

HILDY

Good. Now I want to ask a couple of questions.  
Did Earl Williams know what he was doing when  
he fired that gun?

MURPHY

If you ask us, no. If you ask the  
state alienists, the answer is yes.

MCCUE

It's a simple story. Earl Williams  
works for the E.J. McClosky  
Manufacturing Company as a bookkeeper  
for fourteen years. He starts in at  
twenty dollars a week and gradually  
works his way up to twenty-two fifty.  
A year ago the McClosky Company goes  
out of business and Williams loses  
his job.

(waving hand toward  
Wilson)

Take it away, Wilson!

WILSON

Well -- Williams goes a little balmy  
and begins making speeches on a plan  
he's got to save the world. Only he  
makes his speeches, usually, on a  
very busy street and neglects to get  
a license for it. Well, the cops let  
him alone as much as they can because  
he's harmless and they're kinda sorry  
for him. But one day he decides to  
hold a meeting right in the middle  
of a Veteran's Parade and the cops  
chase him. He gets scared and goes  
into hiding.

(gesturing toward  
Schwartz)

Come in, Dave Schwartz.

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WILSON  
(into phone)  
Who? Hildy Johnson? She just stepped  
out. She'll be back in a second.  
Who? Oh, Mr. Baldwin. Well, if you'll  
hang on a minute, she ought to be  
right in. All right.

WILSON  
(to others)  
Baldwin. The blushing bridegroom --  
himself.

SCHWARTZ  
What's he want?

WILSON  
Wants Hildy -- and sounds very  
excited.

Hildy comes back. Looks at them and stares contemptuously.

HILDY  
Gentlemen of the Press! Always picking  
on somebody who can't defend himself --  
the littler the better.

WILSON  
Phone for you, Hildy.

HILDY  
(going toward it)  
Who is it?

WILSON  
Oh, some insurance man. Are you in?

HILDY  
(grabbing phone)  
Give me that!

HILDY  
(into phone)  
Hello! Hello! Bruce?... what?...  
Where are you?... You're where?...  
How did that happen?...  
(she listens  
unbelievably a second)  
I'll be right over!

MURPHY

Boy, did you see her go?

ENDICOTT

Lioness Rushes to Defense of Cub.

WILSON

I told you Baldwin was in trouble.

MCCUE

Probably went out without his hankie  
and wants Mamma to wipe his nose.

SCHWARTZ

I still give that marriage six months.

BENSINGER

Hello, baby, get me the Sheriff's  
office, will you... Hello, Sheriff  
Hartman?... This is Bensinger. How  
about that favor? You know what:  
once and for all, will you hang this  
guy at five A.M. instead of seven?  
It won't hurt you and we can make  
the City Edition.

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ENDICOTT

Kid, those were pretty roses you  
sent Earl. What do you want done  
with them tomorrow morning?

MOLLIE

(tensely)

A lot of wise guys, ain't you?

SCHWARTZ

(uncomfortably)

You're breaking up the game, Mollie.  
What do you want?

MOLLIE

I want to tell you what I think of  
you -- all of you.

Hildy appears in the doorway and comes into the room.

MURPHY

Keep your shirt on.

MOLLIE

(to Murphy)

If you was worth breaking my fingers on, I'd tear your face wide open.

Hildy goes to desk and begins typing away.

MURPHY

What are you sore about, sweetheart? Wasn't that a swell story we gave you?

MOLLIE

You crumbs have been making a fool out of me long enough!

BENSINGER

(rising and coming over)

She oughtn't be allowed in here!

MOLLIE

(flaring)

I never said I loved Earl Williams and was willing to marry him on the gallows! You made that up! And about my being his soul-mate and having a love-nest with him.

ENDICOTT

You've been sucking around that cuckoo ever since he's been in the death-house. Everybody knows you're his sweetheart.

MOLLIE

That's a lie! I met Mr. Williams just once in my life when he was wandering around in the rain without his hat and coat on, like a sick dog, the day before the shooting. I went up to him like any human being would and I asked him what was the matter, and he told me about being fired after working at the same place for fourteen years, and I brought him up to my room because it was warm there.

MURPHY

Aw, put it on a phonograph!

MOLLIE

Just because you want to fill your lying paper with a lot of dirty scandal, you got to crucify him and make a stooge out of me!

ENDICOTT

(to Mollie)

Got a match?

MOLLIE

(heedless)

I tell you he just sat there talking to me -- all night. And never once laid a hand on me. In the morning he went away, and I never saw him again till that day at the trial!

The boys laugh.

She lashes out at them.

MOLLIE

Go on, laugh! I'd like to know some curses bad enough for your greasy souls! Sure, I was his witness -- the only one he had. Yes -- me -- cheap little Mollie Malloy! I'm everything the District Attorney said I was. And still I was the only one with guts enough to stand up for him! I told the truth and the District Attorney knows it! That's why you're persecutin' me! Because Earl Williams treated me decent and not like an animal -- and I said so!

MURPHY

(finally irritated)

Go into your dance! This is the Press Room. We're busy.

WILSON

Why don't you go and see your boyfriend?

ENDICOTT

(winks at the others)

But you'll have to hurry up -- he  
left a call for seven A.M.

MOLLIE

(through her teeth)

It's a wonder a bolt of lightning  
don't come down and strike you all  
dead!

From o.s. comes sound of the gallows. Mollie gasps.

ENDICOTT

(suddenly uncomfortable)

Don't get hysterical, kid.

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MCCUE

(into phone)

McCue speaking. Mrs. Phoebe DeWolfe,  
eight-sixty-one and a half South  
State Street, gave birth in a  
patrol wagon with Sheriff Hartman's  
special Rifle Squad  
acting as nurses. Well -- Phoebe was  
walking along the street when all of  
a sudden she began -- that's right.  
So the police coaxed her into the  
patrol wagon and they started a race  
with the stork. When the baby  
was born the Rifle Squad examined  
him carefully to see if it was Earl  
Williams who they knew was hiding  
somewhere.

Hildy is still pacing. McCue laughs at her own joke.

MCCUE

(to Hildy)

Did you get that, Hildy?

HILDY

No -- what?

Hildy's phone rings. She answers.

HILDY

Hello -- Bruce! I thought you were downstairs in a -- What? Arrested again! What for this time, Bruce? Mashing! Oh, Bruce, can't I leave you alone for three minutes even? Well, where are you? The 27th Precinct? All right, I'll be right over --

(she breaks off and looks down at her bag on the desk)

I'll be over in twenty minutes, Bruce.

(she hangs up)

If I ever see Walter Burns --

(she picks up phone and dials viciously)

Get me Walter Burns... Hildy Johnson!

Well, he was there just a minute ago! Have him call me back!

She hangs up.

HILDY

(to McCue)

If Walter Burns calls, hold the wire for me, will you? I'll be right back.

(she goes out)

MCCUE

Okay, Hildy.

(into phone)

Well, we can't get any official statement --

The door opens and the Mayor enters.

MCCUE

(into phone)

Oh, wait a minute -- here's the Mayor. Maybe he'll give us one.

MAYOR

Don't pester me now, please. I got a lot on my mind.

MCCUE

(into phone)

His Honor won't say anything.