



BALDY AND THE DEAD SOUTHPAW

By JACK KOFOED

When "Lefty" Waldron passes on, a crooked gambler and a two-timing girl call it suicide - so Simmons investigates!

ONE day, as "Lefty" Waldron is hitting the feed bag in the restaurant of the Waldorf Ritz hotel, "Baldy" Simmons drops into a chair across the table from the star southpaw of the Pink Sox. Lefty is putting a heavy chew on a two-pound sirloin decorated with mushrooms, but there is no look of happiness on his pan.

As a matter of fact, Waldron is an unhappy character at best, who seldom

gets on with his team-mates, or anybody else. However, considering the steak is worthy of a Cordon Bleu, and Lefty holds the Leopards to a couple of infield hits this very afternoon, it does not seem reasonable to believe he is as gloomy as his expression indicates. To top it off, Waldron's sweetie-pie—a lovely actress named Pony McCoy—is in town with a road company of "Knee Deep in Blondes." Of course, Pony calls herself an actress,

but she is really a chorus girl, with legs like Marlene Dietrich.

"Why the sour puss?" Baldy asks.

Lefty finishes working his choppers on a particularly succulent bit of beef, and looks Mr. Simmons squarely in the eyes.

"I am able to give you seven or eight reasons, but one or two serve the purpose very well," the southpaw says. "Yesterday Whispering Jones makes me an offer of two grand to toss off the game with the Leopards. As you know, Whispering Jones is the heaviest gambler in these parts."

"From the way you work this afternoon, it is clear to one and all you turn this character down cold," suggests Baldy.

The southpaw wipes a bead of sweat from his worried brow.

"This is just the trouble. I figure to frame Jones, because he is a very bad influence on baseball. It is my idea to have Manager Dockenspiegel and a couple of other witnesses hidden close by when Whispering hands me the dough. The only trouble is that Pony McCoy arrives in town. Her presence fascinates me so much I forget to tell Manager Dockenspiegel anything about it."

"What is to prevent you from doing this on another occasion?"

Waldron moans, and it comes deep from the heart.

"Last night I am having supper with Pony McCoy in the Gilded Cockatoo Club," says he. "Whispering Jones passes by, and drops an envelope on the table. When I open it in my room some time later, I find it contains two thousand clams."

"I see no insurmountable obstacle there," observes Mr. Simmons. "It is possible to return this unclean pelf, and tell him you change your mind."

"It is not very healthy changing your mind with Whispering Jones, but that is

exactly what I plan to do," sighs Lefty Waldron. "I roam about until three in the morning, trying to find him, but am a complete failure at the effort. Now, this Jones character is a handy person with a John Roscoe, and it is reported that cemeteries are full of people he bumps off. This situation makes me very unhappy."

"And, you shut the Leopards out with two hits!"

WALDRON lights a cigarette. The match burns his right forefinger, and he curses heartily.

"There is nothing to do but my best," he says. "If I am batted out of the box Whispering Jones thinks he has me in his pocket for the rest of his life. Besides, baseball is my game, and I do not double-cross it under any circumstances."

"Atta boy," says Baldy.

"Now I am waiting for Whispering Jones. It does no good to return his two grand, for it is a cinch he loses five times this much betting on the Leopards. From all I hear, he is likely to put more lead in me than you find in a repeater pencil. There is only one thing I am glad of. If anything happens to me, Pony McCoy is safe for the rest of her life. I have a fifty-thousand-dollar insurance policy, and she is the beneficiary."

Mr. Simmons thinks this over very carefully.

"You are, I suppose, on the verge of marrying Miss Pony McCoy?" he says.

"As soon as she is ready, which is when she finishes this road trip with 'Knee Deep in Blondes.'"

"Look," says Baldy. "It is possible this is not as bad as you think. On the other hand, it is likely to turn out even worse. Whispering Jones is more careless with a cannon than Dillinger was in his prime. Go back to your apartment and lock yourself in. I'll look up Johnny O'Keefe,

of the Broadway Squad, and ask him to keep an eye on Mr. Jones.”

Lefty Waldron thinks this is a pretty good idea. To make sure nothing happens, Baldy not only tucks him into a taxi, but sends “Slugger” Willoughby, the doorman, with him as a body guard. Slugger is probably the worst heavyweight to ever step into a ring, but is quite rough in any sort of a bar-room brawl.

Baldy goes looking for Johnny O’Keefe. It takes some little time, but Mr. Simmons finally locates him playing gin rummy in the back room of Poppadopolous’ place on Eighth Avenue.

“Whenever you come around, I always have to quit just as I am about to schneider somebody,” says Johnny, a little unpleasantly. “Who is murdered this time?”

“Nobody yet,” Baldy tells him. “But unless you ditch that deck of cards, somebody is likely to be knocked off.”

“Your remarks leave me cold.”

“Not you, but Lefty Waldron, is likely to be colder than a salted mackerel unless you do something about it.”

This rouses Johnny O’Keefe out of his gin rummy fog, for he is a very patriotic citizen, and is keen to have the Pink Sox win the championship. Besides, he has a bet on the Sox, and they cannot possibly win without their star left-hander, who is good for thirty victories, anyhow. The detective puts the cardboards away.

“Why does anyone wish to bump Lefty?” he asks. “It is admitted Lefty is not the pleasantest character in the world but this is not enough reason to give him a cemetery job.”

Mr. Simmons explains in detail what happens, and how afraid Lefty is that “Whispering” Jones lays him away. Johnny listens in heavy silence.

Then, he says like this: “It is really quite bad. Whispering Jones is not a

person to forget such a deal. It is not a matter of principle with him. It is strictly the money.”

“What do you intend to do?” asks Mr. Simmons.

Johnny pats the gun in his pocket. “The first thing is to find Mr. Jones, though chances are if murder or mayhem are committed, he hires someone else.”

“You do this,” agrees Baldy. “I have another job.”

It is no more or less than to find Miss “Pony” McCoy and put her on guard. Practically everybody in America knows about the romance between her and Lefty. Maybe Whispering Jones tries to get even by damaging her in one way or another. So, Mr. Simmons goes to the Globe Theatre, where Pony is playing in this “Knee Deep in Blondes” extravaganza.

Old Pop, the doorman, takes a pipe out of his mouth, and looks up as Mr. Simmons comes in.

“Well, well, Baldy!” he says. “You gettin’ to be a stage door Johnny at your age? Why, I wouldn’t believe it.”

“Not exactly,” Baldy grins. “But I appreciate if you let me have a word with Miss Pony McCoy.”

Pop takes a gander at the cards in the rack on the wall. Then, he shakes his head.

“Not tonight,” he says. “Pony is not workin’.”

“Sick?”

“No. Whispering Jones arrives in a Rolls Royce and a temper. He tells the company manager Pony is to have the night off, or else. Nobody argues with Jones, so he and Pony go off together.”

Baldy looks at his watch.

“What time is this?” he asks.

“Oh, eight-fifteen—eight-twenty. Somewhere around there. Anything wrong?”

“I wish I knew.”

THE thought occurs to him that Whispering Jones pulls an old trick which is very popular in prohibition days, when tommy-guns and bodies loaded in cement are originated. This consists of putting the snatch on someone very close to the character who is to be harmed.

Even a very hard-boiled person is not likely to make any sort of aggressive move if he knows his wife or sweetheart is in the hands of his enemies. Now, Baldy never meets Miss Pony McCoy, but he sees her pictures, and knows she has looks enough not to be ashamed of competing with Rita Hayworth or Paulette Goddard. Besides, Lefty Waldron's feelings are well known, since a character does not make a gal beneficiary of a fifty-thousand-dollar insurance policy unless he is nuts about her.

But, old Pop puts a stop to this line of reasoning.

"What I do not understand is this: Pony brags like mad that she is going to marry Lefty Waldron. As a matter of fact, she is ready to put in her notice at any given moment. Yet, when this Whispering Jones appears tonight, she throws her arms around him, and gives him one of the biggest and fattest kisses I see in all the years I am around the theatre."

"She kisses him?"

"But hot!"

"Then, it is not a snatch?"

"Well," says Pop judicially, "he snatches her, and she snatches him, so maybe you use the proper term. But, if you mean the kind Machine-Gun McCarthy pulls so often in the old days—definitely no."

There is, Baldy thinks, something very rotten, and not, by any matter of means, in the state of Denmark. Whispering Jones and the faithless Pony McCoy seem to be combining against Lefty Waldron. This is a sad state of affairs, and, as a matter of

fact, a reflection on American womanhood.

It is eight o'clock when Mr. Simmons sends Lefty Waldron to his apartment. It is now ten. Lots of things happen in two hours, particularly when a killer is mad at somebody, and that somebody's girl friend gets fifty grand if he is bumped off.

"Let me use your phone, pop," Baldy says.

It takes only a minute to get Johnny O'Keefe's precinct station, and sure enough Johnny is there.

"Playing gin again?" Baldy asks.

"Sure. Why not?"

"I think you are looking for Whispering Jones."

Johnny laughs. "There is nothing to worry about, Baldy. I find this character at the Frivolity Club, with a very pretty judy, who turns out to be Pony McCoy. Now, it strikes me that if Whispering is so chummy with Lefty's girl, there is no intention on his part to lay Lefty among the daisies. However, I leave Costello and Maginnis at the Frivolity to keep an eye on them."

In spite of this optimistic report, the whole thing does not make sense to Baldy, and he is a great chap for wanting things to make sense.

"Listen, John," he says. "I do not wish to be petulant, or suchlike. The facts, however, are these: Whispering Jones, who kills a man with less compunction than he steps on a spider, loses a wad of dough because of Lefty Waldron. On top of this, he is convinced Lefty double-crosses him. Mr. Jones is known to the citizens as one who settles his debts with the old equalizer. The dame he accompanies to the Frivolity Club is not only Waldron's sweetheart, but figures to get fifty grand if her boy friend turns up his toes. How do you play a tune like this on your harmonica?"

Johnny O'Keefe makes a sound in his throat as though he swallows a marinated herring without chewing it.

"Placed in this light the whole deal sounds bad," he admits. "If they bump off Lefty I lose a century note—because I bet on the Pink Sox to win the championship. What do you suggest?"

Mr. Simmons says: "Stay where you are. I pick you up at the station, and together we visit the forgetful southpaw's apartment. I suggest that you bring one of the medical examiners with you. I have a funny feeling that Mr. Waldron is no longer among us. And, you might tell Costello to keep Whispering Jones and Pony McCoy where we have immediate access to them, if my hunch turns out to be right."

Within ten minutes Baldy is at the station house, and they drive to the apartment house, where Lefty Waldron is holed up. The clerk at the desk is a half pint, with bifocals and a little mustache. Like many small men, he is very cocky. When they ask him to ring the pitcher's flat, he shrugs.

"Mr. Waldron tells me, before going up, that he does not wish to be disturbed by anyone," the clerk says. "He is emphatic about this. As a matter of fact, I even refuse to ring his phone for nobody less than Miss Pony McCoy, who comes here about eighty-thirty. Miss McCoy becomes highly insulted by my refusal, and for some fifteen minutes she calls me names I do not believe such a pretty girl is able to learn."

"Fifteen minutes," muses Baldy. "This is long enough for the job."

"I do not know what you mean. Now, please get the heck out of here, and let me go back to reading True Love Tales."

JOHNNY O'KEEFE is in no frame of mind for any sort of argument. He is

thinking about the hundred dollars he bets on Pink Sox, and how little chance he has of keeping it if anything happens to Lefty Waldron. So, he flashes his badge.

"Gimme the key, or you have no more nose left than an oyster," he says.

There is no answer to this, since O'Keefe is six feet three, and the clerk is five foot six. And, besides, the big man is the law. So Johnny and Baldy and the medical examiner, whose name is Wippenberger, go up to the fourth floor.

They open the door, and go into the living room, which is a very nice living room. No one is there. Now, it is known to one and all that Lefty is a very light sleeper. A mouse, wearing felt slippers, wakes him up by merely tiptoeing across the floor. But, there is no sound from the bedroom.

"Dear, dear," says Mr. Simmons. "I am very unhappy about this, and hate to open the bedroom door."

"Me, too," agrees Johnny O'Keefe. "But I am one hundred dollars unhappier about it than you are."

This does not make any sense to the medical examiner. He never sees a ball game in his life, and never hears about Lefty Waldron. His only interest in life is examining citizens who have passed away. So, he goes into the bedroom, and switches on the light.

The southpaw is lying on the floor. He wears a shirt and pants, and a pistol is on the floor an inch from his outstretched hand. He is deader than Napoleon's second cousin. The medical examiner rubs his hands, chuckles, and starts to look the deceased over.

After a few minutes he looks up. "Suicide beyond any shadow of a doubt," he says. "I find powder burns on the temple."

Johnny shrugs his wide shoulders. "There seem to be no worries in this deal.

Lefty gets panicky and knocks himself off. It is as clear as the lipstick on Pony McCoy's mouth."

For the moment Baldy pays no attention to this remark. He picks up the telephone, and tells the room clerk to present himself on the double.

When the little man arrives, Baldy asks him to go over the whole story of Lefty's arrival, and what happens thereafter.

"Mr. Waldron comes in with Slugger Willoughby. Since he forgets his key, I go up with the master key you have there, and let him in. Then he locks the door behind him, and Slugger goes down in the elevator with me. The only one who calls for him until you arrive is Miss Pony McCoy."

"And, no one is able to go up to that floor without you seeing him."

"I do not say this," the clerk answers petulantly. "After all, there is a back stairway, and I am not like Argus, who has eyes in practically every corner of his head."

"So, it is possible Slugger, or somebody, goes up those back stairs, and does a job on Lefty?"

O'Keefe allows himself a derisive smile.

"Do you not get yourself slightly botched up, Mr. Simmons?" he asks. "You hear the medical examiner. It is suicide. This is what the man says."

"Nobody tells me Lefty bumps himself off," snorts Baldy. "He gets thirty thousand dollars a year. He has a World Series coming up, to say nothing of a beautiful dame he thinks is his ever loving. Maybe he is afraid of Whispering Jones, but it is the Hope diamond against a peck of carrots he does not put a thirty-eight slug in his noggin' on this account."

"I am not on the homicide squad for fifteen years without being able to tell the difference between murder and suicide,"

says Johnny O'Keefe coldly. "Here is a character with a gun practically in his hand, and powder burns on him, to say nothing of what the psychologists call a fear motive. What do these things count up to? Lefty gets so scared he does not know Wednesday from Whitsuntide, and rubs himself out."

For the moment, Baldy gives the flatfoot no argument on this point. He merely suggests that Johnny's henchmen bring Whispering Jones and Pony McCoy to the apartment. This is easily arranged, and within fifteen minutes they arrive, escorted by a couple of detectives, who look like Primo Carnera's brothers.

Jones is a tall, thin man, with a waxed mustache, cold eyes, and a low voice which gives him his nickname.

"All right, all right," he says. "Unravel this deal. I am not such a person as allows himself to be pushed around by a couple of hunkies just out of police school."

"Take it easy," says Baldy. They are in the living room, and the door to the bedroom is shut, so there is no sight of Lefty Waldron's body. "We have one or two questions we'd like answered."

"Such as what?"

"Do you offer Lefty Waldron two grand to ruff off to day's game with the Leopards?"

AT THIS the Whispering person gives him a dirty look.

"For two grand I expect to buy nothing less than the Yankee stadium," he says.

"But, you do lose five times this much betting on the Leopards," old naked noggin insists. "There is no use denying it, because it is a very simple matter to prove."

"So, I lose a wad," Jones whispers. "No one goes to jail for this in all the years I am on Broadway. If Lefty Waldron says I give him two grand, he is a liar in spades,

doubled and redoubled.”

“It is also necessary to explain where you are between eight o’clock and ten, when you are observed in the Frivolity Club, with Miss Pony McCoy.”

Whispering Jones sits down, and lights a cigarette.

“You ask more questions than Phil Baker, though I do not get sixty-four dollars for any answer,” he says. “If you are trying to pin a bribery case on me, what difference does it make where I am between eight and ten o’clock this lovely summer evening?”

“Open up,” ordered one of the detectives who looks like Carnera.

“At eight,” says Whispering Jones, “I am in Monahan’s bar. At eight-twenty I pick up Pony here. We go along Riverside Drive, park near the George Washington Bridge, and talk for awhile. By ten we are in the Frivolity Club. Is there anything else you like to know?”

Mr. Simmons ignores this. He turns a cold glance on Pony McCoy.

“You are supposed to be engaged to Lefty Waldron?” he asks. “Do not deny it, because Lefty tells me this himself.”

“So, I am engaged to him. What am I supposed to do about this—bust into tears?”

“And he makes you the beneficiary of a fifty-thousand-dollar insurance policy?”

There is no use denying this, because insurance companies have more papers than a separation center. Pony admits this is indeed so.

“Then, if this is the situation with Lefty, why do you step around with this Jones character?” says Baldy.

“It is my business,” she snaps. “And you keep your big fat mouth shut!”

“It is your business,” agrees Baldy. “But it is also the business of the police.”

“Police?” she asks, wide-eyed. “Because I cut a slice of guinea hen with

Whispering Jones? What does the book give me for this? Ten years?”

“You carry the ball, Johnny,” suggests Mr. Simmons. “After all, you are the Law.”

“Commere, sister.” The detective opens the bedroom door. “Grab a gander.”

Pony McCoy looks, and utters a scream so high-pitched it makes the walls shake. Then, she falls flat on her face in what seems to be a world championship faint.

Whispering Jones does not move out of the chair.

“A psychological third degree, eh?” he says. “What do you have in there—Boris Karloff?”

“See for yourself,” O’Keefe tells him.

The gambler slouches over, with not the slightest flicker of expression on his dead pan.

“Well, well,” he says. “Imagine Lefty taking the Dutch route. I wonder why.” Nobody pays the slightest attention to Miss Pony McCoy, who finally shudders and sits up.

“What is this all about, Whispering?” she asks.

The gambler says nothing, but Baldy speaks in thus fashion:

“Since you inherit fifty thousand dollars insurance from the dead man, and your new boy friend threatens to rub Lefty out, it does not take any more than a numb-skull to see a motive. To say nothing of the fact that you are here this evening.”

The medical examiner speaks up impatiently. “I tell you several times this case is suicide, and you do no more or less than impugn my professional reputation by saying it is murder.”

“You see,” says Whispering Jones, lifting Miss Pony McCoy to her feet. “Leave us get out of this place.”

Baldy gives Johnny O’Keefe a

meaning look.

"Do not be in too great a hurry, Mr. Jones," Johnny says. "The district attorney is definitely interested in having a bit of chit-chat with you." He turns to the policemen, who look like Carnera's brothers. "Take 'em away."

Protesting bitterly, the pair are hustled off. A police photographer makes many pictures of the body. The joint is dusted for fingerprints, and all the usual police chores done before Baldy and Johnny hide themselves to an all-night beanery in search of chow.

"I do not quite understand why you insist this is homicide when the medical examiner is definite in listing it as suicide," Johnny says. "After all, Dr. Wippenberger is quite a cagey character, and examines maybe a thousand stiffes at one time or another. If we cannot prove this is murder, it does not matter to any court whether or not Pony and Whispering have motives."

"I know it is murder," says Baldy digging into the steaming chili con carne. "There is only one point which needs clearing up before the whole deal is solved."

"Okay," the detective agrees. "But work fast. We are not able to hold Jones and Miss McCoy more than a couple of days. Right now they are probably belling for lawyers and habeas corpuses and such things. So, I leave the matter in your hands, and spend the rest of the evening playing gin rummy with Poppadopoulos, who is pretty nearly as good as I am."

SO, Mr. Simmons returns to the apartment house, where Lefty Waldron has his apartment. It seems to him the time element is one that needs clearing up. The clerk says Pony McCoy bawls him out around eight-thirty, and both Whispering

Jones and the lady swear they are on their way uptown in an automobile at this hour.

"Oh, it is you again," says the clerk in a disgusted voice.

"Well, this is murder," sibilates Baldy. "Confidentially the police do not look on such practises with favor. Whispering Jones and Pony McCoy say they are in Mr. Jones' sedan, and the Gilded Cockatoo from eight-twenty until the coppers check up on them. Yet, you say Pony comes here at eight-thirty and bawls you scarlet in the face."

"She has a tongue like a longshoreman."

Mr. Simmons looks carefully around the lobby, and then into a hall that leads toward the back of the building.

"A stairway there?" he asks.

The clerk—whose name is McElmurray—nods grumpily.

"And, it is possible that, while Pony engages you in a heated discussion, Whispering Jones goes up those stairs, and rubs Lefty out?"

"Could be," agrees McElmurray. "But the police department's own medical examiner says Mr. Waldron shoots himself, so you are wasting your time."

"Well, anyway, it costs nothing to have a look," says Baldy.

But, first, he calls Johnny O'Keefe, and asks him to send the fingerprint expert back again. When the gentleman arrives he dusts the handrail of the back stairway, and gets some very nice prints of Whispering Jones' fingers!

So, the next day a little group gathers in the office of the district attorney. Mr. Jones and Miss McCoy, the D.A., Dr. Wippenberger, Johnny O'Keefe, Baldy and Mr. McElmurray are there, to say nothing of several stenographers who record every thing that is said.

The fingerprints are exhibited.

"We waste no small amount of time

here, and I am a busy man," says Whispering Jones. "So, you find my fingerprints on the rail. These do not mean I go to Lefty Waldron's apartment. As a matter of fact, I frequently visit a business associate of mine, named Ace Deuce Riley. Since the business is more or less secret, I use the stairway to avoid attention. Mr. McElmurray testifies to this, I am quite sure."

Mr. McElmurray does this little thing. He also adds that Pony McCoy is present, but disappears in a huff, because she is not permitted to go to Lefty's apartment.

"Nobody denies this, either," Jones says. "We stop at the apartment house for a minute on the way. Pony does not get up to see Waldron, either. I wait in the car outside."

"Now, these fingerprints are comparatively fresh," says Baldy. "When is the last time you visit Ace Deuce Riley?"

"Oh, I do not know. A couple of days ago, I guess."

Dr. Wippenberger stirs restlessly in his chair. "Once again, gentlemen, I protest. My verdict is suicide. If Mr. Waldron blows his brains out, what difference does it make if Mr. Jones visits Mr. Riley today or a year ago?"

"You see?" says Jones, "That's exactly the point I am making."

The district attorney looks accusingly at Baldy Simmons.

"I recognize the fact, sir, that you help the police and this office on other occasions. It seems to me, though, that in this instance you go slightly off the beam."

Baldy lights a cigar, and settles back in the leather chair.

"Before going into what I have in mind, will Dr. Wippenberger be so good as to tell us why he is certain this is suicide," he says.

The medical examiner bristles. "It is well known that the deceased is a left-handed pitcher. The wound, surrounded by powder burns, is in the left temple. The pistol lay an inch from Mr. Waldron's left hand."

"Thank you," says Baldy. "Now, let us recapitulate. Lefty tells me Whispering Jones offers him a bribe to throw a ball game, and believes the pitcher double-crosses him. Lefty is very much afraid of being killed."

"This is your story," says Jones. "You are unable to prove it."

"But, it is a fact that you drop five grand betting on the Leopards?"

"Sure. I do not win all the time."

"And, it is true that Pony McCoy, who is engaged to Lefty, and who is so much beloved by him that he makes her beneficiary of a fifty-thousand-dollar insurance policy, is two-timing around with you. Revenge aside, it is to the advantage of both to have him out of the way."

Jones nods carelessly.

"The way you put the thing, it certainly sounds reasonable. The only flaw is that the man is not murdered."

"Before we reach this stage again, there is a point that needs clearing up," says Baldy. "You say you visit Ace Deuce Riley several times before the—shall we say—regrettable accident? It is then that you leave your prints on the rail?"

"Yes."

MR SIMMONS goes on. "In this case I am a little puzzled to understand how this is possible since the charwoman washes the bannisters only half an hour before Pony McCoy starts her argument with Mr. McElmurray! You slip up those stairs while Pony keeps the clerk occupied with her argument."

Whispering Jones sags back a little in his chair, and lights a cigarette.

"All right, gentlemen," he says. "I'll tell you the truth. Lefty finds Pony no longer loves him. He is very unhappy, but we desire to be on the level. She wants to tell him we intend to marry, but this dunderheaded McElmurray refuses to call the room. So, I slip up the back stairs in order to break the news personally. I admit I think he double-crosses me, but I forget this in the joy of knowing Miss McCoy marries me. When I get up there, I find him on the floor, dead. It is very depressing."

"And, you say nothing about it to your girlfriend?"

"No. I do not wish to spoil her evening. She is having too good a time."

The district attorney looks very sad.

"While I admit we have not yet shown that Mr. Waldron is murdered, I am sorry that you took the occasion to lie to us, Mr. Jones," he says. "It makes our job more difficult. However, no matter how well Mr. Simmons brings these points into the light, the evidence of our medical examiner precludes the possibility of holding you longer."

"Wait a minute!" says Baldy. "I am now about to show that the medical

examiner is wrong! You admit, Mr. District Attorney, that, if murder is committed, the facts point toward Whispering Jones?"

"Yes."

"Then, get the handcuffs ready. Dr. Wippenberger says the wound is in the left temple, and the pistol lying by the left hand. This is perfectly natural, because Lefty Waldron is a southpaw pitcher. But, what Whispering Jones either does not know, or forgets, is that Lefty does everything else but pitch with his right hand. I am able to bring you every member of the Pink Sox to prove this, if necessary. So, if he shoots himself, he does it with his right hand, and not his left!"

"You dope!" says Pony McCoy, glaring at Jones. "I tell you not to forget anything!"

"Take 'em away," says the District Attorney. He turns to Mr. Simmons. "Baldy, you do it again. These people who try to commit a perfect crime always seem to forget something. Which reminds me," adds the D.A., "that I forget to call my wife and tell I am unable to meet her for lunch, and I shudder to think of the bawling out she will give me."