

Dragnet

"The Big No Tooth"

by Jack Webb and Dragnet Staff Writers

(Originally broadcast April 5, 1955)

CAST

Narrator
Announcer
Joe Friday
Frank Smith (Friday's partner)
Tom Boxer (Brinton Hotel clerk, older character type)
Officer Roberts (beat cop)
Chief Brown (similar delivery to Friday and Smith)
Mrs. Argus (Argus Hotel manager tuff but tired old broad)
Fred Joplin (owner of the Joplin Grill)
Dr. Clinton Potterfield (a dentist)
Phillip Seaver (early 30s, dresses quite well.)

MUSIC THEME

NARRATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, the story you are about to hear is true. The names have been changed to protect the innocent.

MUSIC UP

NARRATOR: You're a Detective Sergeant. You're assigned to Robbery Detail. You get a call that a downtown hotel has been held up by a bandit who carries a sawed-off shotgun. Your job - Find him.

MUSIC UP

ANNOUNCER: Dragnet -- the documented drama of an actual crime. For the next thirty minutes, in cooperation with the Los Angeles Police Department, you will travel step by step on the side of the law through an actual case transcribe from official police files. From beginning to end. From crime to punishment. Dragnet is the story of your police force in action.

MUSIC FADE

FRIDAY: It was Sunday October 9. It was cool in Los Angeles. We were working the night watch out of Robbery Detail. My partner's Frank Smith. The boss is Chief of Detectives, Thad Brown. My name's Friday. We were on our way out from the office and it was 2:06am when we got to the corner of Cinnabar Street and Grand Avenue. The Brinton Hotel.

BOXER: Well I just done what he told me. I figured there was no point in getting myself all roiled up. Didn't see where that would be helping matters.

SMITH: Yes, sir.

BOXER: Whatever he said, I done it. Hey, you fellas looking for a room?

FRIDAY: Police officers. This is Frank Smith, my name's Friday.

ROBERTS: Are you from Robbery?

SMITH: That's right.

ROBERTS: Roberts. 1 - 0 - 16

FRIDAY: Uh - huh.

SMITH: You answer the call?

ROBERTS: Yeah. The description's out. Metro's sending a couple of cars to help us look for the suspect.

FRIDAY: All right, good.

ROBERTS: Anything else I can do for you?

FRIDAY: No not right now.

ROBERTS: Okay. I'll take care of the report.

FRIDAY: Thank you. We'll check with you.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS OUT

ROBERTS: Right.

F/X: DOOR CLOSES

BOXER: You know, I sure woulda been wrong about you two.

FRIDAY: What's that?

BOXER: I never woulda guess you was cops.

FRIDAY: Oh?

BOXER: Salesmen. That's what I'd put you boys down for.

FRIDAY: I see.

BOXER: Ladies Ready-to-Wear. Guess I woulda missed the boat this time.

SMITH: Would you tell us about the hold-up, please?

BOXER: I thought those other officers already let you in on it?

FRIDAY: We'd like to get the details from you if we could.

BOXER: Oh, oh, well, I ain't got nothin' better to do. Stuck here til seven A.M., anyhow.

FRIDAY: Wonder if we could have your name?

BOXER: Boxer. Tom Boxer.

FRIDAY: That's B-O-X-E-R?

BOXER: That's it. You know, just like a dog.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh. What time the robbery take place?

BOXER: Oh. (thinking about it) Forty ... forty-five minutes ago, long around one-twenty, somewhere in there.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

BOXER: Wasn't one-thirty, I'm sure of that.

FRIDAY: Oh?

BOXER: See I was listenin' to the radio. Stan Swift.

FRIDAY: Who's that?

BOXER: You know, Stan Swift. He's on every night -- midnight 'til six - seven nights a week.

FRIDAY: Oh, yeah.

BOXER: "The night's go swifter with Swift!" That's how he puts it.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

BOXER: Gives a time signal every hour and every half-hour. Remember him givin' the one A.M. Hadn't given the one-thirty yet. So it musta been around...oh... one-twenty when this fella come into the hotel.

FRIDAY: What'd he do?

BOXER: Walked up to the desk...

FRIDAY: Yes sir.

BOXER: I didn't even know he was there. Not at first.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh

BOXER: I was sittin' down in that chair. Kinda ...had my back away from the door. Didn't hear him neither on account of being plugged in.

FRIDAY: What was that?

BOXER: To my radio.

FRIDAY: Oh, I see.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS TO RADIO

BOXER: This here gadget. See, see?

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

BOXER: Fits in your ear like, like so.

FRIDAY: Yeah, I understand.

BOXER: Let's you listen without waking nobody up. Other end attaches to the set like ... like so.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

SMITH: You mean that's a radio?

BOXER: Sure is. You ain't seen this kind before, huh?

SMITH: No sir.

BOXER: Transistor.

SMITH: Oh.

BOXER: That's what they call it. Regency transistor. Ain't got no tubes, that's what makes it so small, ya see. Carry it around in your pocket if you've a mind too.

SMITH: I see.

BOXER: Real good tone, though. Plenty of volume if you want to let it out

FRIDAY: Yes sir. Now if you'd just tell us about the robbery would you Mr. Boxer, please.

BOXER: Well, ain't that what I been doin'?

FRIDAY: Yes sir. You said this man walked up to the desk?

BOXER: That is right. Maybe stood there a coupla seconds before I sensed him.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh

BOXER: Unplugged myself. Got up and asked him if he wanted a room. He said he did - single.

FRIDAY: Yes sir.

BOXER: Check the boxes to see what was vacant. Had my back to him while I was checkin', didn't noticed him openin' up his satchel.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

BOXER: Musta been carryin' the gun there -- in the satchel. Anyway, when I turned around to register him, I found myself starin' into the barrel. Shotgun it was.

FRIDAY: Alright, go ahead please.

BOXER: "This is a stick up," he says. "Do what I tell you and you won't get hurt." I didn't know if he meant business or not, and I sure didn't aim to test him to find out.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

BOXER: "Yessir," I said. "You just tell me what you want and I'll do it.

FRIDAY: Yeah.

BOXER: I ain't no coward you understand but I ain't no hero neither. 'Specially when I'm facin' up to a shotgun.

FRIDAY: Sure.

BOXER: Like the man says, "Only real heroes are dead heroes."

FRIDAY: Yes sir.

BOXER: Me? I'd just as soon go on livin.' That's why I done exactly what he told me - give him the money from the cash drawer here.

F/X: CASH DRAWER BEING PULLED OUT

BOXER: See? Every penny. Handed it all over to him. Didn't try to hold nothin' back.

SMITH: Yes sir. How much was there?

BOXER: Fifty...sixty dollars. Somewhere in between there.

SMITH: Uh-huh. What happened then?

BOXER: Well, he told me to empty my pockets. Leave the stuff on the desk.

FRIDAY: You did, huh?

BOXER: I emptied 'em. I didn't have than three or four dollars in change. He scooped it up with the other money, shoved it into his satchel.

FRIDAY: I see.

BOXER: Then he said for me to come out from behind this desk. Walked me over to the elevator. Told me to get inside, ride up to the top floor. That'd be the third, you see the hotel is three stories high.

FRIDAY: Yes sir, I understand.

BOXER: I suppose I coulda got off on number two - he wouldn'a known the difference. Floor indicator down there don't work.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

BOXER: But...I didn't see where I'd be gainin' anything by it, so, I done what he told me. I rode up to three.

FRIDAY: How long did you wait there?

BOXER: Oh, 'til I seen him leave the hotel.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

BOXER: The windy end of the third floor hall.

SMITH: Did he drive away?

BOXER: No. Just strolled off. I don't think he had a car.

FRIDAY: I see.

BOXER: Turned the corner and...that was the last of him.

SMITH: Uh-hum. What did you do then?

BOXER: Took the elevator back down. Called the police. Listened to the radio while I was waitin.'

FRIDAY: Yes sir.

BOXER: Figgered I might as well take it easy 'til the cops come. Wasn't more than five minutes 'fore them officers walked in. Little while later, you fellas walked in. I guess you know when that was?

FRIDAY: Yes sir.

SMITH: Now, Mr. Boxer, could you tell us what he looked like?

BOXER: Huh?

SMITH: The man who held you up.

BOXER: Oh! Well, I told them other fellas. The ones wearin' the uniforms. They said they'd send out his description.

FRIDAY: Yes sir, we understand, we'd like to have it, too.

BOXER: Okay. Oh, young fella - twenty-five to thirty I'd judge.

FRIDAY: Yeah.

BOXER: Big build. Little bigger than you.

FRIDAY: Um.

BOXER: Not as big as you though. Uh, somewhere in between.

SMITH: Yes sir.

BOXER: Black hair! Didn't catch the color of his eyes. Well, that's about all.

SMITH: How was he dressed?

BOXER: Oh, suit. Stripe in it I think. Maybe dark blue with a gray stripe. Bow tie. Kinda...dapper.

FRIDAY: Uh-hum.

SMITH: Have any scars?

BOXER: Not where's you'd notice 'em.

FRIDAY: You said he carried the gun in a satchel - is that right?

BOXER: Musta been where he had it. Didn't actually see him take it out though. My back was to him at the time. FRIDAY: How big was the satchel?

BOXER: Oh, medium size. Oh, 'bout...so long.

FRIDAY: Any initials on it?

BOXER: (thinking about it) No. Not so far as I can recall.

FRIDAY: What about the gun? How big was it?

BOXER: This long, maybe.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

BOXER: Single barrel. Sawed-off.

FRIDAY: Could you tell the make?

BOXER: Well, I ain't no expert on shotguns.

FRIDAY: Yeah.

SMITH: Would you know this man if you saw him again?

BOXER: Sure, I'd be a fool not too. Why?

FRIDAY: Like to have you come down to the City Hall in the morning, Mr. Boxer, if you would.

BOXER: Well, what for?

FRIDAY: Want to show you some photographs, see if you can pick him out.

BOXER: You mean this morning?

FRIDAY: Yes sir, if you would.

BOXER: It's Sunday!

FRIDAY: Yes sir, that's right.

BOXER: You fellas work on Sunday?

FRIDAY: Well, we're not the only one.

BOXER: Whadya mean? FRIDAY: He did.

MUSIC STING and UNDER

FRIDAY: Frank and I check with the patrol officers who had answered Mr. Boxer's call. They told us that a search of the immediate vicinity had failed to turn up anyone who answered the suspect's description. 3:16 AM, the crew from the crime lab finished up their investigation. There were no useful fingerprints or other physical evidence in the lobby of the hotel. 7:38 AM, we checked the suspects M.O. and the description with the stats office. We came up with 18 possibles. We pulled the packages from R & I and took them back to the office.

F/X: DOOR OPENS/CLOSES and FOOTSTEPS

SMITH: Well, looks like it might rain.

FRIDAY: Pretty early in the season isn't it?

SMITH: Yeah, the paper says we're gonna have a wet winter.

FRIDAY: Alright.

SMITH: Real good for skiin,' I guess.

FRIDAY: Yeah.

SMITH: That's what you need. Lot's of moisture. Heavy snow.

FRIDAY: You never go skiing.

SMITH: No.

FRIDAY: Well?

SMITH: I thought about taking it up a couple a years ago. Faye blew her stack, though.

FRIDAY: Oh.

SMITH: Said I'd probably break my neck first time I tried.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

SMITH: Sometimes I think she worries more about me than she does about the kids.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

F/X: DOOR OPENS/CLOSES and SLOW FOOTSTEPS

BOXER: (yawning) Good morning, gents.

SMITH: Oh, hi, sir.

BOXER: Hope I haven't kept you waitin.'

FRIDAY: No, sir, not a bit. How are you today, Mr. Boxer?

BOXER: (yawning, again) Oh, mmm, sleepy. Usually get a coupla of hours cat-nap during my shift. Kinda missed out on it last night.

FRIDAY: Yes sir, I'm afraid you did.

BOXER: Even after all you fellas left, somehow I couldn't dose off. Listened to Stan Swift 'til six AM.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

BOXER: I'll bet you I know more about Egypt than a real live Egyptian! Well, you got those pictures you wanted to show me?

FRIDAY: Yes sir. Right over here.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS

BOXER: S'all right if I sit down?

SMITH: Yeah, go right ahead.

F/X: CHAIR PULLS OUT

FRIDAY: Here ya are.

BOXER: This the pile?

FRIDAY: Yes sir, take your time, look at each one as long as you like.

F/X: PIX BEING FLIPPED THOUGHOUT ENTIRE SCENE

BOXER: Okay...(nervous laugh) Pretty tough bunch of boys.

FRIDAY: Yeah.

BOXER: No, it's not him. Hum. Hum. No. Nope. Oh, Hey! Wait a minute, there is a resemblance. He looks something like this one here.

SMITH: Is it the same man, Mr. Boxer?

BOXER: Oooo, no, no, no. Not the same.

SMITH: Yeah.

BOXER: Similar type though. That help you any?

FRIDAY: Might. Wanna go through the others?

BOXER: Sure. Sure. (pause) Now, you see this fella?

FRIDAY: Yes sir.

BOXER: He's not the same type at all.

FRIDAY: No.

BOXER: The other one I pointed out was. You could see the difference yourself.

FRIDAY: Yes sir, yeah.

BOXER: Ah, not him. (flip) Not him neither. (flip) Nope. (flip) Oh, now, this is closer to him.

FRIDAY: Sir?

BOXER: Not as close as that one, the other one, but closer.

FRIDAY: Yes sir.

BOXER: Now we're getting' further away. (flip) Nooo, no, it's none of these. That all you got?

FRIDAY: 'Fraid so.

BOXER: Well, that's the best I can do for you. (pause) Now, this one here, the one I pointed out first.

FRIDAY: Yeah, we understand, but it's not the same man, you said.

BOXER: Well, I never said it was. Just said they were similar.

FRIDAY: Yes sir. Well, I'm sorry we wasted your time.

BOXER: Oh, it wasn't no waste of time, not as far as I'm concerned.

FRIDAY: Huh?

BOXER: Remember my telling you 'bout how I try to guess what different folks do for a livin'?

FRIDAY: Yeah.

BOXER: Lookin' at all these pictures will be a big help from now on.

FRIDAY: How's that?

BOXER: I'll know a crook when I see one.

MUSIC STING and UNDER.

FRIDAY: On the following Sunday, October 16th, two more hotels were held up by a shot-gunned bandit. Both robberies occurred during the early morning hours. Both hotels were small. The description of the suspect and his M.O. indicated that he was the same man that had robbed the Brinton Hotel. Frank and I continued our investigation but we failed to turn up any leads. During the next week all hotels in the downtown area were alerted. Sunday, October 23rd, the night manager of the Shaeffer Arms, near the corner of Broadway and Clay, reported that he had been robbed at approximately 3:30 AM. He confirmed the bandit's description and M.O. but was unable to add anything new. The next morning, October 24th, we had a conference with Chief Brown.

CHIEF: Doesn't sound to me like you're any closer to him than you were two weeks ago. Whatd'ya got?

FRIDAY: Well, not much.

CHIEF: Let's have it.

FRIDAY: Description.

CHIEF: Pretty general isn't it?

FRIDAY: 'Fraid so.

CHIEF: What else.

SMITH: Well, now, he's only worked one area.

CHIEF: Yeah? SMITH: All the hotels are within a mile of Pershing Square.

CHIEF: Nothing to keep him from spreading out is there?

FRIDAY: So far he hasn't used a car.

CHIEF: You figure he pulled these jobs on foot?

FRIDAY: Looks that way.

CHIEF: Then he must live downtown somewhere.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

CHIEF: Anything about the hotels that might give us a tip-off on his next move?

FRIDAY: Yeah, they're all small. Only one person on duty.

CHIEF: Uh-huh.

FRIDAY: We've marked all the possibles here on a map. You want to take a look at it.

CHIEF: Yeah

F/X: FOOTSTEPS to map. MAP UNFOLDS

FRIDAY: Okay. Right here, these are the ones he's already hit. Here. Here. And over here.

CHIEF: Tight little group.

FRIDAY: Yeah. These circles indicate all the hotels of a similar nature in the downtown area.

CHIEF: Uh-huh. Only works on Sunday, huh?

FRIDAY: That's right.

CHIEF: Whatd'ya got planned for this Sunday?

FRIDAY: Well, we'll stake out as many as we can. We've asked Metro to give us a hand. We figure we'll have enough men to cover about, oh, twenty likelys, maybe.

SMITH: We plan to run the stakes from midnight til six AM. When he hits, it's usually between two and four.

FRIDAY: How's that sound to you?

CHIEF: 'Bout all we can do.

SMITH: Yeah.

CHIEF: I want you both to stay on this between now and Sunday. See if you can't pick up a lead somewhere.

FRIDAY: We will.

CHIEF: Informants been able to give you anything?

FRIDAY: Nope.

CHIEF: They holdin' out?

FRIDAY: No, I don't think so. I don't think they know who he is.

CHIEF: Well, maybe the stakes will work.

FRIDAY: Maybe.

CHIEF: What a minute. Lemme see that map again.

FRIDAY: Alright, here.

CHIEF: Funny. See here?

FRIDAY: Yeah.

CHIEF: You said these are the places he's already robbed?

FRIDAY: That's right.

CHIEF: All right together. Draw a line from one to the other and you'd have a square.

FRIDAY: Yeah.

CHIEF: What's this right in the middle of the square?

FRIDAY: That's the...Argus Hotel on South Broadway.

CHIEF: That's one he hasn't hit yet.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

CHIEF: Look's like your best bet then. FRIDAY: Yeah, that's the way we figured it.

CHIEF: Who's gonna cover it Sunday?

FRIDAY: Well, Smith and I thought we'd take it.

CHIEF: That's a coincidence.

FRIDAY: Hum?

CHIEF: Just who I was gonna suggest.

MUSIC UP and UNDER

FRIDAY: During the rest of the week we continued our investigation but we failed to turn up any additional information about the suspect. A few minutes before midnight, on Saturday, October 29th, men from Metro and Robbery Division staked out twenty-two locations in the downtown area. Sunday, October 30th, 12:05 AM, Frank and I entered the lobby of the Argus Hotel and we walked up to the desk.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS

MS. ARGUS: Sorry, we're full up.

SMITH: We'd like to talk to the manager if we can.

MS. ARGUS: I said we're full up.

FRIDAY: We're police officers.

MS. ARGUS: Huh?

FRIDAY: This's Frank Smith, my name's Friday.

MS. ARGUS: Oh.

FRIDAY: Could we see the manager?

MS. ARGUS: I'm the manager.

FRIDAY: You own this hotel?

MS. ARGUS: Me and my husband.

FRIDAY: Well, maybe we better talk to him.

MS. ARGUS: Go ahead. (pause) If you can find him.

FRIDAY: Isn't he here?

MS. ARGUS: Nope.

FRIDAY: Would you know where he is?

MS. ARGUS: Nope. Out getting' drunk probably.

FRIDAY: I see.

MS. ARGUS: I work nights, he works days. He don't tell me were he goes at night, I don't tell him what I do during the day, that's our arrangement.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

MS. ARGUS: I don't make for a real happy marriage, but it keeps us from killin' each other.

FRIDAY: Yes ma'm.

SMITH: Is there somebody who could take over for you here tonight?

MS. ARGUS: Nope.

FRIDAY: Now you're sure your husband didn't say where he was going?

MS. ARGUS: We don't talk.

FRIDAY: Oh.

MS. ARGUS: He wants me to know something he writes me a note, leaves it on the desk and I do the same for him.

FRIDAY: I see.

MS. ARGUS: We ain't exchanged no words for the last two years.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

MS. ARGUS: Saves a lot of wear and tear on the nervous system. He never said nothin' worth listenin'to anyway.

FRIDAY: I see.

MS. ARGUS: Well, what do you fellas want?

SMITH: Well, ma'm several hotels have been held up downtown lately.

MS. ARGUS: Yeah.

FRIDAY: You were warned about it weren't you?

MS. ARGUS: George was warned. Left me a note.

FRIDAY: I see. Well, there's a chance he might come here tonight.

MS. ARGUS: If he does, I'm ready for him.

SMITH: Huh?

MS. ARGUS: Got me a gun.

F/X: CASH DRAWER OPENING

MS. ARGUS: Pistol. Keep it in the cash drawer. See?

FRIDAY: Yes ma'm.

MS. ARGUS: Know how to use it, too. He shows up, I'm ready for him.

FRIDAY: Is there someplace we could wait in case he does?

MS. ARGUS: You don't have to. I don't need no protection. Told ya, I've got a gun.

FRIDAY: Yes, ma'm...so's he.

MUSIC STING

--- Commercial Insert ---

MUSIC UP and UNDER

FRIDAY: Mrs. Argus Finally agreed to let us stake out the hotel. She showed us into a small room of the lobby. From there, Frank and I could see anybody who entered. During the next four hours only two people requested accommodations. They were both middle aged men and neither one of them in any way resembled the suspect's description.

SMITH: What time you got, Joe?

FRIDAY: Uh, five after four.

SMITH: Latest he ever pulled a job was three-thirty.

FRIDAY: Yeah.

SMITH: Maybe he decided to lay off tonight.

FRIDAY: Maybe.

F/X: PHONE RINGS in B/G

MS. ARGUS: (Off mic) Argus Hotel. (pause) Who? (pause) Oh, oh, yeah. (pause) Hey, you guys in there?

FRIDAY: Yes, ma'm.

MS. ARGUS: (Off mic) Somebody wants you on the phone.

FRIDAY: Okay, I'll be right over.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS

MS.ARGUS: (Off mic) In the booth.

FRIDAY: Yes, ma'm

F/X: PHONE BOOTH DOOR OPENING

FRIDAY: Friday. Yeah, wait a minute. (pause) 'kay. What's that address? (pause) Yeah, I got it. Thanks. Right.

F/X: PHONE HANGS UP and FOOTSTEPS BACK

SMITH: What's up?

FRIDAY: Look's like we staked out the wrong places.

SMITH: Yeah?

FRIDAY: All night caf_ on South Main. The owner was held up. He's pretty badly wounded.

SMITH: Yeah.

FRIDAY: Sawed-off shotgun.

MUSIC UP and UNDER

FRIDAY: Frank and I drove over to the Joplin Grill on the corner of Main and Vincent Place. We talked to the patrol car officers who had discovered Fred Joplin's body. They told us Joplin was unconscious when they found him. They said that they called an ambulance and he'd been taken to Georgia Street Receiving Hospital. We telephoned the hospital and asked them to be notified as soon as the victim was available for questioning. 4:42 AM, Lt. Lee Jones and the crew from the Crime Lab began their investigation. Frank and I went back to the office.

October 30th, 10:17 AM, Georgia Street reported that Joplin had recovered consciousness. We drove down there and talked

to Dr. Sebastian, he said that Joplin was suffering from shock and loss of blood. He also said that Joplin's right shoulder was severely lacerated and there was a possibility the arm would have to be amputated. 10:46 AM, we interviewed the victim.

JOPLIN: Sat down on the stool and asked for a cup of coffee.

SMITH: Yes sir.

JOPLIN: I turned around, pick up the Sylex, started filling the cup.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

JOPLIN: Time I's finished, he got his gun out. Guess he had it in that bag he's carryin'

SMITH: Yes sir.

JOPLIN: Told me it was a stick up. Said to give him the money from the register or he'd shoot me.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

JOPLIN: I didn't say nothin' Just stood there kinda starin' at him.

FRIDAY: Yeah.

JOPLIN: Raised up his gun. Shot gun it was.

SMITH: Yes sir.

JOPLIN: "I mean business, mister," that's what he said next. "I mean business."

FRIDAY: I see.

JOPLIN: I still didn't say nothin.' Just stood there with a cuppa coffee in my hand. "Start movin," he said. Voice sounded real low and mean. Didn't seem to match his face. Sort of a pleasant lookin' fella. Voice was mean though.

FRIDAY: Yeah.

JOPLIN: Started gesturin' with that shotgun. Pointin' towards the register. That's when I let fly.

FRIDAY: Huh?

JOPLIN: With a cuppa coffee. Smashed it right into his face.

FRIDAY: I see.

JOPLIN: Musta give him quite a jolt.

FRIDAY: Yes sir?

JOPLIN: Didn't keep him from shootin' me, but it sure wrecked his aim some. Least ways I'm still here. Don't remember nothin' after that.

FRIDAY: I see.

JOPLIN: Sure hit him a good one, though. Them coffee cups ain't the lightest things in the world.

FRIDAY: Yes sir, I understand.

JOPLIN: Not to mention the coffee itself. Scaldin' hot it was.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

JOPLIN: Right here, that's where I belted him. Right in the jaw. Used to be a ball player, you know.

FRIDAY: Is that right?

JOPLIN: Wasn't a pro exactly, but I had a first rate pitchin' arm. "Lefty" Joplin, that's what they used to call me. Back in Junction City, Kansas it was.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

JOPLIN: Local merchant sponsored our team. Pitched sixteen winners one season. Best record in the league.

FRIDAY: Yes sir, that's very good.

JOPLIN: Well, I...ain't lost all my technique. Least ways I sure whapped him with that cup.

FRIDAY: Yes sir.

JOPLIN: Doc say anything to you fellas about how I'm doin'?

FRIDAY: Well, just that you're getting' along.

JOPLIN: He make up his mind 'bout my right arm yet?

FRIDAY: What?

JOPLIN: Whether I'm gonna lose it or not?

FRIDAY: No, sir, he didn't tell us.

JOPLIN: Guess in a way, I'm kinda lucky.

FRIDAY: What?

JOPLIN: Bein' left-handed.

MUSIC UP and UNDER

FRIDAY: We asked the victim, Fred Joplin, to describe the suspect. The description he gave us tallies with what we already had. 11:17 AM, Frank and I went back to the office.

SMITH: I can't figure it out, Joe.

FRIDAY. What?

SMITH: Why he'd switch from hotels to a caf_.

FRIDAY: Well, maybe he tumbled to our stakeouts.

SMITH: Yeah, I thought sure he try the Argus, though. Right spot for him.

F/X: PHONE RINGS

FRIDAY: I'll get it. (answering phone) Robbery, Friday.
(pause) I see. (pause) Yeah. (pause) Anything else? (pause)
Uh-huh. (pause) Well, give us something to go on, anyway.
Thank you. Right.

F/X: PHONE HANG UP FRIDAY: Lee Jones in the lab.

SMITH: What's he got?

FRIDAY: Well, Joplin was right, he sure didn't miss with that coffee cup.

SMITH: They find the pieces?

FRIDAY: More than that.

SMITH: Huh?

FRIDAY: They found a broken front tooth.

MUSIC UP and UNDER

FRIDAY: Analysis of the broken tooth revealed that it was part of a lower incisor. From what we learned of the suspect it seemed likely that he would make an immediate effort to have the tooth replaced. For the next three days, Frank and I interviewed dentists in the immediate vicinity of the robberies. Thursday, November 3rd, 3:17 PM, we questioned Dr. Clinton Potterfield in his office on the second floor of the Marsh Building.

DOCTOR: Yes. Yes, I believe I had such a patient last Monday.

FRIDAY: Broken incisor?

DOCTOR: Yes, that's right.

SMITH: Could you tell us what he looked like?

DOCTOR: Oh, young man about thirty, nicely dressed, seemed very pleasant.

FRIDAY: Did he say what had happened to his tooth?

DOCTOR: Yes, he did - automobile accident.

FRIDAY: I see.

DOCTOR: He knocked it against the steering wheel

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

DOCTOR: He wanted a new fitting right away.

FRIDAY: Yes, sir. DOCTOR: I agreed to make him a temporary as soon as I could. It should be finished tomorrow.

FRIDAY: Uh-huh.

DOCTOR: He offered to pay me extra if I hurried it up. I told him you can't rush a new bridge, even a temporary.

FRIDAY: I see. Did he give you his name and address?

DOCTOR: Well, not me personally. My receptionist takes care of those details.

FRIDAY: Yes sir, I understand. Would you mind checking with her?

DOCTOR: No, not a bit - excuse me.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS, DOOR OPEN and CLOSE

SMITH: It's about time we got a break.

FRIDAY: Yeah.

SMITH: Hey, look out there. Starting to rain.

FRIDAY: Yessir, it is.

SMITH: Yeah, Just like the paper said, going to be a wet winter.

F/X: DOORS OPENS and CLOSE, FOOTSTEPS

DOCTOR: Well, here you are gentlemen, I had her copy it down for you.

FRIDAY: Thank you.

F/X: PAPER RUSTLING

FRIDAY: Philip Seaver.

DOCTOR: Yes, that's correct. His address is right there, too.

FRIDAY: Well, at least we know one thing now.

SMITH: What's that?

FRIDAY: Why he skipped over the Argus Hotel.

SMITH: Yeah? FRIDAY: He lives there.

MUSIC UP and UNDER

FRIDAY: 3:58 PM, Frank and I drove over to the Argus Hotel and we talked to the owner, George Argus. He told us Phillip Seaver lived on the second floor, Room 23. He said that Seaver was a quiet young man who had been staying at the hotel for the past six weeks. He also told us that Seaver worked nights and was probably in his room now. We took the elevator up to the second floor.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS

SMITH: There it is.

F/X: GUNS COMING OUT OF HOLSTERS

FRIDAY: Alright?

SMITH: Yeah.

F/X: DOOR BEING BROKEN DOWN

(overlapping)

FRIDAY: Alright, Police Officers!

SEAVER: Hey, what the...!

SMITH: Put your hands against the wall, there!

(overlap STOPS)

SMITH: MOVE!

SEAVER: I sure don't know what this is all about.

SMITH: Eh, he's clean, Joe.

FRIDAY: Alright, turn around.

SEAVER: Okay.

FRIDAY: Where's the shotgun?

SEAVER: You guys must be off your rocker!

SMITH: I'll see what I can turn up.

FRIDAY: Alright.

SEAVER: You got no right to come bustin' in here!

FRIDAY: Yeah.

SEAVER: Hey, what would I be doin' with a shotgun?

FRIDAY: Why don't you tell us.

SEAVER: I've never had a gun in my life.

F/X: NOISE OFF-MIC

SEAVER: Boy, you cops sure make the darndest mistakes. I bet you pick the wrong guy up half the time.

FRIDAY: Yeah, sure.

SEAVER: Look, there's nothin' in that bureau except my clothes there fella.

SMITH: Yeah? What about this?

SEAVER: Well, it's just a satchel that's all.

SMITH: It's locked.

FRIDAY: Where's the key?

SEAVER: I don't know, I lost it.

FRIDAY: Break it open.

F/X: SATCHEL BEING BROKEN OPEN.

SEAVER: Hey! That's a good bag!

FRIDAY: Not worth anything to you without a key is it?
(pause) Alright you, let's go.

SEAVER: How the heck did that get in there?

FRIDAY: (not believing him) You don't know?

SEAVER: I told you I didn't.

SMITH: Yeah.

SEAVER: I never had a shotgun in my life.

FRIDAY: Well you got one now.

SEAVER: Well, I musta picked the wrong one up by mistake.
Sure, that's what happened.

FRIDAY: (disgusted) Alright, come on, Seaver.

SEAVER: Okay, okay, I'm comin'.

F/X: HE TRIES TO ESCAPE and SOUND OF SCUFFLE, BODY HITS THE
FLOOR.

SMITH: Cut your hand?

FRIDAY: Uh, be alright.

SMITH: Look at that.

FRIDAY: Huh?

SMITH: Must have bad ones.

FRIDAY: What's that?

SMITH: Another tooth missin'.

MUSIC UP and UNDER

ANNOUNCER: The story you have just heard is true. The names
were changed to protect the innocent.

NARRATOR: On March 12th, trial was held in Department 98,
Superior Court of the State of California, in and for the

County of Los Angeles. In a moment the results of that trial.

MUSIC UP

--- Commercial Insert --

NARRATOR: Phillip Herbert Seaver was tried and convicted of robbery in the first degree - five counts - and received sentence as prescribed by law. Robbery in the First Degree is punishable by imprisonment for a period of not less than five years in the state penitentiary. Because of the viciousness of the suspect, it was decided that the terms would run consecutively.

MUSIC UP and UNDER

ANNOUNCER: You have just heard "Dragnet," a series of authentic cases from official files. Technical advice comes from the office of Chief of Police W.H. Parker, Los Angeles Police Department.

MUSIC UP and OUT