

PAT NOVAK FOR HIRE

Episode Name: Shirt Mix-Up at the Laundry

Air Date: 7 May 1949

Announcer: Pat Novak For Hire

<Opening music, fog horn, and bell>

Pat Novak: Sure... I'm Pat Novak... for hire.

<Opening music resumes>

That's what the sign out in front of my office says. Pat Novak for hire. It's easy to rent yourself out and you make a few bucks, but sooner or later you get burned and it doesn't make any difference whether you're a man or a mouse because down on the waterfront in San Francisco, they build the traps both ways. Oh, everything looks easy, but sometimes they fool you, like putting shatterproof glass in a fire alarm box and you gotta watch out every minute. Because down here, if you reach out to help a pan handler, the guy will take your arm and hand you back the dime. I rent boats and deal any place, I'll give you a good trade-in on a secondhand soul. Works out all right. Sometimes you're on top of the heap, if you like the kind of heaps they got down here. But you gotta get your laughs in a hurry because you find out right away you're not gonna make any more headway than a hummingbird in a wind tunnel. I found that out Wednesday afternoon, must have been about three o'clock. The sun was out down at the far end of the bay. Put a head on the clouds down there and put the rest of the sky in a good mood. Over across the bay it was a warm, easy yellow that made you think of a pound cake full of eggs. It was too nice of a day to work inside so I closed shop and started down to a pool hall on Market Street. I never got there because on the way I stopped by the laundry to pick up a couple of shirts. It started right there, when the clerk walked over to me. He was full of fizz and the sort of guy who gets a bottle of hand lotion for his birthday.

<Clerk humming>

Clerk: Well, well, Mr. Novak is it?

Pat Novak: I don't know, is it?

Clerk: Eh, yes. My, we have a nice day, haven't we?

Pat Novak: Yeah, I want some laundry.

Clerk: Not any better than yesterday, though, not a bit better than yesterday.

Pat Novak: What do you do, give 'em all a rating? How about the laundry, huh?

Clerk: Eh, yes, let's have the ticket.

Pat Novak: All right.

Clerk: Mm hm, 428. That should be right down here.

Pat Novak: It's just a couple of shirts.

Clerk: Yes, yes, here it is. That will be a dollar eighty-four please.

Pat Novak: That sounds like a fair price, but I'll take my own.

Clerk: Oh, oh?

Pat Novak: This isn't mine, it's too big.

Clerk: Are you sure?

Pat Novak: Look, I had a couple of white shirts, now you better look again.

Clerk: Well, the tickets match. You see? 428. You must be wrong, Mr. Novak.

Pat Novak: Now, look fella, shirts don't swell, they shrink. The package is too big.

Clerk: Too big? Well, we better open it, yes. We'll see. I'll have to wrap them again.

<Unwrapping sound>

Pat Novak: Yeah

Clerk: Eh, eh?

Pat Novak: It's not my shade of pink.

Clerk: Oh... I guess it's not yours.

Pat Novak: Thanks.

Clerk: Here's some men's clothing too. How about these shirts?

Pat Novak: If I were a jockey, I'd take 'em, I want my own.

Clerk: Yes, Yes, of course you do. Oh goodness, I don't know what to do with myself.

Pat Novak: Yeah, you've got a problem. How 'bout these shirts though?

Clerk: Oh, we've mixed up the tickets and someone has your package.

Pat Novak: Who?

Clerk: I don't know. Maybe we can check on the collar markings, let me see.

Pat Novak: Yeah..

Clerk: Yes, now, let me check in the book.

<Clerk humming and pages turning>

Here we are. Eh.. this laundry belongs to Earl Hayes.

Pat Novak: Yeah, where's he live?

Clerk: Are you going up there?

Pat Novak: I want my shirts back.

Clerk: Um, yes. He lives at, uh, 321 Dorsett Place.

Pat Novak: Yeah, give me that pen.

Clerk: Oh, I'm sorry Mr. Novak. And please apologize to Mr. Hayes. I'm so angry at myself I don't know what to do.

Pat Novak: Yeah, be careful you don't stomp a hole in the floor. See ya later.

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: When I left, he was wringing his hands and shifting from one foot to another like a small kid in a department store. On the way up to Dorsett Place, I looked at the bundle. There were a couple of women's blouses and four loud colored shirts. Two of 'em looked like a Navajo blanket somebody'd sewed buttons on. I tried to wrap up the bundle and about 10 minutes later I got to 321 Dorsett Place. It was up on Telegraph Hill and it was an old place somebody had remodeled. It was supposed to be modernistic, but it reminded you of a chromium plated tool shed. Apartment 2A was on the second landing. I went up there and knocked. Earl Hayes didn't answer the door, but you couldn't quarrel with what you got. She was in her 30s and pushing 40 hard enough to bruise it, but she looked good standing there in the doorway. Long and lean enough to make a greyhound turn in its card. She was wearing green lounging pajamas and you've seen bananas in looser skins. You could see the bay behind her, through the window, and she stood there brushing back enough red hair to sell to a mattress factory. As she pushed the door back, she started to smile. Her lips were a pale red color and moist enough to put a desert on its feet and you could tell she thought she used them to talk when you got tired of everything

else. Standing there in front of her, you got the same feeling you would if somebody pressed the treble and bass key of an organ at the same time.

Rhoda Warren: Hello. What are you selling?

Pat Novak: Shirts. Is your husband home?

Rhoda Warren: Should I have one?

Pat Novak: I don't know. It depends on the climate.

Rhoda Warren: Come on in anyway.

Pat Novak: All right.

<Door closes>

Rhoda Warren: Who are you?

Pat Novak: My name's Novak, I'm looking for a guy named Earl Hayes.

Rhoda Warren: You better sit down.

Pat Novak: It won't take me that long. He's got my shirts.

Rhoda Warren: Mr. Novak, you don't look like the kind who'd lose his shirt.

Pat Novak: I don't want jokes, lady, there was a mix-up down at the laundry. I got Hayes' stuff and he walked off with mine.

Rhoda Warren: That his stuff in the bundle?

Pat Novak: Yes it is, here.

Rhoda Warren: All right, put it on the table here, we'll see.

<Unwrapping sound>

I don't think you're smart, Mr. Novak.

Pat Novak: Huh?

Rhoda Warren: Where's the other shirt?

Pat Novak: You got 'em all right there.

Rhoda Warren: There's one missing.

Pat Novak: All right, see the laundry, all I want's a trade.

Rhoda Warren: There must have been another shirt in this bundle.

Pat Novak: Maybe it was too dirty, the boy couldn't clean it that fast. Now, look friend, if you want to argue, go ride a street car. I came up for two white shirts, now where are they?

Rhoda Warren: I suppose Earl Hayes has them.

Pat Novak: Where's he?

Rhoda Warren: I'll send you to him, but I'm afraid you won't like him.

Pat Novak: Then I'll be lonely, just tell me where he is.

Rhoda Warren: Two floors up. That'll give you time to work over that story.

Pat Novak: Yeah.

Rhoda Warren: Because he'll know you're lying. He'll want to know about that shirt.

Pat Novak: What makes it that important?

Rhoda Warren: The fact that it's missing. You'll find him upstairs. I hope it works into a friendship.

Pat Novak: Yeah.

Rhoda Warren: But I don't think it will. He'll know you're lying and you'll get tossed around like a green salad.

Pat Novak: Is he tougher than you?

Rhoda Warren: No, he's just not as versatile. Good luck darling.

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: When she said good luck, you knew she was just being polite and didn't mean it any more than the hangman when he tells you to watch your step. When I left, she was over by the window leaning back against the table as shy as a runaway box car. And you got the idea she'd be fun to know if you had a lot of money and an oxygen tent. Well, I rolled up the bundle and I started for the fourth floor. I knocked on the door and when it opened, I knew I had high bid for trouble. I could see into the room, and there were three or four gonofs sitting inside. They had a dull anxious look as if they were trying to find another worm to pull apart and they were the sort

of guys who might have been born, but you wouldn't want to bet on it. The one in the door was a big guy with bushy eyebrows that met near his nose and the way they ran across his face you got the idea he got tired of the old ones and grafted on a vine instead. His face wasn't much better. It looked more like a relief map than a face. It was pock marked and the color of moldy bread and you knew if a woman kissed him, she'd get blood poisoning.

Max Stoffer: Hello, Novak.

Pat Novak: You Earl Hayes?

Max Stoffer: Enough to suit you, come in.

Pat Novak: All right. You're good at guessing names.

Max Stoffer: So a little bird told me.

Pat Novak: Yeah, I saw her. She's got nice feathers.

Max Stoffer: Where's the shirt?

Pat Novak: Here's the bundle. Take your pick.

<Sound of man fussing with the paper bundle wrapping>

Max Stoffer: I don't like any of these, Novak.

Pat Novak: That's all I got.

Max Stoffer: Where's the shirt, Novak?

Pat Novak: Just wear a collar, mister, you don't need a shirt.

<Sound of Pat Novak being punched>

Yeah, I won't need a memory for you, fella.

Max Stoffer: Suit yourself. Tell me about those shirts.

<Door opens>

Hello, Earl, come on in.

<Door closes and footsteps>

We got your boy.

<Footsteps>

Earl Hayes: Who is he?

Max Stoffer: You made a deal, you know his name.

Earl Hayes: I never saw him before, Max.

Max Stoffer: He looks different now. He came up with some of your shirts.

Earl Hayes: That's true, I went by the laundry. Said a guy named Novak picked up the shirts.

Max Stoffer: Except one of 'em's missing.

Earl Hayes: It couldn't be missing. They're all in one bundle.

Max Stoffer: Ask him then, but do it nice, he's touchy.

Pat Novak: He doesn't have to ask. Now look, mister, if you're Earl Hayes, I want my shirts.

Earl Hayes: Give us the other one and we'll make a trade.

Pat Novak: You got the best deal you're gonna make, Hayes, now I want those shirts.

Max Stoffer: Get yourself a loom then. Alright, Joe, get his arm.

<Background yelling>

Earl Hayes: Wait a minute, Max.

Max Stoffer: Sit down, Hayes, or we'll take your ticket away.

<Footsteps>

That's it. Now get his other arm.

<Grunting>

One of you keep an eye on Hayes. Alright Novak, it's you or Hayes, make up your mind.

Pat Novak: I got it made up about you.

<Sound of Pat Novak being struck>

Max Stoffer: You're gonna tire first, Novak. Where's that shirt?

Pat Novak: I dunno. Try Hayes, he looks healthy.

<Sound of Pat Novak being struck>

Max Stoffer: Hold him up.

Joe: He's slippin'.

Max Stoffer: You need handles? Hold him up. You're runnin' out of chances, Novak. Where's that shirt?

Pat Novak: I don't know.

<Sound of Pat Novak being struck>

Max Stoffer: Hold him up.

Joe: Why?

Max Stoffer: If you can't find a reason, don't.

<Sound of Pat Novak falling to the floor>

All right, Hayes, how's your temper?

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: I slid down to the floor so fast I almost went under the varnish and I spent the next couple of hours checking on the termites. It was getting dark when I woke up and right away the room was full of company. The host was Earl Hayes and he was lying on the floor as dead as a cracked bell. He was over by the desk, lying on his back and grabbing at the rug like a Hoover vacuum. The hair was wet against his head and the perspiration on his forehead started to break up and run down like tears, so you got the idea he cried out of his hairline instead of his eyes. He didn't seem in pain or put out. He was smiling a little as if he realized he had a better deal. Over by the door, Hellman was talking to a couple of coppers. He sent them downstairs and walked over to me.

<Footsteps>

Hellman: You woke the neighbors, Novak.

Pat Novak: I don't snore that loud, Hellman.

Hellman: You made the noise with Hayes.

Pat Novak: Yeah. How'd I get my face this way?

Hellman: You look better to me Novak. How long you been here?

Pat Novak: Couple hours.

Hellman: That fits in. The coroner's already been here. He says Hayes was beat to death an hour ago with that poker out of the fireplace.

Pat Novak: You better check on the prints.

Hellman: I already sent it down. You slept too long.

<Footsteps>

Coroner Worker: Hello inspector. We came by for the stiff.

Pat Novak: He's right there. Tell the morgue to keep him out 'til I get down.

Coroner Worker: Come on, Joe. That's it. Grab 'im.

<Footsteps and grunting>

Sure is a little guy.

Hellman: He'll bury easy. Tell 'em I'll check in at 8.

Coroner Worker: So well, inspector.

<Footsteps>

Hellman: All right, Novak, tell me all about it.

Pat Novak: I came up here for a shirt.

Hellman: That's not hard to get. What about Hayes? How'd the beat go?

Pat Novak: It went both ways with a guy named Max, you better talk to him.

Hellman: I like you better.

Pat Novak: Oh, you're not bright, Hellman. I've been out of the game for two hours.

Hellman: Look, big shot, don't push me around. You got a story, maybe it's good, maybe it's not. You could have taken Hayes and run into trouble yourself.

Pat Novak: That's the hard way, Hellman, I don't like your whip, get another boy.

Hellman: You'll do Novak and you'll do it all downtown.

<Phone rings>

Yeah, Hellman talking. What do you mean you can't send them up yet? Who's in charge down there? Give me the guy in charge. Huh? Well, two guys just came up here. You must have sent 'em. They were here, you must have sent 'em. Yeah. Well, you can send them for me.

<Hellman hangs up phone>

Pat Novak: Don't tell me, Hellman.

Hellman: Aw, it couldn't happen.

Pat Novak: No, it couldn't happen to anybody but you, Hellman. It's gonna look real good too when they find out you let two strangers walk in and steal a body.

Hellman: I don't understand it.

Pat Novak: It's simple Hellman. You better go in and rob that bed right now.

Hellman: Huh?

Pat Novak: Cuz when they're done kicking you around down at headquarters you're going to need a sling and with a figure like yours, it'll take a good size bed sheet.

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: When Hellman hung up the phone, he turned the color of early summer squash. He stood over by the window running his hand through his hair. He left the window and stood in the center of the room for a minute. His coat was open and his stomach was piled up on his belt in nice even layers. It reminded you of a rolled up garden hose. And the way his pants fit him when he walked, you got the idea somebody sewed an anvil in the lining. After a while, he came over and started to talk to me. He kept pulling his ear and in the dim light, there, it looked like the cross-section of an eggplant.

Hellman: I'm still gonna hold you, Novak.

Novak: You'd look better with a hot potato, Hellman.

Hellman: I'm gonna hold you for 12 hours. In the meantime, that body will show up.

Novak: He didn't look that active to me. Wake up, Hellman, you've been backed into a corner. You better get a body first.

Hellman: Look, Novak, I know the guy was dead. I'm not gonna sit on my hands.

Novak: The most fun you'll ever have.

Hellman: I'm gonna to check those prints and I'm gonna find out why you were up here.

Novak: I came to see Hayes. The laundry pulled a switch and I came up for shirts. Check with the guy at the laundry.

Hellman: Yeah.

Novak: And on the way downstairs, stop at 2A.

Hellman: Why?

Novak: There's a souped up redhead down there, you can ask her a question.

Hellman: You can do that with any woman.

Novak: You can ask her who Max is. I went there to find Earl Hayes. She answered and sent me here.

Hellman: There's only one thing wrong with that story.

Novak: Huh?

Hellman: There's no redhead in 2A. I checked all the apartments. 2A's been empty for three months. The people are out of town.

Novak: Eh.

Hellman: I think you dreamed her.

Novak: I don't dream that good in the afternoon. Look Hellman, I'm walking out of this place, and all you can do is hear the echo.

Hellman: I wanna see you go, Novak. Maybe you'll do something wrong and I'll track ya down.

Novak: You couldn't track down a live bear in a telephone booth.

Hellman: I'll make a try on you, mister, and when I'm through, there'll be enough to put you right in that gas chamber.

Novak: They can save money and do the same thing.

Hellman: Huh?

Novak: They can lock me up in the same closet with you.

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: When I left, Hellman was wandering around like smoke in a drafty room. I picked up Earl Hayes' shirts and ducked by the laundry, but the clerk was gone and the place was closed tighter than a lid on a city scandal. Well, I tried to think back, but nothing made sense. In the first place, what made that shirt so important? And why did the laundry clerk have the wrong address for Earl Hayes? And the main hooker was that body disappearing. Why? If Max killed him, they were in the clear, why take a gamble like that just for laughs? I knew I had to get some answers pretty soon because Hellman wasn't an easy guy. He was a tough, hard cop with a heart big enough to hide behind a piece of bird seed. I had a couple of places to go, so I looked up Jocko Madigan. He's a good guy and he used to be a smart one, except he didn't like the San Francisco fog and worked out one of his own. I finally found him in the Hunt Room at the Bellevue Hotel. The crowd was at one end and he was down at the other. I found out why.

Jocko Madigan: (singing drunkenly) One for my baby and one more for the road.

Pat Novak: Now wait a minute, Jocko.

Jocko Madigan: Ah, Patsy! I'm singing a little sentimental ballad.

Pat Novak: All right Jocko, now you've had enough.

Jocko Madigan: Patsy, I'm as sober as the next man. I've been drinking since 8 o'clock this afternoon and I'm as sober as the next man.

Pat Novak: Oh, stop it, will ya?

Jocko Madigan: Patsy, you know I hate whiskey. But do you realize that 85% of the human body is liquid?

Pat Novak: Yeah.

Jocko Madigan: Now is there any sane reason why all that should be water? Of course not, it isn't fair. That's why we have communists.

Pat Novak: Jocko, I'm in trouble.

Jocko Madigan: Of course you are. Knowing you, Patsy, is like walking hand in hand with a moral pygmy.

Pat Novak: All right.

Jocko Madigan: It's true, Patsy. You have no moral sense. All you have is a small bundle of regrets. Something which you drag out periodically as proof of your decency.

Pat Novak: Will you listen?

Jocko Madigan: But you're not even decent enough to regret the things you've done. From some of your conversations, about the only things you regret are the things you haven't done. The only reason you haven't caused more trouble is that you're not fleet footed enough.

Pat Novak: All right, all right.

Jocko Madigan: You're hopeless, Patsy. You're like some overripe planet, disemboweled and thrown from the skies. You don't know where you're going and you can't remember where you've been. Your only joy is motion and your only sensations are heat and cold. (heavy sigh)

Pat Novak: You all through, Jocko?

Jocko Madigan: Yes... what kind of problem?

Pat Novak: Hellman wants me for a dead guy.

Jocko Madigan: Where is he?

Pat Novak: He was up on Telegraph Hill, but he's gone now.

Jocko Madigan: He didn't die long, did he?

Pat Novak: Somebody took the body away.

Jocko Madigan: That's a funny thing to collect.

Pat Novak: Aw, none of the story lays right. The guy's name was Earl Hayes. There was a laundry mix-up and I went up there to trade.

Jocko Madigan: Yes?

Pat Novak: Now, look, I want you to hop down and find out everything you can about Earl Hayes. Find out who his friends are. Find out where he's from. And see if there's a guy named Max anywhere, will ya?

Jocko Madigan: Where are you going?

Pat Novak: I gotta find a girl.

Jocko Madigan: I felt that way myself earlier tonight.

Pat Novak: Will ya hurry, Jocko? We don't have time to run your love life.

Jocko Madigan: Yes... well, time is a minor drawback anyway. Good night lover.

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: It was nearly eleven when I walked out of the bar and the way things were going I couldn't beat a vagrancy rap with a pocket full of annuities. I had to find that girl, someplace, but it wasn't gonna be easy. You might as well try to French fry a kettle of bones. I went back up to that apartment to see if she left a pointer anywhere. Hellman had a copper out in front but he was sitting in somebody's new Nash reading a comic book. I went all through the apartment and on the way out I spotted the matches in the waste basket. The folder'd been used up and on the outside it said Bonton Club, Duval Street, Key West, Florida. Well, that was the first break I got. Most people use their matches fast, so if she was using Key West matches, it must have meant something. I got down to a phone booth and started calling up the hotels. Finally, a hotel up on Taylor said they had a Miss Rhoda Warren on the register from Key West, Florida. For five bucks a bellhop will tell you anything, so he said she was a redhead. I still didn't know and when I went up there she wasn't in. Well, I had to get back to my place for Jocko's call and when I walked in I got sorry about that five bucks.

Rhoda Warren: Hello Mr. Novak. You keep bad hours.

Pat Novak: So do you and your name's Rhoda Warren.

Rhoda Warren: You like the name?

Pat Novak: Yeah.

Rhoda Warren: Go ahead and use it, it's a phony.

Pat Novak: How about Max?

Rhoda Warren: I don't even know him.

Pat Novak: When you called him today it was a wrong number.

Rhoda Warren: Oh please, Mr. Novak, you're not big enough for menace.

Pat Novak: No?

Rhoda Warren: No, you're like everybody else in the waterfront. You got some muscles, a few stage whispers, and 30 cents in your pocket. So don't try to make a sale.

Pat Novak: Except you'd like to buy that shirt.

Rhoda Warren: Hm, if you want to sell it.

Pat Novak: What makes it worth a thousand bucks?

Rhoda Warren: Your imagination. Five hundred'll buy it.

Pat Novak: You're bad on guesses. Five hundred and Max'll do it.

Rhoda Warren: Look, I don't have to deal with you, darling. You're a pauper on paper and in your pocket. So I can just sit tight while you sell or go broke.

Pat Novak: Where's Max?

Rhoda Warren: I'd sell him out if I were in a hole, I'm not. You are.

Pat Novak: All right.

Rhoda Warren: (yelling) Let go of my arm.

Pat Novak: I need some help, lady.

Rhoda Warren: (yelling) I don't know whether you're making love or trouble, either way, let go of my arm.

Pat Novak: Have you figured it out yet?

Rhoda Warren: (yelling) You're... You're hurting my arm.

Pat Novak: Where's Max? Come on, I'll twist you until the skin comes loose. Where is he?

Rhoda Warren: (crying) Please don't.

<Phone starts ringing>

Pat Novak: All right.

Rhoda Warren: Won't make you friends, anyway.

Pat Novak: (answers phone) Yeah, Novak talking. Yeah, I've been out all evening. Where abouts? Yeah, well he can't use it anymore. Where are you, in the Compton? Yeah, thanks.

Rhoda Warren: The laundry clerk?

Pat Novak: Yeah, he found that shirt.

Rhoda Warren: Tell him not to lose his own. And wish him good luck.

Pat Novak: Will he need it?

Rhoda Warren: Hm, maybe not, but he ought to take it while it's cheap.

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: I knew it wouldn't do any good to press her for Max now. If she was gonna tip her mitts, she'd do it on her own. I left my place and grabbed a cab for the piers. I got out near Market and walked over to the laundry. The back window opened up like a hunk of sky after a bad rain. I found the shirt lying out on a table. It looked like the rest of Earl Hayes' shirts except for one thing. The collar was full of writing. A few letters and a lot of numbers. I took 'em down, left the shirt, and headed for my place. I got one of those shirts from that bundle and copied in some of the same numbers then I picked up a cab for Rhoda Warren's hotel. For another fin, the bellhop went blind and I got into her room about 12:30. Her room was empty but her bags were packed on the bed. I took a 60/40 chance and planted the shirt in the bottom of one of the bags. I told the bellhop to tip me off when she came in and I started back to my place to wait for Jocko's call. I did about as well a bottle of Scotch in a Louisville bar. A squad car picked me up at the corner and said Hellman had a call out for me.

<Car sounds>

About 20 minutes later, we pulled up to Pier 19. Hellman was waiting there moving around like a pea in a boiling stew.

Hellman: Hello Novak. Walk me down the pier.

Pat Novak: Find a crutch, what's on your mind, Hellman?

Hellman: Walk me down the pier!

Pat Novak: All right! But I won't take your arm.

<Footsteps and fog horns>

Hellman: We found a body.

Pat Novak: How, radar?

Hellman: Almost, the coast guard boat spotted him floating in the bay. They radioed in. We're hauling him up now.

Pat Novak: Oh, we're all busy. I found a shirt, too.

Hellman: We may not need it. Those fingerprints worked out just right.

Pat Novak: Well, if they're mine, it's too pat, Hellman. You're too smart a cop to buy that kind of flamp.

Hellman: I'm a smart enough cop to hold you, now that we got Earl Hayes. Here we are.

Pat Novak: Eh..

Hellman: (shouting) You got him down there?

Diver: Yeah, we're passin' him up. Grab ahold there.

Pat Novak: Here, I'll get him.

Diver: All right, pull.

Hellman: (grunting) Here he comes. There.

<Sound of body hitting the floor>

Pat Novak: Well, that water sure changed him, Hellman.

Hellman: There's a mistake. They have his identification, they said it was Earl Hayes.

Pat Novak: Another plant, Hellman. He's the laundry clerk.

Hellman: What was he doin' out in the bay?

Pat Novak: Maybe that's the way they do the laundry now. I'm goin' home, Hellman. You better stand on his chest.

Hellman: Huh?

Pat Novak: That way they can't steal him without taking you too.

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: Well, that 60/40 was beginning to pay off. Somebody was gathering up the loose ends and it was gonna to be easier now because things were getting tight, but you can say that for a lot of wedding rings. So I bummed a ride and I got to my place about a half hour later. I had some trouble there because the cop on duty wanted to take me down to Pier 19 again. He looked wistful, so I told him about a place down the street where he might catch a peeping Tom and I finally got rid of him long enough to get up to the room. As I walked in the door, the phone was ringing.

<Phone ringing>

Pat Novak: (picks up phone) Yeah?

Jocko Madigan: Hello, Patsy, this is Jocko.

Pat Novak: What'd you find out?

Jocko Madigan: Earl Hayes was popular. Anybody could have killed him.

Pat Novak: For instance?

Jocko Madigan: There's a lot on him in the Chronicle morgue. He's wanted for smuggling.

Pat Novak: Yeah? What else?

Jocko Madigan: He had a girlfriend. Her picture's here.

Pat Novak: What's she look like?

Jocko Madigan: Oh, I haven't had enough experience.

Pat Novak: The same one I guess. What else?

Jocko Madigan: And Earl Hayes once served a prison term with a man named Max Stoffer.

Pat Novak: That's our boy, what do you got on him?

Jocko Madigan: He lives here now and he runs a business out on Van Ness Avenue.

Pat Novak: What kind of business?

Jocko Madigan: Oh, it's going to sound funny. He runs a funeral parlor.

Pat Novak: Well, what does that prove?

Jocko Madigan: It doesn't prove a thing. Just because you're a perfume salesman, you don't have to smell pretty.

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: When Jocko hung up, everything began to slip into place. I could see now why everybody wanted that shirt. And the reason why Earl Hayes disappeared was ten feet tall. I called Hellman, he said he knew all about Max Stoffer and he had a squad car on the way out. I met him at the corner of Geary and Taylor and we rode out to Van Ness. Max Stoffer's funeral parlor was over near Pine. When we pulled up, the lights were out except for a lamp in the front room. Hellman walked in the front door without knocking and we turned in where the light was. It was a big night for stiffs, and there were three or four caskets along the wall. In the center,

over near the fireplace, there was a casket on wheels. The plate on the outside said a man named Peter Dawson had the lease. Hellman was about to start upstairs when a door in the back opened.

Max Stoffer: Hello, Novak. What are you doin' here? Is the man with you dead?

Pat Novak: Not too dead to talk to you, Stoffer. He's Inspector Hellman from homicide. The bag looks heavy.

Rhoda Warren: Is he talking to you or me, Max?

Pat Novak: Where's she going?

Max Stoffer: I'm puttin' her on a train, Novak, do you care?

Pat Novak: It's up to Hellman, he wants you for killing Earl Hayes.

Max Stoffer: I thought he disappeared.

Hellman: I'll add on the laundry clerk, too.

Max Stoffer: After I visit the train.

Pat Novak: You put her on that train, she'll get off at the next station, Stoffer.

Max Stoffer: Huh?

Pat Novak: She gave you a bad story and that shirt you've got's a phony.

Max Stoffer: Wait a minute.

Pat Novak: Save yourself some time, mister. Check her bag.

Rhoda Warren: Oh, he's crazy, Max.

Pat Novak: Make the odds, fella.

Max Stoffer: Let me see that bag.

Rhoda Warren: Take a look, he's trying to stampede ya, Max.

Max Stoffer: Give it here.

<footsteps>

Pat Novak: No, underneath there, the other side.

Max Stoffer: There's no shirt in here, what are you...

Rhoda Warren: (frantic) I don't know how it got there, Max, he must have put it there, honest, I don't know how it got there. Something crazy has happened.

Max Stoffer: You don't sound sure.

Rhoda Warren: Please Max, please Max, stay away, I gave you the right shirt.

<Max Stoffer hits Rhoda Warren and she squeals>

Rhoda Warren: Max, Max leave me alone.

<Max Stoffer hits Rhoda Warren again and she cries out>

Max Stoffer: Take her copper, take her for the laundry guy. I'll read about you, lady.

Rhoda Warren: Max, you're crazy, you're crazy to tell him.

Max Stoffer: I'll tell them all about it. I'll tell you every word, copper.

Rhoda Warren: All right, don't forget yourself, big shot. Don't forget to tell 'em what you did with Earl Hayes.

Max Stoffer: There's no body.

Rhoda Warren: Oh, you silly fool, you silly fool, don't you know why they're here?

Max Stoffer: Shut up.

Rhoda Warren: Open them all. You better tell 'em now. He's in there, Hellman. He's in there with Peter Dawson.

Max Stoffer: You had a chance, maybe.

<Max Stoffer hits Rhoda Warren>

Rhoda Warren: Leave me alone, Max. Leave me alone or I'll break you up.

<Max Stoffer hits Rhoda Warren and she cries out>

You can't win 'em all, Max.

Max Stoffer: Put away that gun.

<Struggle between Max Stoffer and Rhoda Warren>

Rhoda Warren: Leave... leave.

Max Stoffer: Get away from her.

<Three gunshots and a body falls to the floor>

Hellman: You don't need the gun anymore.

Rhoda Warren: No...

<Gun hits the floor>

Pick it up, copper.

<Footsteps and a chair is pulled out>

Pat Novak: You had a big night, lady.

Rhoda Warren: Yeah. What happened, Novak? You put that shirt in there and you lied to him.

Pat Novak: Yeah.

Rhoda Warren: You lied to him and he thought I did. He thought I lied to him.

Pat Novak: What's the difference? As long as you killed him, you still get a prize.

<Musical interlude, fog horn>

The next morning was easy for Hellman. He shook the girl for the story on those shirts. The markings on the collar were bill of lading numbers on stuff going to the islands. Everybody was being watched so they had to handle it that way. Earl Hayes used to leave the shirts in that laundry and each time somebody along the line marked one of the shirts. Hayes took the shirts to Max and he got the information to the right people in the islands. Out there, they had a line on what to hijack. Most of the stuff was gold and it was a good game for everybody, until that laundry clerk made a goofy mistake. He got the bundles mixed and he left one shirt out. When Hayes picked up the wrong bundle the girl and Max thought a double cross was under way. After Max worked me over and killed Hayes, he went down to the laundry shop and he couldn't find the shirt. He could only think of one thing, Hayes had the shirt on. So, he got him out of that apartment. Once he had him out, he figured the easy thing to do was to make him disappear for good. So, he put him in a casket with another guy on his way to the boneyard. In the meantime, the clerk found the shirt and called me. The girl overheard the conversation and figured the laundry clerk had the shirt with him. She got in a beef and killed him. She went down to that laundry after me and picked up the shirt. Well, from there on, the cards fell the wrong way. Well, Hellman asked only one question. That laundry clerk was an innocent guy, wasn't it too bad he

got knocked off? Oh, I don't know, when you think about how many buttons you lose in a year it doesn't seem so bad.

<Exit music starts>

Announcer: Pat Novak For Hire was previously released by ABC, the American Broadcasting Company for listeners in the United States and rebroadcast for our men and women overseas. This is the United States Armed Forces Radio Service, the voice of information and education.

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