

# *A Death in Dallas*

*(a trafficking conspiracy)*

**E. E. Hunt**

## **Sections**

Murder Near the Cathedral .....	page 3
A Dallas Conspiracy .....	page 16
Escape from Slavery .....	page 34
Down Mexico Way .....	page 90
I love Lucy .....	page 112
Grant Me Lord A Little Light .....	page 148
Many Things on Which to Stumble .....	page 174
Unto a Stony Path .....	page 205
Things Upon Which to Laugh, The Playboy of San Miguel.....	page 231
A Dream That Lasts But a Day .....	page 262

## *Murder Near the Cathedral*

The body of a small Latino male could be seen wedged between two dirty garbage cans behind the auto body shop on Ross Avenue by police officer Mike Campbell, a thirty year veteran of the Dallas police force. Mike had been contacted by the dispatcher about a possible robbery in process, which led him to the lot behind the body shop on this historic urban street about two miles long. Ross Avenue stretched from downtown Dallas to the Episcopal Cathedral after which it turned into Greenville Avenue. It was his regular routine; however, to take his police cruiser into the back areas of many of the old stores in this his sector of the city of Dallas, which was dominated by Latinos. He had the 3 to 10AM shift, which Mike did not like and was hoping to change because he knew he was getting too old for this night work. He was fifty three, and although in good shape, still trim with a full head of hair just beginning to turn gray, and a wise expression on his face of someone who seen most everything in life, he knew he should request a less demanding shift. However, when he saw a body in his headlights, he slipped into his professional ‘cop mode,’ got out of his cruiser carefully, and slowly made his way to make sure the person was as dead as he looked. Hand on his holster, he gazed around for any sign of perpetrators, but the lot appeared empty except for the lone slain man. Mike thought to himself, “Lucky me. Every one else is safely tucked in their beds except a cop on duty and I guess a dead body.” As he looked down at the little man in the midst of rubbish, he shook his head and continued his musing, “What a lonely place to die, you poor soul, discarded like so much lousy trash.” He

knew that homicide detectives, once alerted, would soon be on the scene, as well as the M.E.

In the meantime Mike had been careful not to disturb anything around the body, but he could easily see that the man had been murdered. It didn't take a genius to figure out that he had been viciously killed when Mike saw the large indentation in the Latino's skull, which made it look like a caved-in melon. No human skull could take that much of a crunch. The motionless body was lying on its stomach, surrounded by a pool of blood as much as any normal body contained. In any case Mike had felt for a pulse in the man's neck, and of course he knew there would not be any. He walked back to his car, picked up the car handset and relayed his grim discovery to the female dispatcher. He told her, "This is more than a robbery. The man has been killed, period." He also checked his computer, which sat in the middle of his dashboard, for any additional information on a short, dark haired Hispanic male, and found nothing off hand, except the 911 alert. That was as expected because he was the first one on the scene, but by now the dispatcher would soon prompt a team of cops on duty to arrive quickly to the scene, which was always the case when a robbery was suspected to be in process, or even more so if someone had been actually murdered. As fast as any internet connection could transmit, just then two more white Dallas police cruisers drew up next to Mike, their drivers getting out of their cars as he also did when he saw them, "Where is he, Mike?" Mike shined his flashlight to the garbage cans.

"Look straight down over there. See him? He's as dead as a doornail, Joe. He's Latino, maybe an immigrant, I don't know. He is not old. Looks kind of like a young guy." Joseph Washington, tall, heavy built and African--American, was an old friend of Mike's and had been on the force

for almost as long as Mike had. Then the other policeman, Roberto Jesus Jimenez, a middle-sized, youngish looking Hispanic, who was a ten- year veteran, asked if Mike had checked around to see if any bad guys were present. Mike told him he hadn't seen anybody else when he had previously flashed his spotlight around the back of the buildings.

“How about some jerk on that roof of the body shop?” Roberto asked as he looked up.

“Don't know. Haven't heard anything special up there nor seen any movement.” Just as he said he didn't know, as if on cue, a shot rang out, and Roberto went down with a cry, holding his arm. Mike dove to the ground between his open door and the cruiser's interior as Joseph ducked behind his own patrol car.

“What the hell!” Joseph cursed. Both uninjured officers shot back towards the roof of the building where they had seen a muzzle flash. Then, still keeping a low profile, Mike slowly slid along the seat to fetch his handset, and lifting it he called, “Officer down. Officer down! Sector 211, Corner of Ross and Peak.” Then he got out of the cruiser carefully, still crouching behind his car door, and resumed firing, joining Joe who had never stopped shooting his pistol at the sniper. Evidently still unscratched and not intimidated, the man up on the roof shot Roberto again in the leg and he cried out once more.

Soon the sirens of four or five cruisers could be heard as well as that of an emergency ambulance. A helicopter had been called in as well and could be heard in the distance. Each of the police present now shined their car spotlights up to the roof of the one story body shop while the shooter kept up his fire, which strangely seemed aimed solely at Roberto. Mike feverously had dragged Roberto behind his cruiser while ducking shots

himself in order to stay out of the line of fire. Yet somehow another bullet hit Roberto, this time in his other leg near a foot that had been slightly exposed, and he screamed again. “This guy has got to be a professional with that shot!” Mike muttered, as he tried to put pressure on Roberto’s wounds, which were bleeding badly. Mike knew that until that shooter was stopped, however, the ambulance could not get near Roberto. All the cops now had surrounded the building and were blasting away at the top of the shop. One of them, really angry, yelled out, “Get that Son of Bitch!”

“Roberto is bleeding to death, for Christ’s sake,” another red- faced cop snorted. Then the shooting suddenly stopped as the thump, thump of a helicopter was heard, and as it hovered over the site its bright lights lit up the roof of the old building like a Christmas tree.

“Where the hell is he?” Mike yelled. “He must be dead or gone. He’s not shooting.” Realizing that the firing had stopped at last and that no sniper could now be seen, the cops lingered no longer and began to storm the building, not even waiting for the well known elite Dallas SWAT team to arrive. The ambulance meanwhile sped up next to the wounded police officer, which allowed its paramedics to pour out of it and attend Roberto who had passed out.

The police soon broke down the front and back garage doors of the body shop. Each of them, six or seven strong now, slowly moved into the empty space within, pistols held with both hands together and projected ahead as they searched the dimly lit space. Their advance was slow but thorough as they hid behind cars half painted or repaired, the smell of fresh solvent lingering in the air, but no one was found in any part of the building. Mike saw a grease pit under a car and shined his flashlight into its open lower cavity, and quickly spotted a small tunnel cut into one side.

“Joe, look down there. See that hole, I bet that S.O.B went into it.” He and big Joseph slowly dropped down the side of the pit with a few audible grunts, and when their feet touched bottom bent over to enter though the narrow opening. Their flashlights illuminated a passage in which they could only crawl, and when they did so it seemed to both of them that it might go on forever, but in reality about a full block or so which led to another building. When they emerged from their crawl space and stood up, dusting themselves off, they saw they were standing in a dirty and dark basement that they assumed was part of some dilapidated old wooden house, many of which stood on or off Ross Avenue. As the two shined their flashlights around the empty, cobwebbed interior, they heard a car rumble away. Their flashlights, however, found a stairwell, probably leading to a kitchen, and without a second thought they ran up it two steps at a time, then darted to the front of the empty house. When they found that the front door was locked, and more or less frozen in place, they slammed their full body weight against that barrier which splintered and fell quickly apart, but the car they had heard was long gone. Standing on the shaky front porch Mike took out his cell phone and radioed in that the “perp” had escaped in a car, and that he was unable to give a description. Maybe the tire tread left behind would offer some evidence, and the house could be searched in time, but the two were frustrated, not just because they lost trace of the sniper, but because they were beginning to suspect they had been set up. Why three shots aimed at Roberto, a Latino like the one killed? Was there a connection? Had the sniper known that Roberto was on duty and wanted him dead also, so he suckered him into a trap using a dead man as bait? Had the shooter called 911? This case was going to be difficult to write up when Mike filed his

report back at the station. Nor did Mike know then how very complicated things would soon become for this lone cop on his beat.

Xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

The sniper who had escaped was anything but a humble Latino immigrant, like the one who had been killed, but a hired gun with plenty of experience using a high-powered rifle with a scope. Twenty four year old Jackson James Cassidy had first learned his skill in the army, and had used that dead aim of his not long ago in Iraq, but for good purpose. In the battle of the city village of Faluja, that was practically turned in to a “parking lot” after the softening up of insurgent strongholds by low level, precision bombing, Jack and his fellow soldiers still had to move house by house in close and fierce fighting. When he entered one house in which an unknown booby trap had been set, the home made bomb went off in his face, which sent him back home to the States severely wounded to recover at Walter Reed hospital. While his physique was left whole, his face wasn't. He was scarred for life, and neither his tall muscular frame nor wavy black hair could compensate for his shattered countenance. A land mine had blown off most of his facial skin, and crushed his chin and cheeks, vaporizing his mouth and chin, but his eyes were okay. “Thank God for that,” he thought. But he knew he was ugly now, with a rebuilt nose, cheekbones, and mouth that made him look like something out of a “Freddy” horror movie, or at least he thought so. Of course, the doctors and nurses had praised his changing appearance after each operation or surgical procedure, trying to make him feel better until he looked at himself in the bathroom mirror. He would never again be the handsome football hero of his high school where every cheerleader had ogled him.

Strong again, but angry, and disillusioned about his appearance, he finally left the hospital for a simple flat, and in his lonely misery decided to put the word out that he could be hired by those who knew of his skill. Before fighting hand- to- hand in Faluja he had shot ten insurgents while holed up on a rooftop. He was an excellent marksman and had been commended and then rewarded with a bronze star for his efforts. He may still be a sharpshooter, but he was no longer acting like a hero for country, school, or college. His disfigured face had turned him into a “Freddy” who killed for hire. Of course he had hit the lumbering immigrant with his pistol after he sighted him walking along Ross Avenue that night. Jack had parked his car and waited in the dark between streetlights until he saw the little man approach. Then after surveying the area to see if they were totally alone, Jack got out of his car and followed him, eventually challenging him in Spanish, saying that he was going to rob him. When the man protested that he had *nada dinero*, he pistol- whipped the poor Latino, which knocked him unconscious. Lying on the sidewalk near the body shop, Jack dragged him to the garbage area. Then he returned to his car, picked up his cell phone and called 911, hoping to see police arrive before too long, but only of course after he was in place as a sniper; he had set up some live bait for them in order to catch his quarry. When he returned to his green Buick, and made his call, he drove it around the corner from Ross and parked it down Peak Street near an old house. Remembering the plans his employers had given him with the \$25,000 in cash, he studied them once again and saw how he could enter the shop, and did so. He climbed to the roof through a ladder inside which led to a vent opening, and waited on top, well protected by a two foot high ledge around the outside of the roof. From there he saw two young Latinos approach the unconscious man, and when they began to rustle him for his

possessions, the man woke up and fought them off. Then one really vicious looking young punk, with long sideburns, very long hair, and a dirty tee shirt, took the baseball bat he was holding and smashed it down on the poor son of bitch's head. From his perch Jack thought to himself, "That has got to hurt. Jesus, I bet they killed him," then when the prowling patrol car could be seen lighting up the street in front of the body shop, the kids ran away, without money or a wallet, leaving the Hispanic man between the garbage cans, profusely bleeding. The patrol car stopped in back of the shop, and the police officer who got out did not fit the description of the man he was supposed to wound or kill. Yet Jack knew that in due time more police would come, and soon enough he would have Roberto, the one he was after, in his sights. His employers told him to make it look like Roberto had been injured in the line of duty, and although the police might become suspicious later, the mystery of why such a set up occurred would keep the cops busy while his employers' plans took shape.