

The Maddest Man in America

By TONY BRENNAN

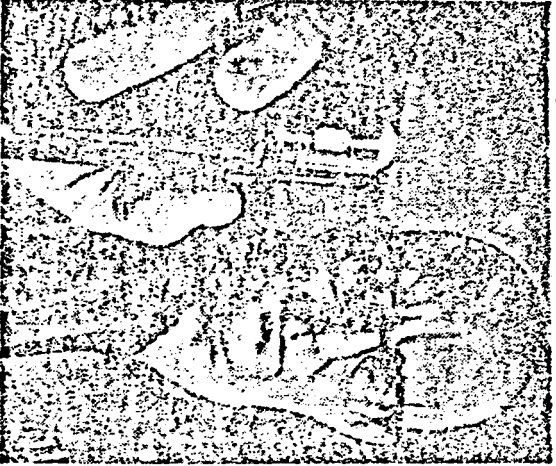
Eugene Austin's cold, steely eyes show no remorse as he admits, "I'm meanest man in America." The burly tough guy has made a grim profession of snatching children from one divorced parent — usually the mother — and whiting them off to the other.

"I can close my ears to the sound of a kid crying the same as I ignore a mother's screams," declared the hardnosed 50-year-old in a Miami, Fla., jail cell.

"Mean Eugene" is not against using violence — or breaking a mother's heart. And until recently, nothing slowed his progress. Not police. Not courts. Not bullets.

Although he occasionally takes a mother as a client, he works mainly for fathers trying to regain their children. But he'll only take an assignment if the courts have granted his client legal custody of the child.

Twenty-five states have tried to take action against him, Austin said — but all the charges were eventually dropped because he was acting with the consent of the parent.



MEAN EUGENE Austin with a spray can of chemical Mace — which he's allegedly used on a reluctant mother.

... No Males a Livin' Snatching Children From Their Divorced Mothers

While working for divorced parents," he says, "I'll hunt a divorcee down wherever she goes. There's no place she can hide. She can kick and scream — even plead with me — but it won't work. I just don't like to be outed."

But on a recent "case," he did fall. In August 1974 Mean Eugene — who operates across the country and around the world — was on assignment in Miami.

His mission: To snatch little Benjamin Hill from his mother and return him to his father.

Mean Eugene — accompanied by the boy's father — waited outside the woman's home when he spotted her arriving with 3-year-old Benjamin, he sprang into action.

He allegedly sprayed the mother with Mace — a painful gas that temporarily blinds and disables — wrenched the screaming young boy from her arms and fled.

The boy's heartbroken mother pressed charges and ~~Mean Eugene~~ ^{Mean Eugene} was eventually convicted of assault. He is now appealing the case.

The determined child-snatcher — his eyes burning with rage as he sat in his jail cell — vowed: "Putting me behind bars won't save me from kidnapping children once I'm free again — that's my chosen job in life."

Other people have taken the law into their own hands in an attempt to stop Mean Eugene. In his tracks.

NEW ARTIFICIAL LUNG IS SAVING LIVES



of breathing continue while the artificial lung takes all the strain," he explained.

The little lifesaver is hooked up to the body externally with tubes inserted into a major artery and a major vein, usually in the groin or neck," continued Dr. Kolobow.

"The whole time, the heart is pumping and the natural lungs are still in motion with the chest moving in what is apparently normal breathing, but it is the artificial lung that oxygenates the blood."

A pump attached to the artificial lung circulates the blood between the device and the patient, he said. "The patient, if conscious, is hardly aware of any change in his respiratory function."

Dr. Kolobow explained that

"damages the blood after 6 hours."

"That's the limit. Our new device can take over for the human lung for a period of two weeks now, but we hope the length of time will be extended to a month."

"It has thin membranes made of silicone rubber less than 1/100th of an inch thick, which shield blood from direct contact with the oxygen stream and cause it no damage."

"The part of the artificial lung containing the membranes is disposable."

"The device is simple and safe, and not packed with electrodes," added Dr. Kolobow, who foresees the day the new lung will be available as "standard equipment in hospitals across the country."

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