

'CRIME FICTION'S ULYSSES...
EXTRAORDINARY'
IAN RANKIN



JAMES Elroy

WHITE
JAZZ



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About the Book

Los Angeles, 1958: a city on the make. A boom town at the edge of a new era ripe for plunder.

Lieutenant Dave Klein: in turn a lawyer, bagman, slum landlord, mob killer. Klein stands at the centre of a complex web of plots where violence and death will intersect.

About the Author

James Ellroy was born in Los Angeles in 1948. He is the author of the acclaimed 'LA Quartet': *The Black Dahlia*, *The Big Nowhere*, *LA Confidential* and *White Jazz*. His most recent novel, *Blood's a Rover*, completes the magisterial 'Underworld USA Trilogy' - the first two volumes of which (*American Tabloid* and *The Cold Six Thousand*) were both *Sunday Times* bestsellers.

ALSO BY JAMES ELLROY

THE UNDERWORLD U.S.A. TRILOGY

American Tabloid

The Cold Six Thousand

Blood's a Rover

THE L.A. QUARTET

The Black Dahlia

The Big Nowhere

L.A. Confidential

White Jazz

MEMOIR

My Dark Places

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SHORT STORIES

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Crime Wave

Destination: Morgue!

EARLY NOVELS

Brown's Requiem

Clandestine

Blood on the Moon

Because the Night

Suicide Hill

Killer on the Road

White Jazz

JAMES ELLROY

 WINDMILL BOOKS

TO
Helen Knode

In the end I possess my birthplace and am possessed by its language.

—Ross MacDonald

*All I have is the will to remember. Time revoked/fever
dreams - I wake up reaching, afraid I'll forget. Pictures
keep the woman young.*

L.A., fall 1958.

*Newsprint: link the dots. Names, events - so brutal they
beg to be connected. Years down - the story stays
dispersed. The names are dead or too guilty to tell.*

I'm old, afraid I'll forget:

I killed innocent men.

I betrayed sacred oaths.

I reaped profit from horror.

*Fever - that time burning. I want to go with the music -
spin, fall with it.*

L.A. Herald-Express, 10/17/58:

BOXING PROBE IN PROGRESS; FEDERAL GRAND JURY TO HEAR WITNESSES

Yesterday, a spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Los Angeles announced that Federal agents are probing the 'gangland infiltrated' Southland prize fight scene, with an eye toward securing grand jury indictments.

U.S. Attorney Welles Noonan, former counsel to the McClellan Rackets Committee, said that Justice Department investigators, acting on information supplied by unnamed informants, are soon to question colorful Los Angeles 'mob fringe character' Mickey Cohen. Cohen, now thirteen months out of prison, is rumored to have attempted contract infringement on a number of local prize-fighters. Currently being questioned under hotel guard are Reuben Ruiz, bantamweight contender and regular attraction at the Olympic Auditorium, and Sanderline Johnson, former ranked flyweight working as a croupier at a Gardena poker establishment. A Justice Department press release stated that Ruiz and Johnson are 'friendly witnesses'. In a personal aside to *Herald* reporter John Eisler, U.S. Attorney Noonan said: "This investigation is now in its infancy, but we have every hope that it will prove successful. The boxing racket is just that: a racket. Its cancerous tentacles link with other branches of organized crime, and should Federal grand jury indictments result from this probe, then perhaps a general probe of Southern California mob activity will prove to be in order. Witness Johnson has assured my investigators that boxing malfeasance is not the only incriminating

information he has been privy to, so perhaps we might start there. For now, though, boxing is our sole focus.'

POLITICAL STEPPINGSTONES HINTED

Some skepticism greeted news of the prize fight probe. 'I'll believe it when the grand jury hands down true bills,' said William F. Degnan, a former FBI agent now retired in Santa Monica. 'Two witnesses do not make a successful investigation. And I'm wary of anything announced in the press: it smacks of publicity seeking.'

Mr Degnan's sentiments were echoed by a source within the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office. Queried on the probe, a prosecuting attorney who wishes to remain anonymous stated: 'It's politics pure and simple. Noonan's friends with [Massachusetts Senator and presidential hopeful] John Kennedy, and I've heard he's going to run for California Attorney General himself in '60. This probe has to be fuel for that run, because Bob Gallaudet [interim Los Angeles District Attorney expected to be elected to a full term as DA ten days hence] might well be the Republican nominee. You see, what a *Federal* probe implicitly states is that *local* police and prosecutors can't control crime within their own bailiwick. I call Noonan's grand jury business a political stepping-stone.'

U.S. Attorney Noonan, 40, declined comment on the above speculation, but a surprise ally defended him with some vigor. Morton Diskant, civil liberties lawyer and Democratic candidate for Fifth District City Councilman, told this writer: 'I distrust the Los Angeles Police Department's ability to maintain order without infringing on the civil rights of Los Angeles citizens. I distrust the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office for the same reason. I

especially distrust Robert Gallaudet, most specifically for his support of [Fifth District Republican Councilman] Thomas Bethune, my incumbent opponent. Gallaudet's stand on the Chavez Ravine issue is unconscionable. He wants to evict impoverished Latin Americans from their homes to procure space for an L.A. Dodgers ballpark, a frivolity I deem criminal. Welles Noonan, on the other hand, has proven himself to be both a determined crimefighter and a friend of civil rights. Boxing is a dirty business that renders human beings walking vegetables. I applaud Mr. Noonan for taking the high ground in combatting it.'

WITNESSES UNDER GUARD

U.S. Attorney Noonan responded to Mr. Diskant's statement. 'I appreciate his support, but I do not want partisan political comments to cloud the issue. That issue is boxing and the best way to sever its links to organized crime. The U.S. Attorney's Office does not seek to supersede the authority of the LAPD or to in any way ridicule or undermine it.'

Meanwhile, the boxing probe continues. Witnesses Ruiz and Johnson are in protective custody at a downtown hotel, guarded by Federal agents and officers on loan from the Los Angeles Police Department: Lieutenant David Klein and Sergeant George Stemmons, Jr.

'Hollywood Cavalcade' Feature, *Hush-Hush Magazine*, 10/28/58:

MISANTHROPIC MICKEY SLIPS, SLIDES, AND NOSEDIVES SINCE PAROLE

Dig it, hepcats: Meyer Harris Cohen, the marvelous, benevolent, malevolent Mickster, has been out of Federal custody since September, '57. He did 3 to 5 for income tax evasion; his ragtag band dispersed, and the former mob kingpin's life since then has been one long series of skidmarks across the City of the Fallen Angels, the town he used to rule with bullets, bribes and bullspit bonhomie. Dig, children, and smell the burning rubber of those skids: off the record, on the Q.T. and *very* Hush-Hush.

April, '58: former Cohen henchman Johnny Stompanato is shanked by Lana Turner's daughter, a slinky 14 year old who should have been trying on prom gowns instead of skulking outside Mommy's bedroom with a knife in her hand. Too bad, Mickster: Johnny was your chief strongarm circa '49-'51, maybe *he* could have helped curtail your post prison tailspin. And tsk, tsk: you *really shouldn't* have sold Lana's sinsational love letters to Johnny - we heard you raided the 'Stomp Man's' Benedict Canyon love shack while Johnny was still in the meat wagon on his way to Slab City.

More sin-tillating scoop on the Mickster:

Under the watchful eye of his parole officer, Mickey has since made attempts to straighten up and skid right. He bought an ice cream parlor that soon became a criminal haven and went bust when parents kept their children away in droves; he financed his own niteclub act, somnambulistic shtick at the Club Largo. Snore City: bum bits on Ike's golf game, gags about Lana T. and Johnny S., the emphasis on 'Oscar', the Stomp Man's Academy Award size appendage. And - Desperation City - the Mickster salaamed for Jesus during Billy Graham's Crusade at the L.A. Coliseum!!!! The chutzpah of Mickey renouncing his Jewish heritage as a P.R. ploy!!!! For shame, Mickster, for shame!!!! And now the scenario darkens.

Item:

Federal agents are soon to scold Mickey for infringing on the contracts of local prizefight palookas.

Item:

Four of Mickey's goons - Carmine Ramandelli, Nathan Palevsky, Morris Jahelka and Antoine 'The Fish' Guerif - have mysteriously disappeared, presumably snuffed by person or persons unknown, and (very strangely, hepcats) Mickey is keeping his (usually on overdrive) yap shut about it.

Rumors are climbing the underworld grapevine: two surviving Cohen gunmen (Chick Vecchio and his brother Salvatore 'Touch' Vecchio, a failed actor rumored to be *très* lavender) are planning nefarious activities outside of Mickey's aegis. Get it on the ground floor, Mickster - we've heard that your sole source of income is Southside vending and slot machines: cigarettes, rubbers, french ticklers and one-armed bandits stuffed into smoky back rooms in Darktown jazz clubs. For shame again, Mickey! Shvartze exploitation! Penny ante and beneath you, you the man who once ruled the L.A. rackets with a paralyzingly pugnacious panache!

Get the picture, kats and kittens? Mickey Cohen is Skidsville, U.S.A., and he needs moolah, gelt, the old cashola. Which explains our most riotous rumor revelation, raffishly revealed for the frenetically foremost first time!

Digsville:

Meyer Harris Cohen is now in the movie biz!!

Move over C. B. DeMille: the fabulous, benevolent, malevolent Mickster is now sub-rosa financing a horror cheapie currently shooting in Griffith Park! He's saved his negro exploited nickels and is now partners with Variety International Pictures in the making of *Attack of the Atomic Vampire*. It's sensational, it's non-union, it's a turkey of epic proportions!

Further Digsville:

Ever anxious to parsimoniously pinch pennies, Mickey has cast lavender loverboy Touch Vecchio in a key role - and the Touchster is hot, hot, hotsville with the star of the

movie: limpwristed lothario Rock Rockwell. Off-camera homo hijinx! You heard it first here!

Final Digsville:

Enter Howard Hughes: Mr Airplane/Tool Magnate, lascivious luster after Hollywood lovelies. He used to own R.K.O. Studios; now he's an independent producer known for keeping wildly well-endowed wenches welded to 'personal service contracts' - read as bit roles in exchange for frequent night-time visits. Dig: we've heard that Mickey's leading lady left the mammary-mauling mogul spinning his own propeller - she actually amscrayed on a Hughes contract and car hopped until Mickey materialized at Scrivner's Drive-In dying for a chocolate malt.

Are you smitten, Mickster?

Are you heartbroken, Howard?

Hollywood Cavalcade shifts gears with an open letter to the Los Angeles Police Department.

Dear LAPD:

Recently, three wino bums were found strangled and mutilated in abandoned houses in the Hollywood area. *Very* Hush-Hush: we've heard the still-at-large killer snapped their windpipes post-mortem, utilizing great strength. The press has paid these heinously horrific killings scant attention; only the sin-sation slanted L.A. *Mirror* seems to care that three Los Angeles citizens have met such nauseatingly nasty nadirs. The LAPD's Homicide Division has not been called in to investigate; so far only two Hollywood Division detectives are working the case. Hepcats, it's the pedigree of the victims that determine the juice of investigation - and if three squarejohn citizens got choked by a neck-snapping psychopath, then LAPD Chief of Detectives Edmund J. Exley would waste no time mounting a full scale investigation. Often it takes a catchy tag name to bring dirty criminal business into the public's consciousness and thus create a clamor for justice. Hush-Hush hereby names this anonymous killer fiend the 'Wino

Will-o-the-Wisp' and petitions the LAPD to find him and set him up with a hot date in San Quentin's green room. They cook with gas there, and this killer deserves a four-burner cookout.

Watch for future updates on the Wino Will-o-the-Wisp, and remember you heard it first here: off the record, on the Q.T. and *very* Hush-Hush.

PART I

STRAIGHT LIFE

1

THE JOB: TAKE down a bookie mill, let the press in – get some ink to compete with the flight probe.

Some fruit sweating a sodomy beef snitched: fourteen phones, a race wire. Exley's memo said show some force, squeeze the witnesses at the hotel later – find out what the Feds had planned.

In person: 'If things get untoward, don't let the reporters take pictures. You're an attorney, Lieutenant. Remember how clean Bob Gallaudet likes his cases.'

I hate Exley.

Exley thinks I bought law school with bribe money.

I said four men, shotguns, Junior Stemmons as co-boss. Exley: 'Jackets and ties; this will end up on TV. And no stray bullets – you're working for me, not Mickey Cohen.'

Someday I'll shove a bribe list down his throat.

Junior set it up. Perfect: a Niggertown street cordoned off; bluesuits guarding the alley. Reporters, prowler cars, four jackets and ties packing twelve-gauge pumps.

Sergeant George Stemmons, Jr, snapping quick draws.

Hubbub: porch-loafing jigs, voodoo eyes. My eyes on the target – closed curtains, a packed driveway – make a full shift inside working bets. A cinderblock shack – figure a steel plate door.

I whistled; Junior walked over twirling his piece.

'Keep it out, you might need it.'

'No, I've got a riot gun in the car. We go in the door, we—'

'We *don't* go in the door, it's plated. We start banging on the door, they burn their paper. You still hunt birds?'

'Sure. Dave, what—'

'You got ammo in your car? Single-aught birdshot?'

Junior smiled. 'That big window. I shoot it out, the curtain takes the pellets, we go in.'

'Right, so you tell the others. And tell those clowns with the cameras to roll it, Chief Exley's compliments.'

Junior ran back, dumped shells, reloaded. Cameras ready; whistles, applause: wine-guzzling loafers.

Hands up, count it down—

Eight: Junior spreads the word.

Six: the men flanked.

Three: Junior window-aiming.

One: 'Now!'

Glass exploded *ka-BOOM*, loud loud loud; recoil knocked Junior flat. Cops too shocked to yell 'TRIPLE AUGHT!'

Window curtains in rags.

Screams.

Run up, jump the sill. Chaos: blood spray, bet slip/cash confetti. Phone tables dumped, a stampede: out the back door bookie fistfights.

A nigger coughing glass.

A pachuco minus some fingers.

'Wrong Load' Stemmons: 'Police! Stop or we'll shoot!'

Grab him, shout: 'This was shots fired inside, a fucking criminal altercation. We went in the window because we figured the door wouldn't go down. You talk nice to the new guys and tell them I owe them one. You get the men together and make fucking-A sure they know the drill. *Do you understand me?*'

Junior shook free. Foot thumps – window-storming plain-clothes-men. Cover noise: I pulled my spare piece. Two ceiling shots, a wipe – evidence.

Toss the gun. More chaos: suspects kicked prone, cuffed.

Moans, shouts, shotgun wadding/blood stink.

I 'discovered' the gun. Reporters ran in; Junior spied them. Out to the porch, fresh air.

'You owe me eleven hundred, Counselor.'

Make the voice: Jack Woods. Mixed bag - bookie/strong-arm/contract trigger.

I walked over. 'Did you catch the show?'

'I was just driving up - and you should put that kid Stemmons on a leash.'

'His daddy's an inspector. I'm the kid's mentor, so I've got a captain's job as a lieutenant. Did you have a bet down?'

'That's right.'

'Slumming?'

'I'm in the business myself, so I spread my own bets around for good will. Dave, you owe me eleven hundred.'

'How do you know you won?'

'The race was fixed.'

Jabber - newsmen, the locals. 'I'll get it out of the evidence vault.'

'C'est la guerre. And by the way, how's your sister?'

'Meg's fine.'

'Say hi for me.'

Sirens; black & whites pulling up.

'Jack, get out of here.'

'Good seeing you, Dave.'

Book the fuckers - Newton Street Station.

Rap sheet checks: nine outstanding warrants total. Missing Fingers came up a sweetheart: rape, ADW, flimflam. Shock pale, maybe dying - a medic fed him coffee and aspirin.

I booked the plant gun, bet slips and money - minus Jack Woods' eleven hundred. Junior, press relations: the lieutenant owes you a story.

Two hours of pure shitwork.

4:30 - back to the Bureau. Messages waiting: Meg said drop by; Welles Noonan said the guard gig, six sharp.

Exley: 'Report in detail.'

Details - type them out, more shitwork:

4701 Naomi Avenue, 1400 hours. Set to raid a bookmaker's drop, Sgt George Stemmons, Jr, and I heard shots fired inside the premises. We did not inform the other officers for fear of creating a panic. I ordered a shot-gun round directed at the front window; Sgt Stemmons misled the other men with a 'birdshot assault' cover story. A .38 revolver was found; we arrested six bookmakers. The suspects were booked at Newton Station; the wounded received adequate first aid and hospital treatment. R&I revealed numerous extant warrants on the six, who will be remanded to the Hall of Justice Jail and arraigned on felony charges 614.5 and 859.3 of the California Penal Code. All six men will be subsequently interrogated on the shots fired and their bookmaking associations. I will conduct the interrogations myself - as Division Commander I must personally guarantee the veracity of all proffered statements. Press coverage of this occurrence will be minimal: reporters at the scene were unprepared for the rapid transpiring of events.

Sign it: Lieutenant David D. Klein, Badge 1091, Commander, Administrative Vice.

Carbons to: Junior, Chief Exley.

The phone—

'Ad Vice, Klein.'

'Davey? Got a minute for an old gonif buddy?'

'Mickey, Jesus Christ.'

'I know, I'm supposed to call you at home. Uh ... Davey ... a favor for Sam G.?'

G. for Giancana. 'I guess. What?'

'You know that croupier guy you're watchdogging?'

'Yeah.'

'Well ... the radiator's loose in his bedroom.'

2

ROCKABYE REUBEN RUIZ: 'This is the tits. I could get used to this.'

The Embassy Hotel: parlor, bedrooms, TV. Nine floors up, suite service: food and booze.

Ruiz belting Scotch, half-assed restless. Sanderline Johnson watching cartoons, slack-jawed.

Junior practicing quick draws.

Try some talk. 'Hey, Reuben.'

Popping mock jabs: 'Hey, Lieutenant.'

'Hey, Reuben. Did Mickey C. try to infringe on your contract?'

'He what you call strongly suggested my manager let him buy in. He sent the Vecchio brothers out to talk to him, then he punked out when Luis told them, "Hey, kill me, 'cause I ain't signin' no release form." You want my opinion? Mickey ain't got the stones for strongarm no more.'

'But you've got the *cojones* to snitch.'

Jabs, hooks. 'I got a brother deserted the army, maybe lookin' at Federal time. I got three bouts coming up at the Olympic, which Welles Noonan can fuck up with subpoenas. My family's what you call from a long line of thieves, what you call trouble prone, so I sorta like making friends in what you might call the law-enforcement community.'

'Do you think Noonan has good stuff on Mickey?'

'No, Lieutenant, I don't.'

'Call me Dave.'

'I'll call you Lieutenant, 'cause I got enough friends in the law-enforcement community.'

'Such as?'

'Such as Noonan and his FBI buddy Shipstad. Hey, you know School-boy Johnny Duhamel?'

'Sure. He fought in the Gloves, turned pro, then quit.'

'You lose your first pro fight, you better quit. I told him that, 'cause Johnny and me are old friends, and Johnny is now *Officer* Schoolboy Johnny Duhamel, on the fuckin' LAPD, on the righteous Mobster Squad, no less. He's tight with the - what you call him? - legendary? - Captain Dudley Smith. So I got enough fuck—'

'Ruiz, watch your language.'

Junior - pissed. Johnson goosed the TV - Mickey Mouse ran from Donald Duck.

Junior killed the volume. 'I knew Johnny Duhamel when I taught at the Academy. He was in my evidence class, and he was a damn good student. I don't like it when criminals get familiar with policemen. *Comprende, pendejo?*'

'*Pendejo*, huh? So I'm the *stupido*, and you're this punk cowboy, playin' with your gun like that sissy mouse on fuckin' television.'

Necktie pull, signal Junior: FREEZE IT.

He froze - fumbling his gun.

Ruiz: 'I can always use another friend, *Dave*. There something you want to know?'

I boosted the TV. Johnson stared, rapt - Daisy Duck vamping Donald. Ruiz: 'Hey, *Dave*. You wangle this job to pump me?'

Huddle close, semi-private. 'You want to make another friend, then give. What's Noonan have?'

'He's got what you call aspirations.'

'I know that. *Give*.'

'Well ... I heard Shipstad and this other FBI guy talking. They said Noonan's maybe afraid the fight probe's too limited. Anyway, he's thinking over this backup plan.'

‘And?’

‘And it’s like a general L.A. rackets thing, mostly Southside stuff. Dope, slots, you know, illegal vending machines and that kind of shit. I heard Shipstad say something about the LAPD don’t investigate colored on colored homicides, and all this ties to Noonan making the new DA – what’s his name?’

‘Bob Gallaudet.’

‘Right, Bob Gallaudet. Anyway, it all ties to making him look bad so Noonan can run against him for attorney general.’

Darktown, the coin biz – Mickey C.’s last going stuff. ‘What about Johnson?’

Snickers. ‘Look at that mulatto wetbrain. Can you believe he used to be forty-three, zero and two?’

‘Reuben, *give*.’

‘Okay, give he’s close to a fuckin’ idiot, but he’s got this great memory. He can memorize card decks, so some made guys gave him a job at the Lucky Nugget down in Gardena. He’s good at memorizing conversations, and some guys weren’t so what you call discreet talking around him. I heard Noonan’s gonna make him do these memory tricks on the stand, which—’

‘I get the picture.’

‘Good. I quit my own trouble-prone ways, but I sure got a trouble-prone family. I shouldn’t of told you what I did, so since you’re my friend I’m sure this ain’t getting back to the Federal guys, right, *Dave*?’

‘Right. Now eat your dinner and get some rest, okay?’

Midnight – lights out. I took Johnson; Junior took Ruiz – my suggestion.

Johnson, bedtime reading: ‘God’s Secret Power Can Be Yours’. I pulled a chair up and watched his lips: glom the inside track to Jesus, fight the Jew-Communist conspiracy

to mongrelize Christian America. Send your contribution to Post Office Box blah, blah, blah.

‘Sanderline, let me ask you something.’

‘Uh, yessir.’

‘Do you believe that pamphlet you’re reading?’

‘Uh, yessir. Right here it says this woman who came back to life said Jesus guarantees all gold-star contributors a new car every year in heaven.’

JESUS FUCK.

‘Sanderline, did you catch a few in your last couple of fights?’

‘Uh, no. I stopped Bobby Calderon on cuts and lost a split decision to Ramon Sanchez. Sir, do you think Mr. Noonan will get us a hot lunch at the grand jury?’

Handcuffs out. ‘Put these on while I take a piss.’

Johnson stood up – yawning, stretching. Check the heater – thick pipes – nix ballast.

Open window – nine-floor drop – this geek half-breed smiling.

‘Sir, what do you think Jesus drives himself?’

I banged his head against the wall, threw him out of the window screaming.

3

LAPD HOMICIDE SAID suicide, case closed.

The DA: suicide probable.

Confirmation - Junior, Ruiz - Sanderline Johnson, crazy man.

Listen:

I watched him read, dozed off, woke up - Johnson announced he could fly. He went out the window before I could voice my disbelief.

Questioning: Feds, LAPD, DA's men. Basics: Johnson crash-landed on a parked De Soto, DOA, no witnesses. Bob Gallaudet seemed pleased: a rival's political progress scotched. Ed Exley: report to my office, 10:00 A.M.

Welles Noonan: incompetent disgrace of a policeman; pitiful excuse for an attorney. Suspicious - my old nickname - 'the Enforcer'.

No mention: 187 PC - felonious homicide.

No mention: outside-agency investigations.

No mention: interdepartmental charges.

I drove home, showered, changed - no reporters hovering yet. Downtown, a dress for Meg - I do it every time I kill a man.

10:00 A.M.

Waiting: Exley, Gallaudet, Walt Van Meter - the boss, Intelligence Division. Coffee, pastry - fuck me.

I sat down. Exley: 'Lieutenant, you know Mr Gallaudet and Captain Van Meter.'

Gallaudet, all smiles: 'It's been "Bob" and "Dave" since law school, and I won't fake any outrage over last night. Did you see the *Mirror*, Dave?'

'No.'

"Federal Witness Plummets to Death", with a sidebar: "Suicide Pronouncement: 'Hallelujah, I Can Fly!'" You like it?'

'It's a pisser.'

Exley, cold: 'The lieutenant and I will discuss that later. In a sense it ties in to what we have here, so let's go to it.'

Bob sipped coffee. 'Political intrigue. Walt, you tell him.'

Van Meter coughed. 'Well ... Intelligence has done some political operations before, and we've got our eye on a target now - a pinko lawyer who has habitually bad-mouthed the Department and Mr Gallaudet.'

Exley: 'Keep going.'

'Well, Mr. Gallaudet should be elected to a regular term next week. He's an ex-policeman himself, and he speaks our language. He's got the support of the Department and some of the City Council, but—'

Bob cut in. 'Morton Diskant. He's neck and neck with Tom Bethune for Fifth District city councilman, and he's been ragging me for weeks. You know, how I've only been a prosecutor for five years and how I cashed in when Ellis Loew resigned as DA. I've heard he's gotten cozy with Welles Noonan, who just might be on my dance card in '60, and Bethune is our kind of guy. It's a very close race. Diskant's been talking Bethune and I up as right-wing shitheads, and the district's twenty-five percent Negro, lots of them registered voters. You take it from there.'

Play a hunch. 'Diskant's been riling the spooks up with Chavez Ravine, something like "Vote for me so your Mexican brothers won't get evicted from their shantytown shacks to make room for a ruling-class ballpark." It's five-four in favor on the Council, and they take a final vote sometime in November after the election. Bethune's an