

Generic Radio Workshop Script Library [\(BACK\)](#)**Series: Suspense****Show: Two Sharp Knives****Date: Dec 02 1942**Cast:

THE MAN IN BLACK

ANNOUNCER (2 lines)

SCOTT, the Deerwood City Chief of Police

WALLY, his assistant

ELMER, the stationmaster

CONDUCTOR, on the 2:11 train

FURMAN, picked up for murder in Deerwood

GEORGE, the disgruntled jailer

TED, the crabby District Attorney

RISING, of the Trans-America Detective Agency

WHEELLOCK, Furman's personal attorney

DOC, the doctor-coroner

FRITZ, the undertaker

ETHEL, Furman's wife, classy

HOTCHA, her friend, brassy

HAMMILL, police officer

CROWD, at the undertaker's

MFx: "SUSPENSE" THEME ... AN ACCENT

THE MAN IN BLACK: (OMINOUSLY QUIET) SUSPENSE!

MFx: THEME ... CONTINUES IN BG

THE MAN IN BLACK: Tonight, Columbia brings you as guest star Hollywood's genial character actor Stuart Erwin. The story is by the author of "The Thin Man" and "The Maltese Falcon," Dashiell Hammett, one of America's acknowledged masters at the art of suspense.

SUSPENSE is compounded of mystery and intrigue and dangerous adventure. In this series are stories calculated to intrigue you, to stir your nerves, to offer you a precarious situation and then - withhold the solution until the last possible moment. Tonight, for instance, Stuart Erwin plays for us a pleasant, easy-going assistant chief of police in a small town who, to everyone's surprise, was instrumental in solving a murder. We trust that with this tale we shall keep you in ...

MFx: ACCENT

THE MAN IN BLACK: ... SUSPENSE!

ANNOUNCER: For SUSPENSE tonight, CBS presents Stuart Erwin in "Two Sharp Knives" by Dashiell Hammett.

MFx: ACCENT ... TRANSITION TO AN INTRODUCTION ... THEN IN BG, OUT AT [X]

THE MAN IN BLACK: Shortly after two a. m., a poker game had just broken up at Ben Kamsley's, the doctor-coroner of Deerwood City. Scott Anderson, Deerwood's chief of police and Wally Shane, his assistant were standing outside. [X]

SFX: SCOTT AND WALLY'S FOOTSTEPS ... THEN IN BG

WALLY: Where are we headin' for, Scott?

SCOTT: Let's walk across the street, Wally. Railroad station.

WALLY: (IRONIC) Gee, aren't you afraid of the excitement, chief? Don't you think that watchin' the 2:11 come in is apt to be too much for your blood pressure?

SCOTT: Well, if it is, Wally, you can always carry on. You've been a pretty good imitation of an assistant to me for some time now.

WALLY: Yeah?

SCOTT: Yeah. If anything happens to me, you'd be the chief. Don't worry, it won't be any harder for you to fool the public as chief. Hi, Elmer.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS OUT

ELMER: Howdy, Scott. Hello, Wally. Kind of late for you boys to be around, ain't it?

WALLY: No, I don't know. We sort of figured we'd put the town to bed tonight. How's the 2:11? On time?

ELMER: Right on the nose. She ought to be blowin' through the bend in just about three seconds now.

SFX: DISTANT TRAIN WHISTLE

ELMER: Yup. What'd I tell ya? That's her now. (BEAT) Expectin' anyone on her, Scott?

SCOTT: No, Elmer, I'm not expectin' anyone. Wally and I just thought we'd come over and watch it come in, that's all.

SFX: RUMBLE OF APPROACHING TRAIN ... IN BG

WALLY: You know, Elmer, you never can tell who might get off,

though. Dick Turpin, Henry Morgan, Jesse James, Jack the Ripper, six officers of Murder, Incorporated, or even your Aunt Gussie.

ELMER: I guess you're right, Wally. Well, here she be. Pardon me, gents, but I gotta be rollin' the wagon out to the baggage car.

SFX: TRAIN ROLLS TO A HALT ... TRAIN BELL RINGS, IN BG

CONDUCTOR: (OFF, CALLS LOUDLY) Deeeeer-wood! Deerwood! (FRIENDLY) Hi, Elmer! How's it goin'?

ELMER: Can't complain. Can't complain, Cap.

SFX: ELMER LOADS BAGGAGE ONTO TRAIN, IN BG

CONDUCTOR: Well, maybe you can't, Elmer, but I sure can, if you hold us up with that freight there. You got much more?

ELMER: Nope. This is the last piece now.

SFX: LAST PIECE OF BAGGAGE LOADED

ELMER: There ya are, Cap. All done.

CONDUCTOR: Okay. See ya tomorrow, Elmer. (CALLS) Board! Board!

SFX: TRAIN CHUGS OUT OF STATION, BELL RINGING ... FADES OUT DURING FOLLOWING

WALLY: Hey, Scott. Do you see what I see?

SCOTT: If you mean, do I see the man that just got off that train, the answer's yes.

WALLY: Well, he's a ringer for the guy we got a picture of.

SCOTT: That is the guy.

WALLY: Well, then, what do we do now?

SCOTT: We take him, Wally. My car's at the corner of the alley.

WALLY: (RELUCTANT) Oh, but, Scott--

SCOTT: We tail him up the street.

WALLY: Okay, Scott. There he goes now, over toward the taxi stand.

SCOTT: Come on, let's follow him.

SFX: TRANSITIONAL PAUSE ... FADE IN FOOTSTEPS, THEN OUT WITH--

SCOTT: Hello, Furman.

FURMAN: Huh? Oh, I - I don't believe I--

SCOTT: You're Lester Furman, aren't you?

FURMAN: Yes. I am.

SCOTT: Philadelphia?

FURMAN: Yes.

SCOTT: I'm Scott Anderson, Chief of Police.

FURMAN: What? Chief of--? (BEAT) What's happened to her?

SCOTT: Happened to who?

FURMAN: (SUSPICIOUS) Oh! Oh, no, you don't! Let me go!

BIZ: SCUFFLE BREAKS OUT AMONG THE THREE, THEN CONTINUES IN BG ...
NEXT THREE LINES OVERLAP

FURMAN: If you think you can pull that sort of stuff with me, you're very much mistaken!

SCOTT: Now, hold on.

WALLY: Okay, Scott. Let me get a crack at that mug.

SCOTT: Now, now, now, now--

FURMAN: Wait a minute! Wait a minute!

SCOTT: Hold it, Wally.

BIZ: SCUFFLE ENDS

SCOTT: Well, Furman?

FURMAN: (BREATHLESS) Well, I-- I - I'm sorry. For a moment there I thought you weren't really a policeman.

SCOTT: (AMUSED) Thanks. Nice to know I look almost human.

FURMAN: Yes. It - it was silly of me. I'm - I'm sorry.

WALLY: Well, let's get goin' now before anything else happens. Okay, Furman, get in the car.

SFX: CAR DOOR OPENS ... THEY CLIMB INTO CAR DURING FOLLOWING

WALLY: I'll drive, Scott.

SCOTT: (TO FURMAN) In you go.

SFX: CAR DOORS SHUT ... ENGINE STARTS ... CAR PUT IN GEAR ...

ENGINE CONTINUES IN BG

FURMAN: Are - are you taking me to police headquarters?

SCOTT: That's right.

FURMAN: What for?

SCOTT: Philadelphia.

FURMAN: I, uh-- I don't think I understand.

SCOTT: You understand that you're wanted in Philadelphia for murder, don't you?

FURMAN: Murder! Why - that's ridiculous. That's-- Who told you that?

WALLY: Well, it's a cinch he didn't make it up.

FURMAN: But, wait! There must be some mistake--

SCOTT: Take it easy now. Just wait'll we get down to headquarters - and I'll show you what I mean.

MFX: BRIDGE

SFX: DESK DRAWER OPENS... RATTLE OF PAPER ... DESK DRAWER SHUTS BEHIND--

WALLY: Now then, here's the circular on Lester Furman. It was sent out by the Trans-America Detective Agency in Philadelphia. Take a look at it.

FURMAN: (EXAMINES PAPER) Oh. Yes. (READS) "Fifteen hundred dollars reward for the arrest and conviction of Lester Furman, alias Lloyd Fields, alias J. D. Carpenter, for the--" (ASTONISHED) "For the murder of Paul Frank Dunlap in Philadelphia on December eighth, 1942"?!

SCOTT: Well?

FURMAN: It's a lie.

SCOTT: You're Furman, aren't you?

FURMAN: Oh, yes, but--

WALLY: That's your picture on the circular, isn't it?

FURMAN: Yes. Yes, but I--

GEORGE: (APPROACHES) Well, Scott, I see you and Wally got Furman, huh?

SCOTT: Oh, hello, George.

GEORGE: Aw, you lucky stiff. Now, you two split a grand and a half reward. Never seen nothin' like it. You know, if it ain't vacations in New York at the city's expense, it's reward dough.

SCOTT: George, some day, if you don't remember you're the jailer around here and not the D.A.--

GEORGE: Huh?

SCOTT: --you're gonna be wearing your teeth on the outside of your lips and I'll be the guy who'll arrange 'em that way. Savvy?

GEORGE: Aw, just 'cause you caught a guy who's hot in Philadelphia--

FURMAN: (PANICS) It's a lie! It's a frame-up! You can't prove anything! There's nothing to prove! I never killed anybody. I won't be framed! I won't be--!

WALLY: Take it easy, Furman, take it easy. You're wasting your breath on us. Save it for the Philadelphia police. We're just holding you for them.

FURMAN: But it's not the police. It's the Trans-America Detective--

SCOTT: (INSISTS) We turn you over to the Philadelphia police.

FURMAN: Mr. Anderson, I-- I-- Well-- Then - then there's nothing I can do now?

SCOTT: There's nothing any of us can do till morning. We'll have to search you now, then we won't bother you any more till they come for you.

FURMAN: But I--

SCOTT: Wally, you look through his bag. I'll see what he's got in his pockets.

WALLY: Okay, Scott.

SFX: SUITCASE OPENED ... RUMMAGE THROUGH CONTENTS ... RATTLE OF PAPERS

SCOTT: Well, all he's got on him are some business cards, a few letters, a hundred and-- (MUMBLES TO HIMSELF, COUNTS MONEY) A hundred and sixty dollars, a book of checks in a Philadelphia bank, and a few odds and ends. What's with the bag, Wally?

WALLY: Not much. A couple of changes of clothes, some toilet articles, and-- Oh, here's a thirty-eight -- loaded. Pretty

little thing, isn't it?

SCOTT: Okay, put those things and what I got in the vault. All right, George, you can take Furman now and lock him up.

FURMAN: This is the most ridiculous thing--!

GEORGE: Come along, darling. Come on.

SFX: IN BG, RATTLE OF KEYS ON A RING ... FURMAN ESCORTED TO CELL

GEORGE: We ain't had nobody in our little hoosegow for three days runnin'.

SFX: CELL DOOR UNLOCKED AND OPENED

GEORGE: There ya are. Now you'll have it all to yourself, just like a suite at the Ritz.

FURMAN: But I--

GEORGE: Go on. In ya go.

SFX: CELL DOOR CLOSSES ... GEORGE'S FOOTSTEPS AWAY BEHIND--

FURMAN: I tell you, you're making a mistake! I demand to be allowed to get in touch with my lawyer! I-- (FADES OUT)

GEORGE: Hey, how about you boys cuttin' me in on a little of that blood money, huh?

WALLY: Oh, sure, George, sure. I'll forget all about that two and a half you been owin' me three months.

SCOTT: Make Furman as comfortable as you can, George. Take good care of him.

GEORGE: He's valuable, huh? Yeah, now, if it were some bum that didn't mean a nickel to you--

SCOTT: George, any day now I'm gonna forget that your uncle is county chairman and throw you back in the gutter just to see how high you'll bounce. Remember that!

GEORGE: (CHASTENED) Oh, Scott, I - I didn't mean nothin'.

SCOTT: That's all, George. Never mind the rest. I'm goin' home now. If anything's urgent, I can be reached there. But get this - I don't want to be disturbed -- unless it is urgent.

MFX: BRIDGE

SFX: PHONE RINGS THREE TIMES ... RECEIVER UP

SCOTT: (WAKES, GROGGY) Hello? Hello?

WALLY: (FILTER) Scott, this is Wally.

SCOTT: Yeah, Wally? What time is it?

WALLY: (FILTER) It's five after six in the morning and you better come right down, Scott. That fella Furman's hung himself.

MXF: ACCENT ... THEN IN BG

SCOTT: What? Furman hung himself?

WALLY: (FILTER) Yep. By his belt -- from a window bar. Deader'n mackerel.

SCOTT: I'll be right in, Wally. Phone Doc Kamsley and tell him I'll pick him up on my way down.

WALLY: (FILTER) No doctor's gonna do Furman any good, Scott.

SCOTT: Well, it won't hurt to have him looked at. You'd better phone the county court at Douglassville, too, and file a routine report.

WALLY: (FILTER) Already did that. And what's more -- hold onto your seat -- the D.A.'s on his way over, in person!

SCOTT: The D.A.?

WALLY: (FILTER) Yeah.

SCOTT: I'll be there before you hang up, Wally.

MXF: BRIDGE

SFX: SCOTT'S HURRIED FOOTSTEPS, STATION DOOR OPENS

WALLY: Come on in, Chief! Ted Carroll, the D.A., is here, and he's plenty hot under the collar.

SCOTT: What's he burning about?

WALLY: Oh, he's just mad. Runnin' up quite a phone bill on us, too. Been callin' Philadelphia every couple of minutes since he got here. What kept you so long?

SCOTT: Oh, I couldn't get my car started. Well, let's go in and see the old buzzard.

SFX: THEIR FOOTSTEPS TO OFFICE DOOR WHICH OPENS

SCOTT: Hello, Ted.

TED: Listen, Scott, what is all this?

SCOTT: All what?

TED: There's some funny business going on here.

SCOTT: What's funny about it? Man hangs himself. Just another case of suicide.

TED: Sure, it was suicide. But I just telephoned Trans-America, and dug a guy out of bed there, and he said they'd never sent out circulars on Furman, didn't know about any murder he was wanted for. All they could tell me about him was he used to be a client of theirs.

SCOTT: I don't know what to say, Ted.

TED: I don't either. Oh, a fine Chief of Police you are! What on earth kept you so long?

SCOTT: Car stalled. Came as quick as I could. What makes you so crabby, Ted?

TED: (SNEERS) Nothing. I guess it's just the District Attorney in me.

WALLY: (LIGHTLY) Oh, now, come, come, gentlemen. Nobody'd know you two were staunch admirers of each other.

SCOTT: (CHUCKLES) Okay, Wally. (TO TED) Tell me, what do you make of it?

TED: Well, there's plenty wrong, Scott. First, that Trans-America thing. They never sent out circulars about Furman, and now -- get this -- I talked to the Philly police just before you came in and there wasn't even any Paul Frank Dunlap murdered!

SCOTT: There wasn't?

TED: No. What did you get out of Furman before you let him hang himself?

SCOTT: That he was innocent.

TED: (EXASPERATED) Didn't you grill him? Didn't you find out what he was doing in town? Wally, didn't you--?

WALLY: What for? He admitted he was Furman, the description fitted him, the photograph was him, the Trans-America Detective Agency's supposed to be on the level, ain't it? Philadelphia wanted Furman, we didn't.

TED: But, Scott--

SCOTT: Why, sure, Ted, if I'd've known he was gonna hang himself-- Yeah, but then, if your aunt wore pants, she'd be your uncle. (BEAT) You said Furman had been a client of Trans-America. They tell you what the job they did for him was?

TED: His wife left him a couple of years ago and he had them hunting for her for five or six months, but they never found her. They're sending a man up here tonight to look things over.

SCOTT: They are, huh?

TED: Yes.

SCOTT: Mm hm.

TED: Well, I'm going out and grab a quick bite. But I might as well tell you, Scott, there's going to be trouble over this!

SCOTT: I know that, Ted. There usually is when somebody dies in a jail cell.

MFx: BRIDGE

SFx: FOOTSTEPS APPROACH ... RATTLE OF KEYS ON A RING

GEORGE: (CHEERY) Well! So what's become of that fifteen hundred fish now, huh, Scott?

SCOTT: (SERIOUS) What happened here last night, George?

GEORGE: (CASUAL) Nothin'. Furman hung himself.

SCOTT: Did you find him?

GEORGE: Uh uh. Wally took a look in here to see how things was before he went off duty, and he found him.

SCOTT: You were asleep, I suppose.

GEORGE: (DEFENSIVE) Well, I - I was catchin' a nap, I guess, but everybody does that sometimes, Scott. Even Wally sometimes when he comes in off his beat between rounds. Yeah, but I always wake up when the phone rings or anything.

SCOTT: Oh, sure.

GEORGE: Well, suppose I had been awake. You can't hear a guy hangin' himself, can ya?

SCOTT: Did Doc Kamsley say how long Furman had been dead?

GEORGE: He done it about five o'clock, he said he guessed. Oh, do

you wanna look at the remains, Scott? They're over at Fritz's undertakin' parlor.

SCOTT: Not now.

GEORGE: Hey, and speakin' of Furman, what are you gonna tell the guys from Trans-America when they show up here tonight?

MFX: BRIDGE

SFX: KNOCK AT OFFICE DOOR

SCOTT: Come in, come in.

SFX: OFFICE DOOR OPENS

RISING: Oh. They told me I'd find you here. You're Chief Anderson, aren't you?

SCOTT: Yes, that's right.

RISING: I'm Carl Rising, assistant manager of the Trans-America Detective Agency in Philadelphia. This is Mr. Wheelock, who was Lester Furman's personal attorney.

SCOTT: Glad to know you, Mr. Rising. How do you do, Mr. Wheelock?

WHEELOCK: How do you do?

SCOTT: I know you gentlemen are already in possession of most of the details concerning Mr. Furman from the time he arrived in Deerwood until the time of his death. But perhaps you don't know that the police of most towns in our corner of the state have also received copies of this same reward circular. Take a look at it.

SFX: RATTLE OF PAPER

RISING: (EXAMINES PAPER) Oh. Hm. I must say, this circular is an excellent forgery.

SCOTT: You're sure it's a forgery, Mr. Rising?

RISING: Oh, yes, there's no doubt about it. But it's an excellent forgery.

SCOTT: Tell me, Mr. Wheelock, was Mr. Furman a native Philadelphian?

WHEELOCK: Oh, my, yes. He was a well-known, respectable, and prosperous citizen of Philadelphia.

SCOTT: Married, I believe?

WHEELLOCK: In 1934 he married a twenty-two-year-old girl named Ethel Brian, daughter of a Philadelphia family.

SCOTT: And the Furmans had a child, isn't that right, Mr. Wheelock?

WHEELLOCK: Yes, born in 1936, but the child lived only a few months. Mr. Furman's wife disappeared after the child's death.

SCOTT: What year was it that she disappeared?

WHEELLOCK: Mr. Rising should remember that. His agency worked on the matter.

RISING: Oh, I remember it well. Mrs. Furman disappeared in 1937. We never heard anything of her again -- although Furman spent a lot of money trying to locate her.

SCOTT: What did she look like, Mr. Rising?

RISING: Ah, just a moment. I have a picture of her right here in my briefcase.

SFX: BRIEFCASE OPENED

RISING: Ah, here it is. Quite pretty, isn't she?

WHEELLOCK: If you care for that type.

SCOTT: (EXAMINES PHOTO, MUSES) I see what you mean, Mr. Wheelock. She's attractive at that. Judging by this photo, I'd say that she was a small-featured, pretty blonde, with a weak mouth and large, somewhat staring eyes.

RISING: Oh, that's an accurate enough description all right.

SCOTT: If you don't mind, I'd like to have a copy made of that photograph, Mr. Rising.

RISING: Oh, you can keep that one, if you like. It's one that we had made up at Trans-America. Her description's on the back.

SCOTT: Thanks. Did Furman ever divorce her?

RISING: No, sir! He was a lot in love with her and he seemed to think that the child's dying made her a little screwy so that she didn't know what she was doing. That right, isn't it, Mr. Wheelock?

WHEELLOCK: That is my belief, Mr. Rising.

SCOTT: You said Furman had money, Mr. Wheelock. About how much did he have, and who gets it?

WHEELLOCK: I should say his estate will amount to perhaps a half a

million dollars, left in its entirety to his wife.

SCOTT: Mm hm. That's quite a handy sum for anyone to have, I'd say. Mr. Wheelock, everything shows that somebody framed Furman into the Deerwood jail -- and that frame-up drove him to suicide. But there has to be something else, a lot else.

WHEELOCK: Well, then, what are you going to do?

SCOTT: I'm going across the street to the undertaking parlor and have a look at Furman. I'll see you later.

MXF: BRIDGE

SFX: MURMUR OF CROWD AT THE UNDERTAKER'S ... THEN IN BG

SCOTT: Hello, Doc.

DOC: Hi, Scott. I figured you'd come over here to the undertaker's pretty soon.

SCOTT: What's on your mind, Doc?

DOC: (CONFIDENTIAL) Let's get out of this crowd. I want to tell you something.

SFX: UNDERTAKER'S DOOR OPENS

SCOTT: I just got rid of two guys in my office. Let's go back there.

DOC: Suits me.

SFX: UNDERTAKER'S DOOR SHUTS ... CROWD OUT ... SCOTT AND DOC'S FOOTSTEPS, THEN IN BG

DOC: (LOW VOICE) Two of those bruises showed, Scott.

SCOTT: What bruises?

DOC: Furman -- up under the hair -- there were two bruises.

SCOTT: Why didn't you tell me?

DOC: I'm telling you now, Scott. You weren't here when I made my examination. This is the first time I've seen you since then.

SCOTT: Why didn't you spill the stuff about Furman's bruises when you were testifying at the inquest then?

DOC: I'm a friend of yours. Do I want to put you in a spot where people can say you drove this chap to suicide by third-degreeing him too rough?

SCOTT: (DISMISSIVE) Ah, you're nuts.

SFX: OFFICE DOOR OPENS, FOOTSTEPS IN, DOOR CLOSSES ... FOOTSTEPS OUT BEHIND--

SCOTT: How bad was Furman's head?

DOC: Well, Scott -- that didn't kill him, if that's what you mean. There's nothing the matter with his skull. Just a couple of bruises nobody'd notice unless they parted the hair. I thought you ought to know, though.

SCOTT: (GENUINE) Well-- Thanks, Ben.

SFX: PHONE RINGS, RECEIVER UP

SCOTT: Yes? Who is it?

FRITZ: (FILTER) This is Fritz, the undertaker. Listen, Scott, there's a couple ladies over here that want to take a look at Furman. Is it all right?

SCOTT: Who are they?

FRITZ: (FILTER) I don't know 'em -- strangers.

SCOTT: What do they want to see him for?

FRITZ: (FILTER) I don't know. Wait a minute.

ETHEL: (AFTER A PAUSE, EARNEST) Can't I please see him?

SCOTT: Why do you want to see him?

ETHEL: (FILTER) Well, I-- I'm -- his wife.

SCOTT: Furman's wife?

ETHEL: (FILTER) Yes.

SCOTT: (QUICKLY) Oh. Oh. Oh. Oh, certainly. Be right over.

SFX: RECEIVER DOWN ... SCOTT RISES TO GO

SCOTT: So long, Ben. I gotta go back to the undertaker's.

DOC: So long, Scott.

SFX: OFFICE DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS ... SCOTT'S FOOTSTEPS ... THEN IN BG, IN AGREEMENT WITH FOLLOWING

WALLY: (OFF) Hey, Scott?

SCOTT: What do you want, Wally?

WALLY: (OFF) I wanta talk to you a minute. Over here, where we won't be seen.

SFX: SCOTT'S FOOTSTEPS TO WALLY ... THEN OUT

SCOTT: Okay, what is it?

WALLY: A couple of dames came into Fritz's undertaking place just as I was leaving. One of 'em's Hotcha Randall, a babe with a record as long as your arm. She's one of that mob you had me working on in New York last summer.

SCOTT: She know you?

WALLY: Sure. But not by my right name. She thinks I'm a Detroit rumrunner.

SCOTT: I mean did she recognize you just now?

WALLY: I don't think she saw me. Anyway, she didn't give me a tumble.

SCOTT: You don't know the other one?

WALLY: No. She's a blonde, kind of pretty.

SCOTT: Okay, Wally. Stick around a while, but stay out of sight. Maybe I'll be bringing these dolls back with me.

WALLY: Whatever you say, Chief.

SFX: SCOTT'S FOOTSTEPS TO UNDERTAKER'S DOOR WHICH OPENS AND SHUTS

FRITZ: Oh, there you are, Scott. I wondered when you were coming. This is Mrs. Furman and this is Mrs. Crowder.

ETHEL: How do you do?

HOTCHA: Hiya, Chief.

FRITZ: They just saw the body.

SCOTT: Mrs. Crowder? I thought your name was Randall.

HOTCHA: (AMUSED) What do you care, Chief? I'm not hurtin' your town any. (CHUCKLES)

SCOTT: (CHUCKLES) Don't call me "Chief." To you city slickers I'm the town whittler.

ETHEL: (DEEPLY FELT) Thank you for letting me see him.

SCOTT: It's all right, Mrs. Furman. But I'll have to ask you and your friend some questions. So if you'll just come across

the street to headquarters, we can get on with the routine.

MXF: BRIDGE

SCOTT: I want to tell you something. (BEAT) Mrs. Furman, your husband didn't commit suicide. He was murdered.

ETHEL: (STUNNED) Murdered?

HOTCHA: Aw, Chief, we got alibis. We were in New York, and we can prove it.

SCOTT: And you're likely to get a chance to. What brought you down here anyway?

ETHEL: (DAZED) Murdered?

HOTCHA: Well, who's got a better right to come down here? She was still his wife, wasn't she? She's got a right to look out for her own interests, hasn't she?

SCOTT: Uh huh. Uh, that reminds me of something. Excuse me a second.

SFX: SCOTT'S FOOTSTEPS

SCOTT: I've got to make a phone call in the next room.

SFX: SCOTT'S FOOTSTEPS TO OFFICE DOOR WHICH OPENS AND SHUTS ... PHONE RECEIVER UP ... BUZZ ... LINE CONNECTS

HAMMILL: (FILTER) Officer Hammill speaking.

SCOTT: This is Scott.

HAMMILL: (FILTER) Yes?

SCOTT: Is Wally around?

HAMMILL: (FILTER) No, he's not here. He said you told him to keep out of sight. I'll find him for ya, though.

SCOTT: Right. Tell Wally I want him to go to New York tonight. Send Mason home to get some sleep. He'll have to take over Wally's night trick.

HAMMILL: (FILTER) Oke.

SFX: RECEIVER DOWN ... SCOTT'S FOOTSTEPS TO OFFICE DOOR WHICH OPENS AND SHUTS

ETHEL: (WORRIED) Mr. Anderson--? Mr. Anderson, do you think I had -
- had anything to do with Lester's-- with his death?

SCOTT: I don't know, Mrs. Furman. I know he was killed. I also know he left you something like half a million.

HOTCHA: Wow. Dollars?

SCOTT: Dollars.

HOTCHA: All right, Chief. Let's stop clownin'. The kid here didn't have a thing to do with whatever you think happened.

SCOTT: No?

HOTCHA: No. We read about Lester Furman committing suicide in yesterday morning's paper, and about there bein' something funny about it, and I persuaded her she ought to come down to see--

ETHEL: Mr. Anderson, I wouldn't have done anything to hurt Lester. I left him - because I wanted to leave him. I wouldn't have done anything to hurt him for money or anything else. Had I wanted money from him, I would only have had to to ask him for it.

HOTCHA: That's the truth, Chief. For years, I've been tellin' Ethel she was a chump not to tap him. But she never would.

ETHEL: I wouldn't've hurt him.

SCOTT: Why'd you leave him then?

ETHEL: Oh, I don't know how to say it. The way we lived wasn't the way I wanted to live. I wanted-- Oh, I don't know what. Anyway, after the baby died I - I couldn't stand it any more--

SFX: PHONE RINGS

SCOTT: Excuse me.

SFX: RECEIVER UP

SCOTT: Hello? ... Oh, yeah, Hammill? ... Hm? You gave Wally the message? ... Yes, yes, I want him to go to New York tonight. ... Okay, where is he? Home? ... He is home, hm? ... Okay, thanks.

SFX: RECEIVER DOWN ... RATTLE OF PAPER

SCOTT: Mrs. Furman -- this circular that got your husband into jail -- did you ever see that picture before?

ETHEL: No-- (RECOGNITION) Why, that's-- Oh, it can't be. It - it's a snapshot I had -- have. It's an enlargement of it.

SCOTT: Who else has one?

ETHEL: (GENUINELY PUZZLED) Nobody that I know of. I don't think anyone else could have one.

SCOTT: You've still got yours?

ETHEL: Yes. Don't remember whether I've seen it recently. It's with some old papers and things -- but I must have it.

SCOTT: Well, Mrs. Furman, it's stuff like that that's got to be checked up, and neither of us can dodge it. Now there's two ways we can play it.

ETHEL: Yes?

SCOTT: Mrs. Furman, I can hold you here on suspicion till I've had time to investigate things. Or I can send one of our men with you to check up in New York.

ETHEL: Yes?

SCOTT: I'm willing to do that if you'll speed things up by helping him all you can, and if you promise you won't try any tricks.

ETHEL: I promise. I'm as anxious as you are to--

SCOTT: All right, all right. How'd you come down?

HOTCHA: We drove down. We got a great big car. That's my car, see? That big green job across the street.

SCOTT: (IMPRESSED) Mmm.

HOTCHA: Yeah.

SCOTT: Then my man can ride back with you, but -- no funny business.

HOTCHA: Aw, don't worry, Chief.

SCOTT: Come on, we're gonna see Wally Shane, the man who's gonna drive to New York with ya.

MFX: BRIDGE

SFX: KNOCK AT APARTMENT DOOR

SCOTT: Wally?!

WALLY: (BEHIND DOOR) Who is it?

SCOTT: Scott, Wally.

WALLY: (BEHIND DOOR) Come in.

SFX: APARTMENT DOOR OPENS

SCOTT: Ladies first.

ETHEL: (STARTLED) Harry--? Harry!

WALLY: (SURPRISED) Ethel?

SFX: SCOTT MOVES QUICKLY INTO ROOM, BEHIND--

SCOTT: No, you don't! No, you don't! No use reaching for that gun, Wally! I've already got you covered.

WALLY: I guess you win, Scott.

SCOTT: Yeah, I guess I do. Come along back to headquarters with me like a good little boy. Wally, you're under arrest for murder.

AFX: BRIDGE

WALLY: Well, and that's how I knew it was all up, Scott, the minute I saw those two dames goin' into Fritz's. Then, when I was duckin' out of sight, I ran into you, and I was afraid you'd take me over there with you, so I had to tell you one of 'em knew me, figurin' you'd want to keep me under cover for a little while anyhow -- long enough for me to get out of town.

SCOTT: Why didn't you get out, Wally?

WALLY: Well, I drop in home to pick up a couple of things before I scam and that phone call of Hammill's catches me and - and I fall for it. You see, Scott, I figured you're not on to me yet and are gonna send me back to New York to see what dope I can get out of the dames. Well, you fooled me, brother.

SCOTT: Kinda thought you'd fall for that.

WALLY: Then you didn't just stumble into all this accidentally, did you?

SCOTT: No, I didn't, Wally. I figured Furman had to be murdered by a copper. Only a copper would know reward circulars well enough to make a good job of forging one. Incidentally, who printed that Furman circular for you, Wally?

WALLY: I'm not dragging anybody in with me. It was only a poor mug that needed dough.

SCOTT: (BEAT) Okay, Wally. You see, I knew only a copper would be

sure enough of the routine to know how things would be handled. Only one of my coppers would be able to walk into Furman's cell, bang him across the head, and string him up on the-- Those bruises showed, you know, Wally.

WALLY: They did? I guess I should have wrapped two towels around that blackjack. Well, gee, Scott, I seem to have slipped up on a lot of things.

SCOTT: So that narrows it down to my coppers, and-- Well, you told me you knew the Randall woman. There it was. Only I figured you were workin' with them. (GENUINE CURIOSITY) What got you like this, Wally?

WALLY: Same thing that gets most saps into jams. A yen for easy dough. I was in New York, see, Scott, workin' that Dutton job for you, pallin' around with big shot racketeers, passing for one of them and--

SCOTT: Yes?

WALLY: Well, I got to figurin' that my work takes more brains than theirs, and they're takin' in big money and I'm workin' for coffee and cakes. That kind of stuff gets you, Scott. Anyway, it got me.

SCOTT: Mm hm.

WALLY: Then I ran into this Ethel Furman and she goes for me like a house afire. I liked her, too, see, so that's dandy; but one night she tells me about how much dough her husband's got and how he feels about her, and I get to thinking.

SCOTT: Thinkin' what?

WALLY: I think she's nuts enough about me to marry me. So I get to thinkin', suppose he died and left her his roll.

SCOTT: Mm hm. I see.

WALLY: So I run down to Philly a couple of afternoons and look Furman up and everything looks fine. I took my time workin' out the details, meanwhile writin' to her through a fellow in Detroit.

SCOTT: Go on. Finish.

WALLY: Well, I decided to do it. I sent those circulars out -- to a lot of places, not wantin' to point too much to this one. And then when I was ready I phoned Furman, telling him to come to Deerwood Hotel that night, and some time before the next night, he'd hear from his wife, Ethel. I knew he'd fall

for any trap that was baited with her. Only I guess I'm not as sharp as I thought I was, Scott.

SCOTT: Maybe you are, Wally, maybe you are. But that doesn't always help. Old man Kamsley, Ben's father, used to have a saying, "To a sharp knife comes a tough steak." Well, sorry you did it, Wally. (BEAT) I always liked you.

WALLY: I know you did, Scott. I was countin' on that.

MXF: SORROWFUL ... TO A FINISH

THE MAN IN BLACK: And so ends Dashiell Hammett's "Two Sharp Knives," starring Stuart Erwin. Tonight's story of ...

MXF: ACCENT

THE MAN IN BLACK: (OMINOUSLY QUIET) ... SUSPENSE!

MXF: THEME ... IN BG

THE MAN IN BLACK: Columbia presents these tales of mystery and intrigue and dangerous adventure for your relaxation and enjoyment. Next week, SUSPENSE will not be heard -- because of a special holiday broadcast, Columbia's review of the events of the year, "Twelve Crowded Months," which has been scheduled. On the following Tuesday, January fifth, there'll be another in this series, same hour, nine-thirty Eastern War Time. William Spier, the producer, John Dietz, the director, and Bernard Herrmann, the composer-conductor are collaborators on ... SUSPENSE!

ANNOUNCER: This is the Columbia Broadcasting System.

MXF: FADES OUT