

Not a Case for Science

By Abner Anthony



IM CREADY laid

down his book as I when a guy's tellin' the truth, either."

He poked the book on the table

with a contemptuous forefinger.

"Them machines may do all they say

they will, but I hate to depend on a

lot of zig-zag lines instead of the shif-

ty look in a liar's eye and the slip-

up ways of catchin' crooks—

finger prints, cigar ashes and all that sorta thing. Honest, I believe if I was to see you steal the cuckoo clock off the wall there, I'd run for a piece of paper and some lamp black to take your finger prints, instead of bumpin' you on the head and draggin' you off to the can."

"Science has made wonderful strides in your profession," I began.

"Science me eye!" he interrupted me. "It listens all right in a book, but for me, I'll have a chance alongside any of these magnifyin' glass investigators. All I ask is a hunch from old man Human Nature, a good drag-net system, a couple o' stool pigeons where they're most needed—and some luck."

"Give me all that and then bring on your robbery or murder, or whatever else you got a mind to, and I'll come pretty near to gettin' hold of someboddy that knows something about it."

"After that, it's not the hardest thing in the world to get at the truth, the whole truth and nothin' but the truth, help me. There's ways of doin' it that work out pretty good."

"You mean the third degree?" I asked, knowing I would bring a storm about my ears.

"Third degree, h—!" he shouted angrily. "You been goin' to the movies around for a few minutes after I got there on the job would have tied that truth machine up in a double knot."

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"Third degree, h—!" he shouted angrily. "You been goin' to the movies around for a few minutes after I got there on the job would have tied that truth machine up in a double knot."

"I'm stallin' around headquarters they had come to the woman's apartment the night it happened, with not much to say. They're sitting and talking on my mind except a Stetson. Things are slow and I'm waitin' for four bells when it's my time to hit the hay."

"Along about twelve o'clock the telephone rings and a few minutes after the chief yells for me."

"Jimmie," he says; "take a couple

of men with you and get up to the

Everglade Apartments on Ninety-first

street. A Mr. Harris Andrews tele-

phones that his friend Lyons was shot

much better, but they're always tryin'

to strengthen their story by addin'

this and addin' that until, finally, they

slip up and crab the whole works.

Too many times the up-to-date meth-

ods add a lot of frills and make a

mystery out of what ought to be noth-

in' but a plain pinch."

Now that Cready had gotten under a full head of steam, I carefully refrained from making any comments. Nor did I give him any visible signs of encouragement. I know well the best way to get a story from this veteran of the police department.

"Take that Lyons murder two years ago," he continued. "To the public that looked like a dead open and shut proposition. Dick Lyons was killed and Harris Andrews was arrested less than an hour later. Of course, you remember the outcome of the trial—Guilty, first-degree murder."

"I made that pinch and there was lots of chance to do some scientific investigating that may or may not have ended in the same thing, but I'll bet a week's pay that the stories that flew

around for a few minutes after I got there on the job would have tied that truth machine up in a double knot."

"Andrews meets us, and he's excit-

ed as h—. As soon as I looked at

the man stretched out on the floor, I

knew he was dead. The whole top

of his head was blown off, pretty

near.

"Andrews' story is as straight as a

whip. He and Lyons had been out on

a theater party with a woman and

one look at the kid.

"'Walter!' she cries, holdin' out her

arms.

"'Mother,' says the kid and makes

as though to go to her, but the cops

ran him back. 'What does this

mean?' he asks her.

"The woman turns to me. 'Lethim

go,' she says, and her voice is awful

wearily and tired. 'Let him go. He

didn't do it. He did it,' and she pointed

to Andrews.

"'It's a lie,' hollers Andrews. 'She's

tryin' to save her boy. Take him

away.'

"'It's a lie,' shouts Andrews.

"'You shut up!' I tell him and me

to the woman.

"'Dick begged me to go on with him

and then Andrews came in. He is

very jealous and without saying a

word he shot Dick.

"'After he shot him, he called up

the police department and made me

change to these clothes. Then he in-

vented the story he told you and made

me promise to back him up in it.'

"'I guess I would have done it, too,'

she went on, 'only—' and her look at

the kid finished what she meant to

say.

"Of course, by this time Andrews

was wild. One of the cops had grabbed

him by the arm while the woman was

tryin' to save her boy. Take him

away.'

"'It's a lie,' shouts Andrews.

"'You sell up!' I tell him and me

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