreign language. To learn it I had to study and analyze it. As a result, when I use slang, colloquialisms, snide talk or any kind of off-beat language I do it deliberately." A master of capturing the flavor of speech on the page, Chandler uses two distinct voices to create atmosphere.

The first is typified by his use of the vernacular, with its rollicking, wisecracking dialogue, the other by the more meditative, at times even melancholy, descriptive passages. The dominant mood in his novels is that which surrounds losers in life: drifters, grifters, two-bit hoodlums, drunks, washouts, whores, lonely people coming together for a few moments during which even their togetherness is tinged with the certainty of solitude. These are people who have seen too much of the wrong side of life, and they have been broken by it. They are cynical people who have lost or discarded their ideals, so that even their dreams are only in black-and-white.

For all the harsh, hard-boiled veneer, there are undeniable elements of melodrama in Chandler's last novel. He writes about crime with the assurance that it will be solved. He creates a pure, romantic, sensitive, compassionate hero who will inevitably triumph in the end. He gives us a couple of durable female characters: Betty and Helen. Both shine with solid gold from under the brassy exterior. Chandler ends the book with a vision of love and impending marriage, and he renders sex scenes with an almost sentimental delicacy. Still, Chandler's ironic attitude to his life and his art is never far below the surface. Typically, Marlowe undercuts a poignant scene when he walks away and scolds himself: "A little more of that and I'd be falling in love with myself. I might even give myself a small unpretentious diamond ring," he quips.

Such scenes reveal Chandler as a master of image and simile. His prose is fresh and apt to a degree that is almost unequalled in American letters. The quality and playfulness of his wit has certainly few equals in the hard-boiled genre, and the startling effect with which he yokes disparate concepts or images together could belong to the metaphysical school of English poetry from the seventeenth century. The stylist who wrote in The Big Sleep: "The General spoke again, slowly, using his strength as carefully as an out-of-work showgirl uses her last good pair of stockings," is back in Playback with more delicious similes. "One was a Hertz rented car, as anonymous as a nickel in a parking meter," he writes. Although he was first and foremost a master of the

hard-boiled style, Chandler embedded within his writing longer descriptive passages, internal monologues, descriptions of settings that bear a Hemingway-like attention to detail, and a gallery of colourful secondary characters. In this way he remains faithful to publisher Cap Shaw's editorial manifesto for the old Black Mask pulp fiction magazine: "We wanted simplicity for the sake of clarity, plausibility and belief. We wanted action but held that action was meaningless unless it involves recognizable human character in three-dimensional form." While acknowledging the formulaic nature of most hard-boiled prose, Shaw wanted his writers to emphasize "character and the problems inherent in human behavior over crime solution." Without shying away from the seamy and seedy details of modern urban life, Playback describes these details in a way that makes the reader experience and respond to them emotionally, in terms of human triumphs and sorrows.

Themes

A major theme in Playback is the author's self-conscious treatment of the hard-boiled genre. In the later stages of his career, Chandler frequently expressed his discontent with its limitations, insisting: "From now on I am going to write what I want to write, as I want to write it. Some of it may flop.

There are always going to be people who will say I have lost the pace I had once, that I take too long to say things now, and don't care enough about tight active plots. But I'm not writing for those people now."

Indeed, he was not. The Long Goodbye, Chandler's second last novel, and arguably his best, is a far cry from the two-fisted style of the stock hard-boiled detective stories of the pulp fiction magazines. In this poignant, at times almost reflective book, Chandler pushes the boundaries of the crime genre when he deals with such themes as the nature of friendship, love, and middleage compromises. In doing so, Chandler transforms material that in less skilled hands would have been a routine murder yarn, into a taut psychological drama, character study, mood piece, and a novel of manners.

"I am not satisfied that.. . a novel cannot be written which, ostensibly a mystery and keeping the spice of mystery, will actually be a novel of character and atmosphere with an overtone of violence and fear," Chandler once explained. Such statements reveal the author's ambitions to push the limits of formula fiction. Such a controlled quasi-poetic emotion should combine with a lingering image of the mood and aura of the places and people described. It is significant that Marlowe is almost never hired to actually solve a murder mystery; he gets entangled in it while dealing with peopleoriented investigations. Increasingly preoccupied with writing contemporary fiction using the crime story form, Chandler went so far as to apologize for his early Black Mask stories which pandered to the pulp tradition by piling on murders and violent deaths.

Playback is one of Chandler's most selfconscious books. In it, he displays a flamboyant, self-reflexive attitude to the hardboiled crime genre and all its cliches. To begin, in a tribute as ironic as it is deferential, the novel is rife with allusions to Dashiell Hammett's classic Red Harvest (1929). The most prominent among these is "the Kansas Op[erative]" named Goble, "a middle sized fat man and the fat didn't look flabby," who looks like Hammett's Continental Op. He ends up beaten to a pulp by a redhaired gangster, Richard (or Red) Harvest.

Marlowe runs into a cabbie who protests that car-tailing is something from crime novels; Vermilyea greets him as "Mr. Hard Guy in person," while the hero himself quips about television detectives who never take their hats off, or pulp fiction sleuths who always drive dark, inconspicuous cars.

Playback deviates from the standard elements of the detective genre in so many ways that it verges on becoming an antimystery. Larry Mitchell is presumed dead, but no formal investigation is initiated, and no one is ever brought to trial. Justice is not meted

out—at least in the legal sense. Marlowe does not enforce the law by arresting Brandon, the likely culprit, nor does he report him to the police. To top it all off, there is not even a clear-cut case of murder, although no less than three people (Mitchell, the night watchman named Ceferino Chang, and Betty's husband) die sudden deaths. There are plenty of guns around, although nobody ever shoots one. The novel features long passages of stark philosophical reflections or sociological vignettes, and there is a quaint ending, with the hero in love and looking forward to his impending marriage.

Even Marlowe, ostensibly a gumshoe hireling for a fee plus expenses, is not like the Op or Sam Spade, those perennial hustlers and money pinchers. In Chandler's 1954 novel The Long Goodbye Marlowe returns a five thousand dollar bill that he received from Terry Lennox when he realizes that it was meant to buy his silence; in Playback he rejects the same "gift" from a gangster. The test of integrity is a recurring theme in Chandler's fiction. By common standards, the detective is a social failure.

As Robert B. Parker's Marlowe tells his millionaire wife in Poodle Springs (Chandler's last book, which Parker finished), "They [her friends] will laugh at me because I'm a failure. I don't have any money.

In this great Republic that's how the judgement is made, darling." Yet, ironically, we measure the failure of others by judging their moral and ethical standards against Marlowe's.

Another major theme inextricably linked with the fiction of Raymond Chandler, and with hard-boiled fiction in general, is the pervasivness of violence, crime, and systemic vice. Small wonder that the cops and dicks in Chandler's stories are such hardbitten cynics. The real criminals, powerful, evil men, are never brought to justice because graft and corruption are rampant.

Crime, money, and power are all in the hands of people who can afford to buy legal and political immunity from even the most tenacious investigators. Although Marlowe usually gets the bad guy, he is well aware that the capture of a murderer is nothing to cheer about; the corrupt system remains intact. In a symbolic scene at the end of "Smart-Alec Kill," a 1934 Black Mask magazine story by Chandler, the detective and a police captain go for a drink after closing the case. "What'll we drink to?" asks the cop. "Let's just drink," answers the hero.

Key Questions

Playback is in many ways Chandler's farewell work, at once typical in taking a hard look at contemporary society, and atypical in turning into a self-conscious and, at times, almost nostalgic retrospective of his literary career. In forming your response to this unique novel you may wish to consider the following questions: 1. In what ways does Marlowe differ from the stereotype of the hard-boiled detective?

2. Are Mitchell and Chang victims of murder or of accident and suicide, respectively? What are the implications of either interpretation for the novel?

3. What elements of this novel set it apart from others of the genre?

4. Do you find Chandler's style vivid and colorful? If so, why?

5. How would you describe the mood of the novel and how is it evoked?

6. What is the significance of Henry Clarendon's philosophical musings for the rest of the novel?

7. Why doesn't Marlowe report Brandon to the police? Why does he refuse to shake hands?

8. Do the themes dealt with in Playback still resonate with readers today? Why?

Literary Precedents

Much as Raymond Chandler admired Ernest Hemingway's titles, he vacillated about his own. Some that he contemplated but discarded were: The Corpse Came in Person, A Few May Remember, The Man with the Shredded Ear, Zone of Twilight, Parting Before Danger, The Is to Was Man, All Guns Are Loaded, Return From Ruin, Lament But No Tears, Too Late to Sleep, The Cool-Off. Playback refers, of course, to a "replay" of Betty's nightmare of being accused of murder with circumstantial evidence pointing in her direction: barely exonerated of her husband's death, in Esmeralda she faces the prospect of being held responsible for the death of Mitchell. However, Chandler's title also resonates in another way, inasmuch as the novel is a replay of an original movie script that Chandler wrote for Paramount in 1947.

After receiving Oscar nominations for scripts for Double Indemnity (1944), which he cowrote with Billy Wilder, and for The Blue Dahlia (1946), Universal Studios offered Chandler a lucrative contract of four thousand dollars a week, a percentage of profits, and minimal supervision to write the script for a movie called Playback. Chandler completed the project in early 1948.

Universal never made the picture, yet the script was some of Chandler's best screenwriting work. It was "one of the best films I wrote," he later said. In 1953, he took a stab at turning the script into his final Marlowe novel; the job was set aside until 1957, when Chandler finally managed to complete it. The book version preserves the storyline —it is still the story of Betty Mayfield, who runs from a playback of her tragic past—as well as a number of principal characters. Nonetheless, the novel is in many ways quite different from the script.

Chandler, who by now was living in La Jolla, California (near San Diego), was feeling as emotionally distant from Los Angeles as he was physically removed. As a result, the backdrop for the script became Vancouver, British Columbia. Betty arrives there on a train with Larry Mitchell who, after playing around with her and Margo West at Brandon's penthouse party, is murdered on her balcony. The investigation is conducted by a sympathetic Canadian detective named Killaine who eventually (and not so convincingly) falls in love with the heroine after clearing her of blame for the killing.

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