

Chapter 5 Matricide

The phone rang and rang but no one answered. The caller recovered his dime and furtively darted through the streets of West Los Angeles looking for the next phone booth. Again the phone rang off the hook, but Della Street did not pick it up. She was flat on her back draped across the massive mahogany desk of her boss, Perry Mason. Her stockings and shoes lay in a pile by the doorway. Perry Mason stood over her half-naked body. He wore his suit coat and tie but nothing more. Della pulled him toward her with all the smoldering lust suppressed throughout the course of the trial but now free to devour her snorting bull and hero.

“Oh yes, Perry, yes! You’re the best Perry, the best.” She lived the life that millions of American women secretly longed for sitting next to their grey flannel husbands on Sunday night. They were celebrating as they did at the conclusion of each trouncing of that moron Burger. They celebrated the triumph of good and innocence.

“Oh God, Perry, oh God, yes yes! I’m so close, so close. One more, yes, one more probing question, Perry. Please give it to me, one more.”

And he did. With the same contained erotic rage she’d seen a hundred times in the courtroom. “Miss Street, are you familiar with Exhibit A?”

“Oh yes, yes!”

“Isn’t it true, Miss Street, that you love Exhibit A? That in fact you crave it? Isn’t that true, Miss Street?” As he probed, his voice grew louder and showed signs of coming unhinged.

“Yes, yes, it’s true! Yes, yes, oh God, oh God, yes yes yes yes, Perry, yes!” And with each gasping, screaming affirmation, Della Street confessed her true self for all the women of Ohio. In one breathless instant, she confessed, with every ounce of her being, both the guilt and innocence of her desire.

“No further questions, Your Honor.”

And with that they each blasted into a billion particles of joy, leaving their earthly forms and ascending into that great realm beyond the flesh. They soared past the moon, becoming one being and only after a season of bliss did their spirits begin to lazily drift back and forth, back and forth, floating down to the waiting outline of their bodies, the way a garden of rose petals might fall from the sky and ever so lightly settle to the ground.

Huge longhorns receded into Perry’s skull and his eyes rolled forward. Della sang the song of willows. Neither had fully come into the state of a personal self when the phone rang again, this time more frantic and persistent than the last. The pair startled and clumsily reached for their clothing. Della got to the phone and answered, trying to compose her breathless voice.

“Mr. Mason’s office, may I help you?”

“I need to speak with Mr. Mason immediately. It’s very urgent.” Indeed the voice on the phone was as breathless as her own.

“Who may I say is calling?”

"Jimmy Brennan. Please, it's important I speak with Mr. Mason right away. There isn't time to waste."

"I'm sorry, Mr. Brennan. Mr. Mason is not currently available." She smiled warmly as Perry finished buckling his belt.

Perry Mason looked at her quizzically and then nodded to Della.

"Just one moment, Mr. Brennan."

Perry took the phone and paused a few seconds. The receiver looked small in his hand and even smaller held against his head, which was statuesque and calm as he gazed into the unknown. "This is Perry Mason."

"Mr. Mason, thank God. I must talk to you now! I'm in terrible trouble."

"What seems to be the trouble, Mr. Brennan?"

"I can't talk here. It's too dangerous. They're after me."

"Who is after you?"

"Tragg and his bloodhounds. They think I killed my mother but I didn't, Mr. Mason, I didn't. I swear."

Perry shot a glance at Della. She looked sympathetic. "All right, Mr. Brennan, come straight to my office immediately. But come in through the back at Palm Street."

"Thank you, Mr. Mason. I'll be there in five minutes."

Perry hung up the phone and looked up at Della. His face was thoughtful. "It's the Brennan boy. Della, get us something cold to drink. I have a feeling Mr. Brennan has a lot to tell us."