

ment. "All right, I'll do it. How do we get in touch with one another?"

"Leave that to me," Sessena said. He put out his hand. "Thanks for your help. I knew I could count on you."

THREE

SESSENA walked into the Red Onion shortly after ten p.m. The continuous entertainment advertised on the billing outside was being provided by a standup comedian who delivered his patter to a sparse audience whose bored impatience was more than visible as they waited for the strippers to begin. Sessena took an inconspicuous table and waited for Molly Flannery to join him. He returned her grin wordlessly as she sat down opposite him and ordered two drinks from the hovering waitress.

"How are you doing, Molly?"

"Swell, Ernie. Everybody's loosened up a little now that it's getting on toward Christmas. How do you like our Christmas decorations?"

Sessena looked around the smoky room, taking in the tarnished tinsel draped behind the bar and the plastic and cardboard Santa Claus and reindeer hung along the walls. "Great, it makes me feel like a little kid again."

Molly gave a short, hard laugh. "Yeah, they affect me that way too. I'm surprised the boss knew there was a holiday like Christmas."

"Anything new on our friend, Bart Williams?" Sessena asked.

"Last night he showed me a big ring. He says it's a star sapphire he got sent to him from Hong Kong and it's worth \$3,500."

Sessena pushed out his cigarette. "Was it a man's ring, or a woman's ring?"

"A man's ring."

"Was he wearing it?"

"No, he was carrying it around in a little box in his vest pocket. I noticed, because he's the only guy that comes in here wearing a vest."

"Did he say what he was going to do with it?"

"He said he was going to send it back to Hong Kong."

"Why?"

"I don't know, I guess he didn't like it."

Sessena rubbed one jaw with the flat of his hand. "Funny that he'd import an expensive ring like that and go to the trouble of clearing it through customs and paying duty, which he must have done, only to send it back." Molly shrugged. "Well, that's what he said, anyway."

Sessena thought a moment. "Molly, I'd like you to do something more for me."

"Name it, Ernie."

"I want you to hire a private eye to check on that ring. I'd like to know who was involved in bringing it into the country and who is involved in shipping it back out . . . if that's what Williams does with it."

Molly nodded. "I hire this guy and tell him what?"

"Just tell him what he needs to know to check out the gem. Everything Williams told you. Of course, you leave me out of it completely."

"O.K., Ernie, I'll do it. But I don't know any private eyes."

"Why don't you use Secrets Schultz? He has an office over on Ninth Street. He's reliable and a real digger. His fee runs about forty bucks a day. I'll pick up the check."

"Like hell you will, Ernie. This is for Mike, remember? I'll pay the guy whatever it amounts to. You know, shaking your fanny, even in a dump like this, pays pretty good."

Ernie laughed. "O.K., Molly, have it your way. You're a helluva gal. It's no wonder Mike was in love with you." He got to his feet.

"Say, Ernie," she said looking up, a vulnerable expression in her pale blue eyes. "What are you doing for Christmas? Have you got anybody to spend it with?"

Ernie pushed her chin lightly with a fist. "I never make plans that far in advance, sweetheart."

The Man Behind the Desk was standing at the window puffing on his pipe and watching the pin oaks sway in a stiff breeze when Ernie Sessena entered his office. He turned and waved him toward a sofa. "Storm coming up. What have you got?"

"I've made some progress on the Wax-Works problem."

"A little tug on the line?"

Sessena shook his head. "Not a tug on the line exactly—it's more like a knot." He sat down on the sofa. "I told you that my information indicates that Williams has a steady and substantial unexplained income and that there was a star sapphire ring, presumably worth \$3,500, which Williams imported from Hong Kong?"

The Man nodded.

"Williams sent it back to Hong Kong again."

The Man smiled thinly. "He didn't like the merchandise."

"That's one way to look at it."

"How do you look at it?"

"I look at it as a possible means of communicating illegal information to someone in Hong Kong. Suppose he had a film of Pentagon classified data reduced to a micro-dot and placed under the stone before he shipped it back?"

The Man Behind the Desk nodded. "It has been done. But taking that supposition, then what?"

Sessena lit a cigarette and blew out the match. "In this case, the details of returning the ring through customs and claiming a refund for duty paid was handled by one of the most prominent law firms in Washington—Probar, Wilts, and Theme." He met and held his superior's level gaze.

"That's interesting. It's sending a man to do a boy's job, isn't it?"

Sessena nodded. "It seems that way. Particularly, since the senior partner, Philus Probar, handled the matter personally. Why would he do that? This was a routine matter usually handled by a customs clerk, not a law firm. And, if a matter such as this *were* handled by a law firm, it would be handled by one of the junior attorneys or even a law clerk, not by the senior partner who charges forty dollars per hour for his time."

The Man Behind the Desk slowly refilled his pipe and lit it, striking three kitchen matches from the small pile on his desk before it drew to his satisfaction. He leaned back in his swivel chair and stared at the farthest corner of the ceiling. He spoke at last into the silence. "Philus Probar is a National Committeeman of one of the major political parties, isn't he?"

Sessena nodded. "Yes, he is. A very prominent gent."

The silence in the room lengthened, broken only by an occasional creak as the Man shifted in his chair. "We're getting pretty close to where it counts aren't we?"

There was another long silence.

"Who do we know in that law firm, Ernie?"

Sessena grinned across the room and the dour expression on his face vanished. "Jerry Blyth works for the firm. He used to be with us."

"Do you think he would handle this for us?"
"I could ask."

"Do you think he could handle it discreetly?"

"If he handles it at all, that's the way it would be." The Man Behind the Desk tightened his teeth on his pipe stem. "All right, Ernie, pull on this thread a little bit more. Let's find out what motivated a big-wig National

Committeeman, the senior partner of a large and wealthy law firm, to attend personally to a small shipment through customs to Hong Kong for an obscure clerk in the Research and Development Section of the Department of the Army who recently has been living beyond his means." His eyes bored into Sessena's in spite of the trace of a sardonic twinkle. "That's a mouthful, Ernie. God help us if we have to build a hot fire in the Wax Works."

Sessena arose and stretched lazily. "I always wanted to try my hand at chicken farming. Maybe I'm going to have my chance."

Ernie Sessena and Jerry Blyth finished lunch at the Lawyers Club on Pennsylvania Avenue. As they walked out of the dining room and through the wood panelled reception area, Sessena said, "I've got my car. Why don't you let me drive you back to the office?"

"Well, thanks, Ernie, but I can get there quicker by cab."

"I'd like to talk with you just a little more, Jerry. Let me give you a lift."

Jerry Blyth looked at his companion quizzically. "All right, Ernie, let's go."

Sessena drove down Nineteenth Street toward Constitution Avenue, around the Lincoln Memorial, and across the Memorial Bridge toward Arlington Cemetery.

"I could mention the obvious, Ernie. This is the long way around to my office."

Sessena squinted through the rain-flecked windshield at the bridge traffic. "Buddy, I'm going to ask you to do something for me because you're an old CIA man and you know what it's like when you're following a lead and you discover that you're up against it."

"I'm all heart, Ernie, but I'm not in the CIA now. I'm just a struggling attorney trying to go straight."

"We need you, Jerry," Sessena said quietly.

Jerry Blyth shifted in his seat, and then struck his right palm against the dashboard in exasperation. "Damnation. You never get away from it do you?"

"Not if you were one of the good ones."

"O.K., what's the story?"

"It may be a hot one," Ernie said. "I can only mention it to you because you've been a member of the corporation and I know that I can depend on you. It's a very delicate matter."

"So?"

"It involves your law firm."

Jerry turned in the seat and studied Sessena's profile. "You sure as hell don't hand out easy ones do you?"

"No, it's not an easy one for me or for you."

"Are you going to ask me to do something unethical?"

Sessena shrugged. "I don't know what lawyers consider ethical and unethical. I want to know why a senior partner of your law firm undertook to handle, personally, a very minor matter for a very minor client."

Jerry reached into his pocket and extracted a package of cigarettes. He pushed one and pulled it out with his lips, shoving in the cigarette lighter on the dashboard with one thumb. "There could be a very simple explanation for that."

"That would make us all very happy," Sessena said dryly.

"Tell me, Ernie, is this really important? I don't want to snoop into the private or professional affairs of a senior partner of my law firm unless it is God damned important."

Sessena met his eyes briefly as he navigated the Arlington Circle and headed back toward Washington. "It's a matter that involves the security of the United States," he said. "And if that sounds pompous, it's just the simple truth."

Jerry Blyth whistled under his breath. "Well, I never really wanted to be a lawyer anyway." He slumped in the seat and maintained an unbroken silence until Sessena pulled to the curb beside the Connecticut Avenue office building in which the law firm was located. Then he turned to Sessena and spoke unsmilingly. "God damn it, Ernie." He paused. "Who is the client?"

"His name is Bart Williams. He returned a sapphire ring to Hong Kong within the last few days with the help of your law firm and your Mr. Probar."

Jerry Blyth nodded unhappily. "Probar. Jesus, God." He sighed deeply. "I'll check it out and give you a telephone call when I'm ready to squeal."

Sessena clapped him on one shoulder with a heavy hand. "You'll get your reward, Jerry. Right here on earth. I'll take you to lunch at the Press Club. They have the best drinks and the lousiest food in Washington."

"That's great! Who wants food? Blurred vision is what you need in this town."

The Man Behind the Desk looked at Sessena wistfully. "I was just leaving for the week end."

"The Blue Ridge can wait," Sessena said heartlessly.

"You got me into this."

"The Wax Works?"

"Yes."

"Let's have it."

"Probar handled the matter of Williams' ring because someone connected with the House Armed Services Committee asked him to." Sessena spoke evenly, without inflection, but there was a faint gleam of malicious satisfaction in his eyes.

The Man Behind the Desk cleared his throat. "Isn't that also the senior committee for Subcommittee Number 5, the CIA Special Subcommittee?"

"It sure is."

"My God!" The expostulation came as a ragged exhalation of breath. The Man Behind the Desk stared at Sessena, stricken. "What are we getting into?"

"One be-Jesus of a mess, think I." Sessena's voice took on a slight drawl.

A big fist was struck into a palm. "We can't investigate the very Congressional Committee that administers our agency!"

"And wipes our noses and gives us goodies when we cry."

"Well, what in God's name would you do?"

"I wouldn't cut and run."

The Man Behind the Desk flushed. "O.K., Sessena, I had it coming." He drummed his fingers on his desk. "You know, of course, if we start checking the Committee and its staff members, they can blow us out of the water as soon as they get wind of it. Threats to the agency, cries of 'police state,' the newspapers baying at our heels. We'd be out on our asses before you could say, 'Jack Robinson.'" Sessena laughed. "You could always write nursery rhymes."

The Man Behind the Desk chuckled and felt better. "I could at that."

Sessena scraped an open palm down his close shaven jaw, feeling the roughness of his heavy beard. "We could continue the investigation indirectly."

"This is too hot now for amateurs. We might have a leak." He shuddered. "That's too horrible to even contemplate."

"No. We'd do this with a pigeon under an agent's control."

"Go on."

"There's a pigeon by the name of Anthony Baylor who runs one of these little Washington 'poop sheets' from a one-room office in the National Press Building. He's one of these professional Georgetown types—bachelor, a nobody with social pretensions, fancies himself a 'newspaperman.' Honest, but short of cash, ambitious, but incompetent."

"He's not a fairy, for God's sake?"

"No. He chases the skirts. I hear he catches his fair share."

"Good. I wouldn't want to think of him as a complete failure."

"I think we can use him."

"How?"

"We have an experienced agent, Frank Bennington, with the cover of a freelance writer. Let's have Bennington contact Baylor and tell him something smells about the Armed Services Committee, appeal to Baylor's idea of him-

self as a newspaperman, offer him a chance to make money writing an exposé. With Baylor investigating in the stupid, crockery-breaking manner he'll no doubt employ, who knows who'll break for cover?"

"Just stir things up a bit and see what happens?"

The Man Behind the Desk relit his pipe.

"Exactly."

"Bennington isn't briefed?"

"No. He does what I tell him. I don't explain why. He prefers it that way. He sleeps better."

The pipe belched smoke briskly for a moment. "I like that." He smiled through the haze at Sessena. "Handle it as an unidentified operation under your regular budget." He stretched happily, thinking of the Blue Ridge. "Don't report back to me on this one. I'll sleep better too. When I want to live dangerously, I'll ask to be filled in."

"I'm on my own?"

"Way into the wild blue yonder."

"And expendable?"

"We're all expendable, Ernesto mio. We just peel off at different velocities."

"Comforting thought."

"Isn't it?"

"It's the warmth of this organization that I like."

"I wondered what attracted you."

FRANK Bennington walked down the pale green corridor in the National Press Building until he came to a door of frosted glass set into a scratched and chipped walnut frame that bore the faded gold numerals he was seeking. Below the number on the glass, *Baylor's Bit* appeared in letters of a fresher gold.

He opened the door and walked into a one-room office. A glare of sunlight from two unshaded, dirt-spattered windows bathed the room, and it was stifling hot. A tall, thin man of about thirty looked up from the typewriter he was industriously using. His eyes, under prominent eyebrows, were obscured by his green eye-shade.

"Yes?"

"Mr. Baylor?"

"Of course."

"I'm Frank Bennington."

The eye shade was removed. "Frank Bennington?"

"I'm a fellow journalist, free lance. I interpret the capital scene for the out country—trade journals, news-

papers—from time to time, I make the national magazines."

Baylor's voice warmed. "Bennington? Oh, yes. I've heard of you. Sit down, sit down." He rose, and grasping the only other chair in the office, tipped it forward, letting its contents cascade onto the floor, before he spun it around and offered it to his visitor.

Bennington smiled. "*Baylor's Bit*, that's a good name for your weekly report. I've read it. It's damn good. I'm sometimes tempted to pirate from it."

Baylor became quite cordial. "Well, thanks. I used to call it *Baylor's Piece*, but my friends thought it was a report on my sex life." He laughed, flashing even white teeth. "Not that it would have to come out weekly."

Bennington brushed a long cigarette ash off the trouser leg of his impressed brown suit. "I imagine you do O.K. You're young, lean, good-looking. I'm a little long in the tooth myself and fighting the paunch." He struck his belly with the flat of his hand scattering more cigarette ash on the grey and red vinyl floor.

Baylor made a deprecatory gesture. "What can I do for you, Mr. Bennington?"

"Call me Frank, for God's sake. When did a couple of newshounds on the Washington beat call each other, 'Mister?'"

"O.K., Frank," Baylor said, grinning, with just a touch of condescension. "I'm Tony."

"Right. Say, you haven't a deadline to meet?"

"No. The baby's to bed for this week."

"Good. Because I'm just here to waste your time. I admire that sheet of yours. I was walking by the door and the name jumped out at me. I thought, damn it, I'm going to meet that guy. I'm glad I caught you in."

"Thanks for the kind words. I've always admired your stuff too, Frank. You seem particularly sure-footed in the area of defense."

"Oh, we all have our specialty," Bennington spoke modestly. "I happen to be well acquainted with the sources in that field. Tell me, Tony, if it's not a trade secret, how

do you cover so much of Washington for your report? You must have a big staff."

"No. This is a one-man operation, for now. I do the leg work and the writing and fire the stuff out to the printers. They set it up in a style and form we've already worked out. A mailing service takes care of the distributing."

Bennington looked at him admiringly. "A one-man army." He rose. "Well, you've got it, kid. It's coming your way. Thanks for your time. I just had to put the face with the product. All the best." He opened the door.

"Anytime, Frank. Nice of you to call by." Baylor continued to look at the closed door with a little smile on his face for some time, then he walked over to a wooden clothes tree in the corner and carefully removed a grey flannel jacket with a deep red lining. He slipped it on over the pin striped shirt that fitted snugly to his thin, athletic torso, and pulled at the knot of his blue knitted tie. A glance at the Swiss chronometer on his wrist told him that it was ten to one. "Gung hol" he said to his reflection in a large wall mirror he had hung to one side of the door. He touched a bit of blue handkerchief protruding from his jacket's upper pocket, slipped on a topcoat, and stepped out into the hallway.

At the parking garage, the attendant roared up the curve from the subbasement parking area and brought the green Morgan two-seater to a stop before Baylor. "This one really handles, man."

"Don't it?" Baylor said easily, dropping the dime he had held between thumb and forefinger in his pocket and extracting a quarter for the attendant. He walked around to the driver's side, and glancing at the leather straps which held the hood securely, lowered himself easily into the seat. With a spin of the wheel and a roar of the engine he was off to Georgetown.

He pulled into the narrow alley between a series of old carriage barns and detached kitchen wings which had once been a part of the large homes on the nearby street. By judicious remodeling, an enterprising real estate pro-

motor had reincarnated the nameless alley as the "Mews." The small apartments, which rented at substantial sums, were much sought-after by Georgetown "swingers," single or in pairs, wed or unwed.

Tony Baylor had an efficiency consisting of one room about fifteen feet by twenty feet with a small bath and a pullman kitchen. It was a dark, rather dank room, still not entirely abandoned by the roaches and earwigs that for decades had held unchallenged sway, but its virtues outweighed its defects. The large fireplace had a magnificent draft and, outside attractive French windows, a small, bricked garden was shaded by a huge magnolia tree which grew in the garden of the large house beyond an aged brick wall.

Baylor parked the Morgan near a row of garbage cans and sprang agilely from the seat. It had taken him some weeks to master this at the price of a skinned knee and a scratched ankle, but now he had the hang of it. The door to the apartment was ajar. He pushed it open and walked in. "Jiggs? Where are you, darling?" He was alone. He walked over to the small kitchen sideboard. There was a salad ready to be tossed and eggs broken for an omelet. She couldn't be far away. He tossed his topcoat at a chair.

"Hi, Tony, sweets," a slim, red-headed girl, dressed in a black ski jumper, pushed against the half-open door and entered the room. "I had to get a bottle of chablis from my ice box and you were out of butter."

He kissed her on the tip of her nose. "I thought I'd lost you." He feigned great relief.

"After lunch, maybe. Before, never." She tied on a small white apron.

"How about a martini while you perform at the skillet?"

"I'll spoil the taste of the wine."

"Be a barbarian and join me."

"Just one, then."

He kissed her behind the left ear.

"Do you still want your lunch?"

"I'm starving."

"Then cut it out."

"Who mentioned food?"

She turned and laughed. "You fool! Did you have a good morning?"

"Great. One of my adoring public dropped by and prostrated himself at my feet."

"That must have made you feel masterly. I hope you were gracious with the poor wretch."

"Of course. Noblesse oblige."

She whisked off the apron. "Luncheon is ready, my lord."

"Then let's fall to!" He kissed her full on her laughing lips and gallantly seated her at a small table at the window overlooking the garden.

The next day he received in the mail a series of reprints of a number of articles by Frank Bennington. They were accompanied by a scrawled note, "I really enjoyed our chat. This will give you an idea of what another worker in the vineyard is doing."

It was several days later that Bennington telephoned him. "Tony? This is Frank Bennington. I wonder if you can have lunch with me tomorrow? I warn you that I am going to ask your professional advice. Well, why not the Press Club? One o'clock. Good."

Bennington was waiting for him in the National Press Club foyer as he stepped off the elevator. They had two rounds of drinks in the rowdy conviviality of the members' bar, then fried oysters in the dining room. They got along famously. Bennington had an inexhaustible fund of anecdotes that Baylor enjoyed, and Baylor's dry wit sent Bennington into such fits of laughter that, face red and breath short, he would end up coughing.

By the time lunch was finished, they had established a close rapport. "Tony, let's sit in the lounge a few minutes," Bennington said as they got up from the table. "I'd like to ask your advice on a matter." They found two leather club chairs under a large grandfather clock at some

distance from the four other occupants of the room who were watching television.

Bennington offered Baylor a cigar and, when he refused, methodically lit one himself. He put the match in a nearby free-standing brass ashtray and took four or five carefully spaced puffs, eyeing the end of the cigar intently.

"Tony, I'm on to one of the biggest things in my career. A first rate scoop. I mean first rate. It's the kind of thing that could lead to the Pulitzer Prize. A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

Baylor nodded and waited for Bennington to continue. "I need help on this. Help from a first-rate, honest-to-God newspaperman who knows this town and who's a digger." Bennington took another puff on his cigar and glanced at Baylor. "Know what I mean?"

"Yes. I suppose I do."

"I don't need someone to do footwork or to check out leads or even to conduct interviews. This is a big one. I need a full-time partner. An equal. Someone to help me evaluate this thing, because it's big. Tony, my God, sometimes I'm scared to death, it's so big."

Baylor lit a cigarette. "Do you have someone in mind?"

Bennington nodded. "Yes. . . . You."

"I haven't time for that kind of newspaper work, Frank. I have my own report."

"Don't give that up, Tony. That's going to be your fortune. I wouldn't interfere there. But a chance to share a Pulitzer Prize doesn't come along every day. Think of what that could mean to you professionally."

"We'd share the Prize?"

"Hell, yes. Bennington and Baylor on the by-line. I'm offering you a partnership, laddie."

Baylor drew on his cigarette, but did not reply. Bennington lowered his voice. "And there's something else, Tony. We don't live by bread alone, right? You might have to hire some help to keep your sheet going while we earn our Pulitzer Prize, right? Now, I'm financed on this one. It's that big. I have a big advance. If our nose

for news leads to where we think it will, there will be plenty more."

Baylor pushed out his cigarette in the ashtray and lit another. He cleared his throat.

"Tell me more."

Bennington leaned back. "I can't tell you more unless you'll sign up with me."

"What kind of money are you talking about?" Baylor asked.

"Payments of five hundred to fifteen hundred as the story progresses, depending on the nature of the information." He glanced sidewise at Baylor. "I think I could get you a thousand-dollar advance for expenses."

Baylor sat silently for some minutes while his cigarette burned down close to his fingers. He dropped it into the ashtray, then he turned and grinned at the older man. "O.K., Frank, for glory and loot, sign me on."

"Good boy. We'll go all the way on this one." He got to his feet. "Let me get us a drink from the bar to celebrate the formation of the hottest news team in Washington and then I'll give you the news lead. Scotch?"

"Scotch over ice."

"Right."

He returned and, handing Baylor his drink, dropped into the leather chair beside him. He leaned toward him and spoke in a confidential undertone.

"You know the Armed Services Committee of the House."

"Yes."

"There's a real smell about that Committee."

"Like that?"

"I won't give you my impressions, Tony. I think we can do a professional job—truly Pulitzer Prize quality—if we cover the story independently and act as counterchecks on each other. It's very easy to go overboard on stories of this type and lose one's objectivity."

Tony nodded. "But you have dug something up?" Bennington nodded. "It smells to high heaven. But," he shrugged, "we need details and corroboration."

"When do I start?"

"Right now."

Tony grinned. "Don't forget the advance on expenses."

"The check will be in your mail in the morning."

BAYLOR said goodbye to Bennington in the elevator as it descended from the National Press Club, and got off at his floor. He walked down the shabby, green corridor to his office door and fitted a key into the lock. The office smelled stuffy. He threw up a window and carefully placed his jacket on the hanger. Humming a recent show tune, he dropped into his chair and reached to a nearby shelf for the blue-bound copy of the *Congressional Directory*. Turning to the listing of staffs of House Committees, he ran his forefinger down the page to "Armed Services." Glancing down the list of secretaries, he hit upon the name Sue Soames. Snapping his fingers in a gesture of elation, he picked up the telephone.

He cradled the instrument against his chin as he lit a cigarette. "Armed Services Committee, please." He inhaled and removed a flake of tobacco from his tongue. "Sue Soames, please. . . . Sue, this is Tony Baylor. Long time no see."

He laughed easily. "How've you been, chick? Well,

I've been around. You know, the office drudge. Say, this is on the spur of the moment, but how about dinner with me tonight? Soft lights, music, good food, great company?" He spun around in the chair and chuckled. "No, I don't think that you're easy to get. Why should we both sit home alone tonight while you put me off until next week? If you are free, admit it and we'll have a ball. O.K.? Great! I'm damn lucky! Saves a dreary day, chick. No, really it was, drab, low down, poor, just nothin'! I'll be around in the Morgan about seven. Same pad? Right! Get beautiful! See you!"

He put the telephone into its cradle, and read the brief biographical paragraph on Representative Sam Fenester, Chairman of the Committee, in the *Congressional Directory*: teacher, farmer, politician at the local and state level, veteran of the House, born in China of missionary parents, devout churchman, joiner of lodges and associations, author—*The Shield of Liberty and Stand Up and Be Counted*. The biographical sketches of the other members of the Committee were briefer, but projected similar impressions of one dimension, cardboard silhouettes of gregarious, patriotic men who savored the simple joys of the straightforward American life. Well, what could you expect from the *Congressional Directory* . . . an exposé or a critique?

Baylor laid the book down and called the offices of a local daily newspaper. "Harry? Tony Baylor. Not bad. The voice of the turtle is heard in the land. Yes. Well, I never knew what it meant either. Harry, I'd like to visit your morgue and check something out in your editions for, say, the last five years. Right. I'll be there in ten minutes." He slipped on his jacket and top coat, flipping the light switch as he headed out the door.

He spent the rest of the afternoon at the newspaper seeking every news item that mentioned any of the members of the Armed Services Committee. The picture that slowly emerged of the chairman, Sam Fenester, was that of a man leading a blameless, if not downright boring life. A bachelor, he lived in an apartment at the Sheraton Park Hotel on Connecticut Avenue. He had a very limited social