

on Fred Lawrence Guiles's *Norma Jean [sic]*, written and serialized before Robert Kennedy died and published (without substantiating notes or sources) the following year. Guiles, taking his lead from Winchell, wrote of her affair with "a married man not in the [movie] industry . . . an Easterner with few ties on the coast." The man was "a lawyer and public servant with an important political career . . . an attorney [who stayed] at his host's beach house," where he and Marilyn met for their rendezvous. No one had any doubt of the man's identity, and as Guiles wrote later, "the [RFK] liaison with Marilyn, which my book doubtless exposed despite my precautions [!], has been written about over and over again."

Despite his telling observation that "Guiles' version . . . may be no more than a compendium of the lies he was told," Mailer then proceeded to compound the fiction by fantasizing that Robert Kennedy *might* have had a hand in Marilyn's death or even that government intelligence agents *might* have killed her in an attempt to frame the attorney general. By simply being the first to name Robert Kennedy, Mailer had his bestseller.

Excoriated by critics for his foggy ruminations, he was interviewed by Mike Wallace on the CBS news program *60 Minutes* (on July 13, 1973), where Mailer had to concede, "I'd say it was ten to one that [Marilyn's death] was an accidental suicide." Why, then, did he trash Robert Kennedy? Mailer was nothing if not candid: "I needed money very badly." He got it, but the public was hooked on a monumental deception. \*

Meanwhile, Robert Slatzer pressed ahead, fruitlessly demanding an official Los Angeles County investigation into Marilyn's death and enlisting the services of private detective Milo Speriglio. Their grandstanding was not much heeded until the appearance of an article—"Who Killed Marilyn Monroe?"—in the October 1975 issue of *Oui*, a monthly "adult" publication best described as a skin magazine. The writer, Anthony Scaduto (whose only sources were Slatzer and Speriglio), ran further with the Kennedy angle than anyone thus far; he also introduced two ingenious new elements into the tale.

The first was the supposed existence of a red leather diary kept by Marilyn—a notebook, Slatzer said, in which she had carefully recorded government secrets told to her by the attorney general. In this book

\* MAILER COULD HAVE SAID THE SAME OF "OSWALD'S TAKE."