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54/08/14 Near Fight, Cry of Lie, End Steve's Accusation of Houk

Cleveland Press

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The bespectacled, serious-faced man in the brown suit and Panama hat stepped off the elevator on the third floor of Central Police Station.

Looking straight ahead, he walked past the closed door of Detective Chief James McArthur.

The door opened, and Clarence Hawkins, veteran secretary of the Detective Bureau, looked out. "In here, Dr. Sheppard," he called.

Dr. Stephen Sheppard, 34, stepped into the room and one of the most dramatic moments of his life.

The young osteopath didn't change expression as Bay Village Mayor J. Spencer Houk, who had considered Dr. Steve a friend until short days ago, leaped to his feet and shook his fist. "You liar!" the 42-year-old mayor blurted.

Dr. Steve's eyes wandered about the room, taking in McArthur, Homicide Capt. David Kerr and Detective Adelbert O'Hara.

On the green wall was a framed quotation about "Loyalty." It was loyalty to his younger brother, Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, 30, that brought Dr. Steve into this scene.

Glancing out McArthur's window, he could see the grim gray sandstone of the County Jail, where Dr. Sam sat in a cell block—charged with the July 4 murder of his pregnant wife, Marilyn.

Dr. Steve was in this room because he had pointed the finger of suspicion at Mayor Houk, Sam's close friend. In an effort to free his brother, he had splashed serious aspersions on the reputation of his murdered sister-in-law.

The seeds of the emotion-packed confrontation were planted Thursday, when Dr. Steve paid a surprise visit to police headquarters.

He wanted to "provide some new leads," he told McArthur.
Nait Fight Cry of 'Lie End
Steve’s Acusation of Houk

(Continued From Page One)

Arthur and Chief Frank W. Story.

McArthur jotted down notes as the intense osteopath spilled out his “facts and suspicions” for more than an hour.

“I hope you’ll do something about this,” Dr. Steve said.

He said he had come in of his own volition—that Sam’s chief defense counsel, William J. Corrigan, didn’t know of his personal effort to save his brother.

Story and McArthur slept on Dr. Steve’s accusations. They presented the charge of Corri- gan and the Sheppard family that they had “closed your minds” to the possibility that Marilyn Sheppard might have been murdered by anyone but her husband.

Friday morning, McArthur detailed his notes, and Story gave the terse order: “Bring Houk in for questioning as a suspect in the Marilyn Shep- pand murder investigation, on the accusation of Dr. Stephen Sheppard . . . .

Astonished by Order

Houk, worn and haggard from the strain of the 41-day old murder investigation, the most trying experience of his career as a suburban mayor, was home at 2014 Lake Rd. when the doorbell rang.

He was astonished when O’Lara told him he could “come downtown” voluntarily—alone.

The startled mayor came voluntarily, somewhat relieved, to change from his T-shirt and biggy blue slacks.

Governor Mike McArthur, the tree-shrouded, murder home at 28924 Lake Rd., as the police car started downtown. He was welcomed to this home by a frantic phone call from Dr. Sam, with whom he is co-owner, that morning of July 4.

Dr. Houk’s life has been one of constant storm and stress.

Sam’s prelimi-

By the time the doorbell rang, Houk was as surprised as MacArthur read the unsupported "facts and suspicions" in the situation.

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