

PAT NOVAK FOR HIRE

Episode Name: Sam Tolliver

Air Date: 9 April 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 place says. Pat Novak for hire. It's the easy way because down here on the waterfront in San Francisco, you can't afford to wait your turn. If you're gonna make a living down here, you gotta do everything you can. You gotta be out of the hen house by sunup. Even then, it doesn't work out always. Because you get trouble, tax-free. It's like leukemia, there's nothing you can do about it. There's no way to duck it, you might as well try to start a conga line in the cathedral. I found that out Monday night, when I met an old friend. It was the night before elections, and I was sitting in the office, scratching married women out of an old date book when Sam Tolliver showed up. I hadn't seen him for years, but it was a nice, easy meeting. What other way is there when you're good friends.

<Footsteps>

Sam Tolliver: You look just the same, Patsy.

Pat Novak: Yeah, it's good to see you, Sam. Sit down.

Sam Tolliver: Sure.

<Sound of Sam Tolliver sitting down>

Doin' well, I guess, huh?

Pat Novak: Well, you get different stories. Where have you been?

Sam Tolliver: All the hard luck stops. Syracuse for a while, then Joliet. That's where I come from now.

Pat Novak: Yeah? That's where they got a big prison.

Sam Tolliver: Uh huh.

Pat Novak: You came too far, Sam. You should have stopped in Oakland.

Sam Tolliver: Huh?

Pat Novak: That's right, if you're out here to play small robber, you better think it over. It's a tough town.

Sam Tolliver: Don't ride me, Patsy.

Pat Novak: I'm not Sam, but once you start losing 'em, it's hard to win again. I just thought you might want to know about San Francisco.

Sam Tolliver: Thanks. Thanks, but you don't have to worry, Patsy, I got a smart streak. I'm here mostly to ask a favor.

Pat Novak: Yeah?

Sam Tolliver: Can you spare me one for old time's sake?

Pat Novak: Medium sized. Go ahead.

Sam Tolliver: I want to borrow one of your boats.

Pat Novak: Heh. Did you come all the way from Joliet to borrow a boat, Sam?

Sam Tolliver: If it's gonna hurt that much, forget it.

Pat Novak: I just asked. All right, when do you need it, tonight?

Sam Tolliver: It's to pick up a package in the bay about 9 o'clock.

Pat Novak: Sure, I'll run you out.

Sam Tolliver: No, it's, uh, it's a little different, Patsy. I can't make the trip. You'd have to do it for me.

Pat Novak: The favor's getting bigger, Sam.

Sam Tolliver: You have to pick up the package and bring it back here. I'll... I'll be waiting at 10 o'clock. I guess you won't buy, huh Patsy?

Pat Novak: I'm not impressed.

Sam Tolliver: It would mean a lot to me, Patsy, it really would. And you couldn't get hurt, honest.

Pat Novak: Nobody gets hurt honest, it's the other way I'm worried about.

Sam Tolliver: I wish I could tell ya, Patsy, but I can't. You know how it is, sometimes you can't. Well, it's that way now, but... you'd be doing me a real favor and you wouldn't get hurt.

Pat Novak: That's what Henry used to tell his wives. All right, Sam, but you put out a bad story.

Sam Tolliver: Well, Patsy, you have to go by the China Star. She's out in the stream. Just tell 'em you came for that package. They won't ask. Just tell 'em you want the package.

Pat Novak: Yeah?

Sam Tolliver: Talk to the captain. I'll be waiting here at your place, about 10 o'clock. And Patsy, it's important, don't let anybody else have it.

Pat Novak: All right, I'll see you here at 10.

Sam Tolliver: Thanks, Patsy. It's a big favor.

Pat Novak: We're old friends.

Sam Tolliver: Yeah. We're old friends. Nothing wrong with them, eh?

Pat Novak: No, there's nothing wrong with old friends, Sam, except sometimes they wear out on you.

<Musical interlude>

When Sam Tolliver walked out of there, I began to worry. I don't know why, because he was always a good guy, but if you leave good silk out in the rain, it will shrink. Well, it was too late to change my mind now. I was gonna get that package and say goodbye to Sam Tolliver. Only things didn't work out that way. You start with trouble and it never stops. It's like offering to buy aspirin for a two-headed boy. About eight thirty, I took a boat and I started out into the bay. Halfway out into the stream, I had to give way to a tanker. After she throbbed by, I picked up the China Star tied up at buoy 327. It was a broken down old barge. So old, I expected to find Noah hiding out in the bilges.

<Fog horns>

Well, I went aboard and they took me into the Captain's cabin. It was gonna be tougher than Sam thought. The old man had some questions and he was about as smooth as a bag of fingernails. Right away I got the idea.

Captain: What do you want?

Pat Novak: I came out for a package.

Captain: Who are you?

Pat Novak: What good'll a name do you?

Captain: Who are you?

Pat Novak: What do you care, mister? This isn't our dance. Just give me the package and I'll leave.

Captain: Keep shoutin', tough boy. And when you're all through, tell me your name.

Pat Novak: Now look, I'm not out here to haunt your boat. You've got the right face for it. I'm just passin' through.

<Sound of Pat Novak being struck three times>

Captain: If you're runnin' a small boat, you got papers. Let's see 'em.

Pat Novak: Yeah, you're too handy in your own cabin.

<Sound of papers being handed over>

Captain: Let's see... Novak, eh? You a Polack, Novak?

Pat Novak: Yeah, and it feels fine. How's it bein' a pig these days?

Captain: Don't get jumpy, I just asked. Who sent you here, Novak?

Pat Novak: Ah, forget you asked. Just keep the package. I'm goin' home.

Captain: You can walk home on the bottom then. Now look, Novak, somebody steered you wrong. Maybe it was no questions once, but it's not that way anymore. Just wanna keep the books straight. Who sent you?

Pat Novak: Sam Tolliver. You need a pencil?

Captain: No, that's enough questions. You see, Novak, all you had to do was answer. You can have the package now or talk some more.

Pat Novak: I'll take it now, where is it?

Captain: On the desk, behind ya there.

Pat Novak: Yeah, thanks.

<Sound of Novak being struck three times and falling to the floor>

Captain: You're welcome, Novak.

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: The captain didn't like company. When he hit me, I dropped down to the floor like a piece of hard working lint. The last thing I remember was Sam Tolliver sending me out to this boat. I knew then I had no more business here than second trumpet in a string quartet. I could hear voices and people moving around, but it didn't help much. You can get that kind of service in a tomb. Somewhere along the line they moved me, because when I woke up I was lying in a cloud of platene on a couch in a different cabin. The class of people had improved. She was bending over me with a cold towel and a warm look. From where I was, she had a figure like a shot of brandy on a winter night. When she said hello, you knew that all you had to do was send up a flare and relax.

Ellen Morrow: Good evening, welcome back.

Pat Novak: (groaning) Yeah.

Ellen Morrow: How do you feel?

Pat Novak: A little used up. I need rechargin'.

Ellen Morrow: Here, put your head on my lap.

<Pat Novak sighs>

There, that's it.

Pat Novak: Yeah, yeah, that's it. Forget the towel, I'll struggle along this way. By the way, whose lap is it?

Ellen Morrow: I'm Ellen Morrow.

Pat Novak: Where's your friend?

Ellen Morrow: The Captain?

Pat Novak: I guess so, the brave guy, axle arm.

Ellen Morrow: He's down getting your boat ready.

Pat Novak: What's he doing, punching holes in the bottom?

Ellen Morrow: He'll be back in a minute. The package will be ready and you can leave.

Pat Novak: No, you keep the package. The last time I got a headache.

Ellen Morrow: I'm sorry about that, it was a mistake.

Pat Novak: That's what they told Marie Antoinette. By that time, her head was 40 feet down the street. What's in that package?

Ellen Morrow: It wouldn't help if you knew.

Pat Novak: You let me work that out, eh?

Ellen Morrow: Work out the answer, then.

Pat Novak: How bout Sam Tolliver?

Ellen Morrow: Slow down, Patsy.

Pat Novak: I'm not goin' that fast.

Ellen Morrow: You're going the wrong way. I'll help you lick your wounds, darling, but I'm not gonna get talkie.

Pat Novak: What have you got to lose?

Ellen Morrow: What have I got to gain, except your gratitude? I can get that any night with a couple of drinks.

Captain: How is he, Ellen?

Ellen Morrow: How does he look?

Captain: Too comfortable. On your feet, Novak.

Pat Novak: (grunting) Yeah.

<Sound of Pat Novak standing up>

You ought to rent that out, sweetheart. I'd sign a lease myself.

Captain: I'll finish the sweet talk, Novak. You get on your way. Here's the package.

Pat Novak: No, I changed my mind about the package, you keep it.

Captain: Your boat's ready. Unless you want to get tossed in like a mackerel, take the package and beat it.

Pat Novak: What's in it and where does Sam Tolliver fit?

Captain: You asked once already with your head in her lap. You want me to sit down?

Pat Novak: Well, you got brains after all.

Captain: Yeah.

Pat Novak: Sorry, I thought they were all in your fist.

<Sound of Pat Novak being hit and falling to the ground>

Yeah, you're still smart.

Captain: Take this package. Show him the boat, Ellen.

Pat Novak: I'm gonna remember you, mister.

Captain: Ellen's gonna lead you by the hands to the dock. Stop beefin' and settle for the simple pleasures.

Pat Novak: I will. I'll remember you.

Captain: Concentrate on Ellen, you'll get a better memory.

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: I went out on deck with the girl and as I got to the starboard side I noticed her hair for the first time, the way you're liable to suddenly notice a flower after a hard rain. Her hair was red and as the orange lights of the bridge reflected against it, it seemed like a prairie fire, way down in the valley, flaring up quick and then burning low again. The rest of her would have made a good prairie fire too. It was the only good thing I could think of on the way across the bay. The water was as quiet as a drowsy caterpillar and I had a chance to think. Why had they changed their mind about giving me that package and how wet were Sam Tolliver's feet? Well, it must have been about 11:30 when I pulled into the pier and started on the run for my office. The lights were on and I burst right in because I had a lot to ask Sam. But it wasn't Sam.

Grimes: What's your hurry, mister?

Pat Novak: I came here to meet a friend.

Grimes: If that's the guy layin' in the corner, you don't have to hurry.

<Sound of footsteps>

Pat Novak: No, this isn't my friend.

Grimes: He doesn't look like one. I'm Sergeant Grimes from homicide. If you're Novak, you're in trouble.

Pat Novak: Why?

Grimes: The guy lyin' under your desk dripping like a broken ink well and you trot out a question like that?

Pat Novak: Well, it's a bum caper somewhere. I was supposed to wait for a guy named Sam Tolliver.

Grimes: It might as well have been a street car. I'm not gonna press you Novak, I don't care. I'm just gonna take you downtown.

Pat Novak: Well this boy quit too late. I've been in the bay the last two hours. You can check, I went out there to pick up a package.

Grimes: The one you got in your arm?

Pat Novak: Yeah. It's for a guy named Sam Tolliver.

Grimes: Let's see.

<Sound of package being handed over>

Pat Novak: Ok.

Grimes: It doesn't say that. It says Mr. John Reedy. 720 Post Street.

Pat Novak: Hm? Mm, I wonder what that means.

Grimes: Let's find out, we'll take it by Reedy's place.

Pat Novak: I got it for Sam Tolliver.

Grimes: You can buy him another. We're going by Reedy's before we go downtown.

Pat Novak: What's the matter with you, do you want it on an 18 foot screen? I didn't kill the guy. I don't even know him. I don't even know this John Reedy.

Grimes: Wait a minute, Novak. I believe you. I believe every word you're saying. Except this is one time you'd be better off lying.

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: When we left my office, I felt as if somebody had walked through my stomach on stilts. Oh, there were loose ends bobbing up everywhere and you couldn't get to any of 'em. It was like chasing a spider with a bowling ball. With all this new stuff, I forgot about the ship. Who's gonna worry about blood poisoning if he's busy having hemorrhages? I began to wonder more about Sam. Where was he and how was I gonna palm off that dead stand-in? Grimes didn't seem worried. We got into his Nash and headed for 720 Post Street. It was an apartment hotel and Reedy lived up on the 3rd floor. On the way in, Grimes picked up a key at the desk and we rode up in the elevator with one of those shifty eyed little guys who'd sell his mother if he didn't have to fatten her up. When we got to Reedy's door, Grimes took over.

<Sound of door knocker>

Grimes: Open up!

<More door knocking>

Pat Novak: Maybe he can't hear you, Grimes.

Grimes: Nobody home. Let's go in.

Pat Novak: Why? We don't know him well enough to sneak in.

Grimes: I ride a hunch, Novak.

<Sound of key in the door>

Pat Novak: Ok.

<Sound of footsteps>

The light's on your side.

<Sound of footsteps>

Grimes: Leave it out, let's look around.

<Sound of footsteps>

Pat Novak: Ok. Stray bodies belong to you, Grimes.

<Sound of footsteps>

Grimes: You go look in that set of bedrooms. I'll check over here in the library. Give me a yell if you see anything.

<Sound of footsteps>

Pat Novak: All right.

<More footsteps, door opens, man screams, sound of gunshots>

Grimes: (yelling) Novak! Novak!

<Sound of running footsteps>

Two of them. I got one by the desk. The other started down the fire escape. I'm going down in front. Take this gun and stand by the fire escape. He may get trapped and start up. So keep your eyes open!

<Sound of footsteps>

Pat Novak: I walked into the library. The window was open and the curtains were blowing over the dead man's face. It was a good thing because you can't split the difference with a service .45. I took him by the heels and dragged him away from the window. His eyes were rolled back as if he expected somebody to tap him on the shoulder and tell him it was all a mistake. His face was contorted, frightened, maybe a little embarrassed like a deer caught in a traffic jam. Well, I stayed at the window about 10 minutes and watched the fire escape. There was no action there and Grimes wasn't back, so I started for the door. I had company right away.

Hellman: Hello Novak, you move?

Pat Novak: Oh, Hellman.

Hellman: That's a big gun you got.

Pat Novak: Ask junior here on the floor. He thinks it's even bigger.

Hellman: I'll check myself.

Pat Novak: Sure, and it's gonna be easy because it's right in the family.

Hellman: Yeah?

Pat Novak: Yeah, belongs to one of your boys down in homicide.

Hellman: Go ahead.

Pat Novak: A sergeant by the name of Grimes steamed in here and knocked down junior and then he beat it down to get the other guy.

Hellman: Eh.. I don't believe it.

Pat Novak: Well talk to him.

Hellman: That's why I don't believe it. There's nobody on the force named Grimes. On this one, you're all alone, Novak.

Pat Novak: There's gotta be a Grimes, the guy had on a uniform.

Hellman: I don't care if he had on a playsuit, Novak, the guy's a phony. He's not from homicide, he's a killer.

Pat Novak: Heh, that's what I meant, Hellman.

<Musical interlude>

I knew Hellman was right. If Grimes was on the level he'd of booked me instead of coming up here. He came up to Reedy's with murder in mind. Even if they believed the story about Grimes, I was still on the spot. That made me accessory to murder. And I was gonna look worse when Hellman found the guy down in my office. On that one I had star billing. Oh, everywhere I turned, things were worse and I knew it was gonna take a low budget miracle to bail me out. It was like trying to give nose drops to a herd of elephants. Hellman seemed to like the idea. Hellman rolled the guy and there was no identification, but he never works for nothing.

Hellman: Eh, a few bucks on the guy, I'll put it in the safe.

Pat Novak: The only safe you got has suspenders on it.

Hellman: I don't like that, Novak.

Pat Novak: Oh, you'd do anything for a buck, Hellman. If you got the right bid, you'd sell the tomb of the unknown soldier.

<Sound of Pat Novak being struck>

Thanks Hellman. I'm getting a big list tonight.

Hellman: I can do all of that I want, Novak, cuz you're in the corner pocket now. I get a tip off from the Chronicle to come up here and I find you holding last rites.

Pat Novak: You got a bigger headache, Hellman. There's another stiff down at my place.

Hellman: Huh?

Pat Novak: That's right, Grimes again. He was sitting there when I walked in.

Hellman: Where were you?

Pat Novak: Out in the bay picking up a package. It's right there on the desk.

Hellman: What's in it?

Pat Novak: I don't know. It was for a friend of mine named Sam Tolliver. He's disappeared and Grimes brought the package up here.

Hellman: Oh, I'll take it downtown.

Pat Novak: You better tag by the China star. That's where I picked up the package. It's out in the bay so you'll need a boat. Even a guy with your complex needs a boat.

Hellman: I'll touch all the bases, Novak. You just stay 10 cents away from headquarters. You can pay your own way into the can.

Pat Novak: Yeah, well that's what will happen if I wait for you I'll be standing out in the downpour.

Hellman: That's right, Novak. If there's a chance, I want to see you get first prize.

Pat Novak: Yeah, well I'm gonna be stuck unless I shop around myself because you got lockjaw of the brain, Hellman.

Hellman: Yeah?

Pat Novak: That wouldn't hurt you so much, but if it spreads you're gonna be in trouble. That's what I'm waiting for.

<Musical Interlude>

Well, if something didn't happen soon, I was gonna be about as embarrassed as a hostess with leaky plumbing. I was counting on Hellman to shake down the skipper of the China Star and if that didn't work, I could close shop. I didn't have any leads, there wasn't anything I could do but sit on my hands. It was like taking your niece to a night club. I had to stumble around until something showed, so I looked up the only honest guy I know. An ex-doctor and a boozier by the name of Jocko Madigan. Oh, he was all right until he found out sometimes you can feel as bad the next morning without a hangover. I toured the town and finally found him at Lupo's trying to put the vineyards out of business.

Jocko Madigan: Ah, Patsy, you're just in time to start the day off right. Mama Lupo, some wine for Mr. Novak! You can only have a quart, we're running low.

Pat Novak: Look, it's almost midnight, Jocko, I gotta talk to ya.

Jocko Madigan: We're not gonna turn into pumpkins. You need some wine.

Pat Novak: No I don't.

Jocko Madigan: Patsy, when you die, the art work is going to be simple. On your grave, they'll chisel a picture of a pair of slacks, a hamburger, and a double malt.

Pat Novak: All right, Jocko.

Jocko Madigan: The final symbols of a decayed civilization, because that's as close as you ever got to civilization. A remote connection at best. Like a bookie, they love horses, but they die on a stock farm. It's the same with you and civilization.

Pat Novak: You all through Jocko?

Jocko Madigan: (sighing) I won't fight against your sober babble. What's the matter?

Pat Novak: There's a dead guy down in my office.

Jocko Madigan: Uh, friend of ours?

Pat Novak: No.

Jocko Madigan: Oh, that's too bad, we'll miss the wake.

Pat Novak: I'm gonna get half hung by homicide. The other half is dead up in a Post Street apartment. Hellman thinks I'm the boy.

Jocko Madigan: Patsy, I wish you wouldn't hang around me when you've just killed somebody. You tarnish my declining years.

Pat Novak: I went out to the bay to pick up a package. When I got back to my place, instead of a friend named Sam Tolliver, there was a dead guy there and a phony cop called Grimes.

Jocko Madigan: How do you make the distinction?

Pat Novak: He grabbed the package and we took it up to Post Street. After a quick hassle in the dark, I'm standing over a dead guy in John Reedy's apartment.

Jocko Madigan: John Reedy?

Pat Novak: Yeah, do you know him?

Jocko Madigan: Most people do, he's running for office tomorrow. Is he the dead man?

Pat Novak: No, I don't think so. What about Reedy?

Jocko Madigan: He's running for a board job.

Pat Novak: Yeah? Would anybody have a reason to work a plan on him?

Jocko Madigan: Maybe.

Pat Novak: What's he like?

Jocko Madigan: Oh, a sort of liberal by marriage.

Pat Novak: Hm?

Jocko Madigan: A reactionary with a rich wife. Supposed to be a good man.

Pat Novak: Well, how 'bout the opposition?

Jocko Madigan: Oh, a lot of them are running. One is Simpson. He couldn't beat an asthmatic turtle across a tennis court.

Pat Novak: Well, we're getting somewhere at least. If Reedy's good, the gambling dough would frame him to lose.

Jocko Madigan: Yes, if politicians can ever lose. A murder in his apartment would look too phony though.

Pat Novak: Yeah, but maybe that package wouldn't. Jocko, you got to help me. I want you to check on the registration of the China Star, and then nose around and find out what you can about tomorrow's election, will ya?

Jocko Madigan: If we lived in a monarchy, this wouldn't happen.

Pat Novak: That fast double play has got something to do with this election. Now, hurry up, Jocko, and when you're through, tag by my place, I'll call you there.

Jocko Madigan: Have you a bottle in the house?

Pat Novak: There's a tap in the kitchen; that will have to do!

Jocko Madigan: No thanks. Outside of a child in pain, the most pathetic sound in the world is running water. Good night, lover.

<Musical interlude>

Pat Novak: I left Jocko and ducked into a phone booth. When I called Hellman he poured out news like a rotary press. They broke open that package down at headquarters. It was full of dope. Plain garden variety, the kind a man uses to forget either his wife or his secretary. I was sure, then, the package was a plant on Reedy. Hellmen didn't see it that way. He said the two dead men were gunsels, last address before San Francisco State Prison at Joliet. I needled him about

that phony cop, Grimes. Hellman said they just got a tip-off by telephone. Grimes was an ex-sergeant in homicide whose real name was Vic Rothery. I asked him who phoned in the tip-off and Hellman said he didn't know the guy, his name was Sam Tolliver. I got out of the chronicle morgue and looked up everything I could on John Reedy. All politicians' children sit on the floor. There was a picture of Reedy there with his family grouped around him on the floor. I pulled the clips on Vic Rothery. It was Grimes, all right. That gave me something to work on, so I went on the prowl for Ellen Morrow. I found her running a dice game in a little after hours joint on Eddy Street.

<Casino noises>

Ellen Morrow: You want chips, Novak?

Pat Novak: You don't want to play against yourself? Yeah, give me some.

Ellen Morrow: All right. Let's see how good you are.

<Sound of dice being rolled>

Eight's your point.

Pat Novak: Yeah. You seen Sam Tolliver?

Ellen Morrow: Make your point, Patsy.

Pat Novak: That's it. Where's Sam Tolliver?

<Sound of dice rolling>

Ellen Morrow: Five. You're not even warm. You're not warm on Sam either.

Pat Novak: He left me hanging with a murder rap.

Ellen Morrow: Your friend double crossed you.

Pat Novak: He double crossed you too!

<Sound of dice rolling>

Ellen Morrow: Another five. You're in a rut, Patsy.

Pat Novak: He turned in Grimes. That's right, baby. They know he's Vic Rothery. Now you still like Sam Tolliver?

Ellen Morrow: No... Keep rollin', darling.

Pat Novak: Is Grimes your boyfriend?

Ellen Morrow: He used to be, I'm sentimental.

Pat Novak: Where's Sam Tolliver?

Ellen Morrow: The Herrick hotel. When you see him, tell him I sent you.

Pat Novak: I will if we talk that long.

<Sound of dice rolling>

Ellen Morrow: There it is. Eight.

Pat Novak: That's right.

Ellen Morrow: I guess I lose, Patsy.

Pat Novak: I guess you do. Be seein' you baby.

<Musical interlude>

She changed when I left. The first time out she was alive and breezy like the Maine coast in July, but now she was broken up and lonely looking. And as I walked out, I thought of an old Dixie cup somebody had used up and thrown in the alley. Well, I got down to the Herrick Hotel, but Sam Tolliver wasn't there. Maybe it was better that way. I left a note for him. A short note that even a Mongolian idiot couldn't trip up on. If Sam was gonna show his hand, he had to do it soon. When I got back to my apartment, Jocko was already there. He was giving a concert for the mice.

Jocko Madigan: (singing) Oh, she pushed a baby carriage, she pushed a baby carriage in the merry, merry month of May.

Pat Novak: All right, Jocko.

Jocko Madigan: (singing) She pushed a baby carriage, she pushed a baby carriage, she pushed it for a Williams man who's far, far away.

Pat Novak: Oh, stop it, will ya?

Jocko Madigan: Patsy, I wish you'd get rid of that radio and buy a good harpsichord.

Pat Novak: What'd you find out, Jocko?

Jocko Madigan: Nothing from the China Star, she weighed anchor and went to sea at a quarter to twelve.

Pat Novak: How about Reedy?

Jocko Madigan: Well there's heavy gambling money against him. And there's talk about a last minute scandal. All the newspapers had tip-offs.

Pat Novak: Where was he tonight?

Jocko Madigan: At a rally in the Mission District with his whole family.

Pat Novak: Well, that would leave time for a plant. They broke open that package, it was full of dope.

Jocko Madigan: Oh, that makes sense. He was once under treatment for malaria. The drugs found in his apartment would make it look bad.

<Phone rings>

Pat Novak: Yea, I'll get it. Hello? Novak talking.

Hellman: I hope so because you got a lot to do.

Pat Novak: What's on your mind, Hellman?

Hellman: A girl named Ellen Morrow. Who killed her?

Pat Novak: Did they?

Hellman: About 20 minutes ago. Vic Rothery's picture was all over the place.

Pat Novak: Yeah, they were chums. You better pick up Sam Tolliver. He's at the Herrick Hotel.

Hellman: I'd rather have Vic Rothery.

Pat Novak: Haven't you picked him up yet?

Hellman: No, we're on our way out.

Pat Novak: Well, you better hurry, Hellman. There won't be any voters left.

Hellman: I thought Sam Tolliver was a friend of yours.

Pat Novak: Well, that's the trouble with close friends. You give them the shirt off your back so they can see where to put in the knife.

<Musical interlude>

After Hellman's call, I knew we were coming up for the last hand. I met him, and we rode down to Vic Rothery's hotel. It was early morning, just about the time dawn is too sleepy to get out of bed. In the pale light, Geary Street looked like a shabby old lady with a snoot full and Rothery's hotel was worse. Hellman flashed a badge at the night clerk, who reached over and handed us a key. It was a funny thing to notice then, but the guy's hands were short and his fingers were peeled and stained yellow as if they'd been dipped in weak acid. Well, we rode up to Rothery's room. As we got out of the elevator and turned the corner, somebody ducked into Rothery's room. That was enough for Hellman, he started down the hall.

<Running sounds, then knocking>

Hellman: Open up in there.

<Man screams, followed by 3 gun shots.>

Pat Novak: Well, you got another customer, Hellman.

<Knocking>

Hellman: Open up!

<Door opens>

Sam Tolliver: Come on in, you're gonna wake everybody up.

Pat Novak: Hello Sam.

Sam Tolliver: Come on in. Don't mind the gun, it's loaded.

Pat Novak: You're a handy cop, Hellman.

<Footsteps>

Sam Tolliver: That's it, now close the door.

<Door closes>

All right, over near the window.

Pat Novak: Yeah.

<Footsteps>

Sam Tolliver: Go on.

<Footsteps>

Pat Novak: Sure.

Hellman: You get an answer for Rothery here?

Sam Tolliver: You too, copper, over near the window.

<Footsteps>

Hellman: I asked you, you got an answer for Rothery here?

<Footsteps>

Sam Tolliver: You're lookin' at it, Mister. You know, Patsy, I'm sorry you came. I could bounce a few off of this guy with no pain at all, but it's gonna hurt on you.

Pat Novak: Don't kid me, Sam.

Sam Tolliver: I don't know why you came, Patsy, you could of left me alone. I didn't meant to put you in for this. Things went wrong and you were in, that's all, but I didn't mean to do it, Patsy.

Pat Novak: Give the man your gun.

Sam Tolliver: You were a good guy to me, Novak. I'm sorry you drew the deuce. I'm really sorry because, well, you were a good guy to me.

Pat Novak: Well, I'm not anymore, Sam. You've got five feet to make up your mind.

Sam Tolliver: I got it made up Patsy, now stay back. Let me try it out on him first.

Pat Novak: You've had practice.

Sam Tolliver: Stay back, Patsy, I'm in a hole and I'll burn my way out. You know that. Patsy, I'm in a hole, I gotta get out.

Pat Novak: Don't kid me, Sam. I was your last friend. All you got now is the roads.

Sam Tolliver: Stay back, Patsy, please. Patsy, stay back.

Pat Novak: Give me that gun, Sam.

<Gunshots, man gasping>

Hellman: Eh, I must have prayed wrong, Novak.

Pat Novak: Yeah. Sorry, Sam. I'm a tough loser.

Sam Tolliver: Yeah, you were right, Patsy. It's a bum town for a small robber.

Pat Novak: For a while, you looked big.

Sam Tolliver: Not for long, though.

Pat Novak: No. You're a small time bum, Sam, and you're better off dead.

Sam Tolliver: I wouldn't argue. Sorry though.

Pat Novak: I doubt it.

Sam Tolliver: I guess that's right. I... I didn't drive her in... (unintelligible gasp).

Hellman: How's your friend, Novak?

Pat Novak: Let's go, friendship's over.

<Musical interlude, fog horn>

Well, Hellman finally pieced it all together. He got that skipper back and put him under the lights. The story was damp, but it fit together. They were all in on a deal to railroad John Reedy. Vic Rothery headed up a bunch to plant the dope in his apartment, but Sam Tolliver got anxious and decided to get the stuff for sale. He talked a couple of buddies into it and sent me out to the ship to pick it up. The captain smelled a switch and knocked me out long enough to get word to Rothery on the beach. Rothery got the guy in my office and the other guy that Sam posted in Reedy's place in case anything went wrong. That left only Sam on the other team. Rothery wore the uniform because it was an easy way to plant the stuff in Reedy's apartment but the timetable went haywire and he got tripped up by that tip-off call to the Chronicle. That's about the way it was. Well, Hellman asked only one question. How come Sam Tolliver headed for the girl's place and then Rothery's? I don't know, except maybe that note I left Sam. How'd I know he'd believe a lie? Oh, it worked out for everybody except John Reedy. He lost the election anyway. Jocko forgot to mention the guy was a Republican.

<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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