

Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| COPYRIGHT INFO | 3 |
| A NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER | 5 |
| The MEGAPACK™ Ebook Series | 7 |
| THE VITAL ELEMENT | 18 |
| PSYCHO-SYMPTOMS | 28 |
| STRANGER'S GIFT | 39 |
| THE WAY OUT | 54 |
| IN THE HOUSE OF RATS | 64 |
| TO SPARE A LIFE | 74 |
| THE INSPIRATION | 84 |
| EASY MARK | 97 |
| GATOR BAIT | 107 |
| THE COMMUNE | 117 |
| THE DELICATE VICTIM | 128 |
| TRIAL RUN | 139 |
| THE TIP-OFF | 149 |
| THE ULTIMATE PREY | 162 |

Sample file

NEW NEIGHBOR 175

TILL DEATH DO NOT US PART 191

HOPE CHEST 206

THE HOLDUP 221

A WAY WITH A WILL. 230

THE BEACON 241

Sample file

COPYRIGHT INFO

The MEGAPACK™ is copyright © 2015 by Wildside Press, LLC. All rights reserved.

* * * *

The MEGAPACK™ ebook series name is a trademark of Wildside Press, LLC. All rights reserved.

* * * *

“The Vital Element” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, November 1967. Copyright © 1967 by Talmage Powell.

“Psycho-Symptoms” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, November 1968. Copyright © 1968 by Talmage Powell.

“Stranger’s Gift” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, December 1969. Copyright © 1969 by Talmage Powell.

“The Way Out” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, July 1969. Copyright © 1969 by Talmage Powell.

“In the House of Rats” originally appeared in *Ellery Queen’s Mystery Magazine*, September 1970. Copyright © 1970 by Talmage Powell.

“The Inspiration” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, October 1970. Copyright © 1970 by Talmage Powell.

“To Spare a Life” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, March 1970. Copyright © 1970 by Talmage Powell.

“Easy Mark” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, May 1971. Copyright © 1971 by Talmage Powell.

“Gator Bait” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, March 1971. Copyright © 1971 by Talmage Powell.

“The Commune” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, January 1971. Copyright © 1971 by Talmage Powell.

“The Delicate Victim” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, July 1971. Copyright © 1971 by Talmage Powell.

“Trial Run” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, August 1971. Copyright © 1971 by Talmage Powell.

“The Tip-Off” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, August 1973. Copyright © 1973 by Talmage Powell.

“The Ultimate Prey” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, December 1974. Copyright © 1974 by Talmage Powell.

“New Neighbor” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, October 1975. Copyright © 1975 by Talmage Powell.

“Till Death Do Not Us Part” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, August 1975. Copyright © 1975 by Talmage Powell.

“Hope Chest” originally published in *Mike Shayne Mystery Magazine*, August 1976. Copyright © 1976 by Talmage Powell.

“The Holdup” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, May 1979. Copyright © 1976 by Talmage Powell.

“A Way With A Will” originally appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, April 1981. Copyright © 1981 by Talmage Powell.

“The Beacon” originally appeared in *Mike Shayne Mystery Magazine*, April 1981. Copyright © 1981 by Talmage Powell.

A NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER

Welcome to our second Talmage Powell collection!

Talmage Powell (1920-2000) was one of the all-time great mystery writers of the pulps (and later the digest mystery magazines). He claimed to have written more than 500 short stories (and I have no reason to doubt him—I am working on a bibliography of his work, and so far I can document 373 magazine stories...and who knows how many are out there under pseudonyms or buried in obscure magazines!) His pen names included Robert Hart Davis, Robert Henry, Milton T. Lamb, Milton T. Land, Jack McCready, Anne Talmage, and Dave Sands. Some (like Robert Hart Davis) were “house names” shared by many different authors. (Bill Pronzini also wrote as “Robert Hart Davis,” for example.) His work appeared in *Dime Mystery*, *Black Mask*, *Ellery Queen’s Mystery Magazine*, *Alfred Hitchcock’s Magazine*, *Manhunt*, and many, many more

He wrote his first novel, *The Smasher*, in 1959. He went on to pen 11 more novels under his own name, 4 as “Ellery Queen,” and 2 novelizations of the TV series *Mission: Impossible*. Clearly, though short stories were his first love.

Enjoy!

—John Betancourt
Publisher, Wildside Press LLC
www.wildsidepress.com

ABOUT THE SERIES

Over the last few years, our MEGAPACK™ ebook series has grown to be our most popular endeavor. (Maybe it helps that we sometimes offer them as premiums to our mailing list!) One question we keep getting asked is, “Who’s the editor?”

The MEGAPACK™ ebook series (except where specifically credited) are a group effort. Everyone at Wildside works on them. This includes John Betancourt (me), Carla Coupe, Steve Coupe, Shawn Garrett, Helen McGee, Bonner Menking, Colin Azariah-Kribbs, A.E. Warren, and many of Wildside’s authors...who often suggest stories to include (and not just their own!)

RECOMMEND A FAVORITE STORY?

Do you know a great classic science fiction story, or have a favorite author whom you believe is perfect for the MEGAPACK™ ebook series? We’d love your suggestions! You can post them on our message board at <http://movies.ning.com/forum> (there is an area for Wildside Press comments).

Note: we only consider stories that have already been professionally published. This is not a market for new works.

TYPOS

Unfortunately, as hard as we try, a few typos do slip through. We update our ebooks periodically, so make sure you have the current version (or download a fresh copy if it’s been sitting in your ebook reader for months.) It may have already been updated.

If you spot a new typo, please let us know. We’ll fix it for everyone. You can email the publisher at wildsidepress@yahoo.com or use the message boards above.